Results of the Brown School’s Active Learning Pilot

Washington University in St. Louis 2014 iTeach Symposium

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Learning Objectives

• Understand the role of active learning in graduate professional training in social work and public health
• Learn how to assess the impact of technology and furnishings on teaching and learning
• Learn the outcomes and implications of the Brown School’s pilot
Active Learning Pilot Background: 2012 Teaching and Learning Survey

- Implemented via SurveyMonkey in August 2012 to all faculty teaching in AY2010-11 and AY2011-12
- 137 faculty respondents (92% response rate)
  - 47 full-time
  - 90 adjunct (including doctoral students and TAs of all types)
- 245 course sections are represented (some courses and/or course sections are not represented due to non-response)
- Response rate differs by item; frequencies presented
## Pedagogies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Once a Semester</th>
<th>Occasionally throughout Semester</th>
<th>Every week or every time class is held</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion in class</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>206</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lecture</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>179</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Group work: see next slide</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case study/case design</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guest lecturer/speaker</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion out of class</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaker panels</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field trips</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
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</table>
Group Work Pedagogy

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Occasionally throughout Semester</th>
<th>Every week or every time class is held</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small group exercises</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for groups to meet on assigned projects during class time</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>35</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Project-Based Group Work:

- 79 sections work with a community-based partner on a project.
- Of those, 61 sections work in small groups during class time.
- The average group size is 5 students.
- 54 sections prefer group workspace in the classroom during class time.
- 38 replied in another item that they would like multiple small group tables in the room.
Classroom Set-Up

A Typical Set-up for an Active Learning Classroom, includes:

- Multiple writeable surfaces
- Lecture location varies
- Ability to project to each work pod or to a main screen for lecture
2013 Active Learning Pilot

- Goldfarb room 37
- Business as usual format before spring break (U with internal dash)
- Active learning format (6 tables of 5 each)
- 15 courses assigned to pilot: 13 met weekly and 2 over weekend
- Mix of MSW and MPH courses
- Mix of pedagogies represented (some with group work and some without)
Goldfarb Room 37: Pre-test Set-up
Pilot Furnishings and Technology

- Tables: all 60’x36’ with three different styles provided by Steelcase, HermanMiller (with grommets), and Haworth (with grommets)
- Chairs: two sets from each provider
- Screens: 3-42’, 2-42’, and 1-52’
- Laptop: 1 per table, connected to screen
- Command and control: Wireless touch display
Goldfarb Room 37: Active Learning Set-up
Study Respondents

- 23 faculty teaching in the classroom
  - Pre-test=19 respondents
  - Post-test=16 respondents

- 340 students learning in the classroom
  - Pre-test=168 respondents
  - Post-test=102 respondents
Research Questions

- How do the furnishings and technology facilitate teaching and learning relative to the standard arrangement of Goldfarb 37?

- What are student and faculty preferences regarding the different furnishings and technologies?

- Are there differences in preferences across the types of pedagogies and course content?
Key Take Aways

- Furnishings and technology must allow for multiple pedagogies
- Movement is critical
- Centrality helps to focus
- Scale is important
- Technology access is a priority
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Next Steps

- Retrofitting an existing classroom
- Informing technology planning for the new building, e.g., electrical boxes in floors
- Determining furniture preferences for vendor selection, e.g., tables that allow for all pedagogies, chairs and tables must be on casters, etc.
- Developing faculty capacity to use active learning pedagogy, including the associated technology and furnishings
Discussion

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