Using Team-Based Learning in a General Education Capstone Course

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The University of the District of Columbia

- Historically black, urban-focused, land-grant university
- Undergraduate enrollment: 4,000
- Average age of UG students: 29
- Revised General Education program in 2010
General Education Curriculum

Foundation Courses
- Writing I
- Writing II
- Quantitative Reasoning
- Oral Communication
- Ethics & Values

Discovery Courses
- Writing
- Quantitative Reasoning
- Technology
- Science
- Diversity
- Civics & Teamwork

Frontier Course
- Writing in the major
- Capstone
MOTTO

ASPIRE. ACCOMPLISH. TAKE ON THE WORLD.
Capital Capstone Course Essentials

• Student teams address partner-presented problem/opportunity
• Team proposes research-based solution
• After approval, students/partner implement solution
• Deliver culminating presentation
Team Based Learning (TBL) Goals

Help students develop ability to work effectively in teams.
Create higher level learning.
Transform the quality of student learning.
Contribute to innovative problem solving.
## TBL Best Practices & UDC Adaptation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Best Practices</th>
<th>UDC Adaptations</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Strategy</td>
<td>Some instructors incorporate 4-phases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work done in class</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teams made by instructor</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teams work together for whole term</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Size = 4-7 students</td>
<td>5 students per group recommended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heterogenous groups</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not assign roles</td>
<td>Team decision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade group work</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prompt feedback on individual/group performance</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use peer assessment</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Fink, L.D., Lane, D.R
Four Essential Principles of TBL

- Groups Must Be Properly Formed/Managed
- Students Must Be Made Accountable
- Team Assignments Promote Learning/Team Dev.
- Students Must Receive Frequent/Immediate Feedback

Source: Michaelsen
Group Formation

- Student Intake Form
- Jung Typology Test
- Major
- Age
- Life experience
- GPA
- No cliques
- Geographic origins
- Other

Team Lifesavers

**Majors:** Accounting, Social Work, English, Poli Sci.

**Ages:** 21-61  **GPAs:** 2.4-3.85

**Places of Birth:** DC, Thailand, Saudi Arabia, Colombia

**Post College Goals:** Dive Instructor/CPA/Social Gerontology/President of Colombia
Accountability

1. Readiness Assurance Process
   Multiple Choice Test on reading
   ◦ Taken 1st individually
   ◦ Taken 2nd as a team
   Students have to come to consensus/immediate feedback

2. Peer Assessment
   ◦ Quality Feedback practice
   ◦ Peer review determines grade
Team Assignments

• Must require group interaction
• Should not be dividable
• Challenge: Writing projects and presentations
• Challenge: Different projects
Frequent/Immediate Feedback

• Feedback from team members
• Immediate feedback on assignments
• Mid-term review - feedback from classmates
• Quick turnaround on assignments
• Peer review and feedback for final grade
Implementing the “Best Ball” Concept

• Each student completes each element of each assignment
  • Preparing interview questions
  • Preparing annotations
  • Writing each element of the proposal
  • Brainstorming solutions

• Groups decide on task execution

• Select best rendering or best elements of rendering

• All gain practice in applying skills
Teams Report Results after Tasks

• Immediate feedback
• Accountability
• Team process
• Project progress
• Development of application skills
• Improve group progress
Build Trust

• Trust Teammates
• Trust group process
• Learn to deal with diversity/conflict
• Improvement of results
Norming and Performing!
References


