



Curriculum Design Pattern

Global Learning by Design

Name of Pattern

Rules of Engagement

Date

December 2014

Quick Look

Rules of Engagement activity intends to develop student responsibility of organising group work and living up to their responsibilities to the group. This is achieved by having the team members define roles and responsibilities (rules of engagement). The most appropriate tool for this activity is a Google Doc although a course wiki may also be used.

Rationale

Rules of Engagement activity gives students the opportunity to develop their understanding of how effective and efficient groups operate in preparation for the workplace.

Learners/Context

Rules of Engagement activity has been constructed to help streamline group collaboration and communication. Each group must negotiate and agree upon a set of rules and principles by which they will work. Students will be required to understand the importance of workload distribution, self-organisation and self-determination regarding group responsibilities and tasks.

Related Category

Academic skills, WIL, active learning, building graduate attributes, online collaboration, employability skills.

Alignment

Rules of Engagement addresses graduate attributes of work-ready (<http://www1.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=lvn0vsrq00lbz>)

Instructions/Process

Prior to Semester

1. Decide on the assessment task with student group allocation in Blackboard.

OR

2. Alternatively, setting up study groups in Blackboard and request students to self-direct into these groups. Send out an announcement to alert students of the request
3. Allocated the specific roles and responsibilities within the group. For example: Leader and the leader's responsibility; note-taker and the responsibilities and so forth
4. Allocate specific questions for each role. Refer to the Learning Lab references on group work (<https://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/search/node/group%20work>)

5. Establish Google Docs for students to share their work.

OR

6. Establish groups in Blackboard. Ensure all students are placed in their respective groups and explain the group process

Beginning of Semester

7. Ask students to gather in their respective groups to work in the appropriate forum
8. Ask each group to maintain their own forum
9. Discuss with the students the various roles, their responsibilities and the mechanics – who edits the shared space? At what time(s) do members contribute? Is there a need for physical meetings? Should we draw up a timeline for project completion?
10. Establish some rules for feedback quality – this may be dependent on the project to be completed. How will each member of the group contribute? What are the ground rules/ etiquettes for commenting on ideas?

11. Discuss the expectations of each member need to be defined. Consider learners whose natural style is to work alone - groups can discuss how and why to motivate them to join in. Consider is mediation. Is it going to be necessary for course staff to intervene or arbitrate? What are consequences for students, should mediation by course staff become necessary? Make sure the groups prepare answers to questions such as:
- What to do if you have a problem completing a given task?
 - How to notify other members?
 - How is a team member's score affected in the case of non-participation?

Post activity

Ask each group to produce a final document in Google Doc, clearly stating the expectations; roles; responsibilities and any other important issues for group work.

The document should be made available to the lecturer or tutor by each collaborating group. Each group should also be able to view each other's products and refine their own if appropriate.

The final document is effectively a charter for each group's work.

Conditions

The understanding of group roles and responsibilities by all students, including reluctant students, is vital. This could be accomplished in several ways, the most certain of which is to assign a summative assessment grade to the activity itself.

This has the potential to increase the workload for course staff. Peer assessment strategies could be used at the stage where groups view each other's documents. In this case a simple rubric should be provided to students

Resources

Graduate attributes

(<http://www1.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=lvm0vsrq00lbz>)

Learning Lab and Group work (<https://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/search/node/group%20work>)

Collaborative Learning: Group Work (<http://www.cte.cornell.edu/teaching-ideas/engaging-students/collaborative-learning.html>)

Collaborative Teaching and Learning Strategies (<http://net.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/eli80085.pdf>)



Asian Students' Perceptions of Group Work and Group Assignments in a New Zealand Tertiary Institution (<http://ro.ecu.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1063&context=ceducom>)

Shank, P. Editor. 2007, The Online Learning Ideas Book, pp68-72. Pfeiffer ISBN 978-0-7879-8168-6. Idea credited to Joanna C Dunlap.