جامعة كالجاري في قطر
UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY IN QATAR

CENTRE FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

CTL Newsletter

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The Editorial

Hard to believe we have come to the end of yet another academic year. We have had our resilience tested over the last two years but is empowering to see the strength demonstrated by instructors and students alike as shown in the articles in this edition of the CTL Newsletter.

UCQ instructors and students write on various topics with an emphasis on strategies that they have used to both teach and learn during the pandemic. Parivash Enghiad shares few strategies that can be employed to support students learning in clinical settings. Nicole Boulais-McBain introduces the Dosage Calc 360º platform and the prospects of enhancing student's ability in dosage calculation.

Lida Larson writes about two discussion-based strategies she found useful in creating a community of learners in her online class, while Daphne Kennedy shares an assignment she developed based on the conceptual teaching framework to ensure enduring understanding.

In her article, Angela Waigand demonstrates how to incorporate second language acquisition principles while teaching, and Faisa Farah introduces the concept of academic integrity and student learning. In our final article, Ambi Sinnasamy share best practices for group collaboration.

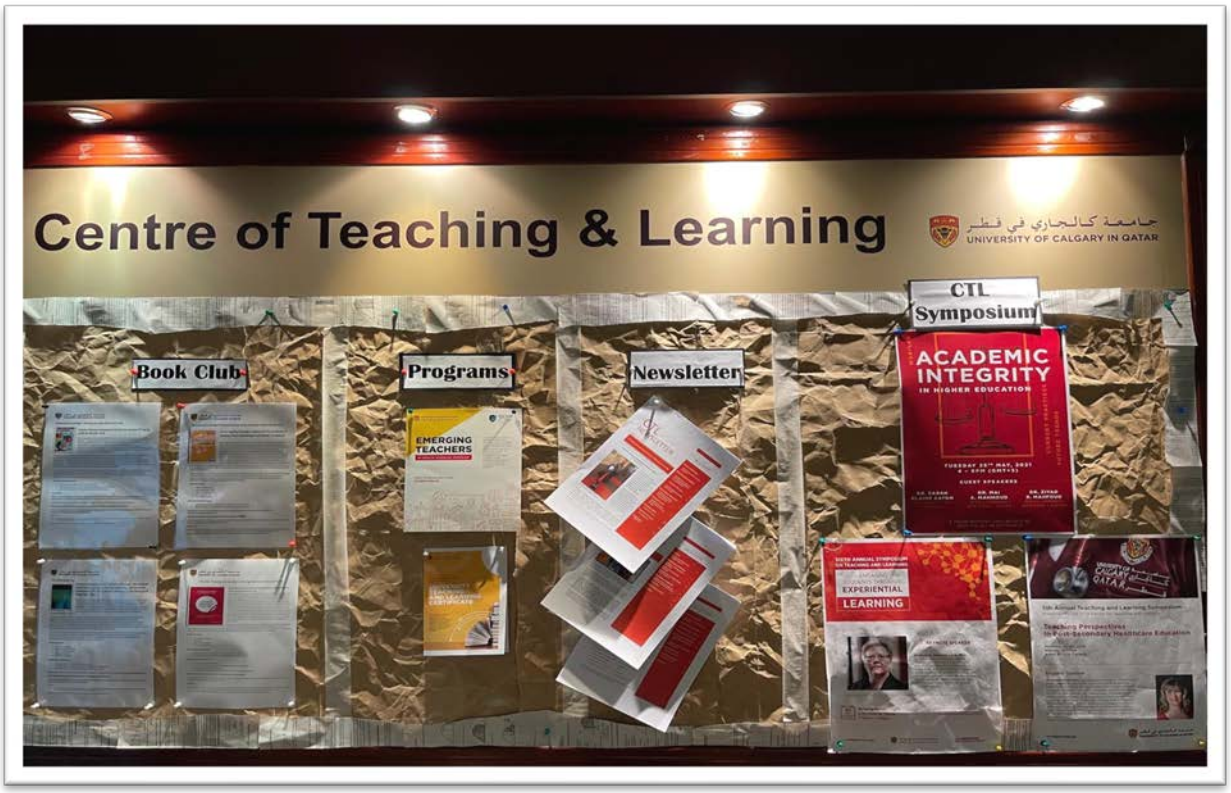
We also get to hear from our students! Visit the section on Students Voices to learn more.

This newsletter was made possible by a team of volunteers who formatted, proofread, and provided feedback to the authors. Thank you, Angela Waigand, Vahe Kehyayan, Jessie Johnson, Fadi Khraim, Julie Jeffries, Shannan McNevin, Shelly Cacho (UCQ Student), and Kalpana Prasad (Marketing and Communication).

Have a great summer!

Dr. Frances Kalu
Editor

CTL News



Over the past academic year, the CTL has played a role in supporting the transition to online learning. As we work towards a new academic year, we welcome a new Associate Dean Program and Innovation, along with exciting innovations to enhance teaching and learning at UCQ.

Our educational sessions for the upcoming year have designed using the teaching expertise framework with educational sessions identified for different faculty groups (Kenny et al., 2017). Based on feedback from faculty and the results from the grade leniency project, our focus would be on enhancing teaching in a concept-based curriculum, assessing learners, supporting new faculty, teaching with technology, and the scholarship of teaching and learning. We will also have a new cohort of intake into the Certificate in University Teaching and Learning program, while our current cohort complete their journey through the program. Our undergraduate learning assistants will also be available to support student learning in your classroom or lab.

The University of Calgary Teaching and Learning Grant program is open for applications (https://taylorinstitute.ucalgary.ca/grants). If you are considering applying or have a project you are thinking about, you are welcome to join our SoTL Community of Practice under the mentorship of Dr. Carol Ewashen.

How can Learning Facilitators and Educators Support Students in Clinical Placements?

Parivash Enghiad, Clinical Nursing Instructor

Photo courtesy: Sidra Medicine –www.sidra.org/media/newsroom/2021/sidra-medicine-welcomes-first-batch-of-nursing-students-university-of-calgary

In a time that COVID-19 has impacted humanity, health care workers are the front-line fighters. In the world of uncertainty, when health care providers are facing one of the most challenging time of their career, the clinical environment has changed. Care delivery models and structures are now tailored toward prioritizing Covid-19 patients, reducing the chain of transmission, and protecting patients and all the students at UCQ. It is important to ensure that we utilize the platforms for the benefit of our students, instructors, and patient's health care providers from contracting Covid-19. In this environment, the training of nursing students has become more challenging than ever.

In nursing, the learning environment is divided into academic and clinical learning environments (Papp et al., 2003). Nursing educators and nursing students are components of an academic environment. The clinical environment consists of a clinical setting, equipment, staff, patients, and nursing instructors. The focus in an academic environment is on learning objectives and outcomes, while in clinical placement, all the clinical objectives and outcomes are more difficult to achieve as the learning outcomes are connected to the clinical placement settings which has a primary focus on clinical care as opposed to learning outcomes. Therefore, one of the main purposes of clinical placements is to consolidate what nursing students learned in theory into their practice.

While having hands-on experience within a clinical placement is a fundamental part of any health science curriculum and is essential for student nurses' learning, it could also be challenging and confusing for some students (Melincavage, 2011). Ulenaers et al. (2021) stated that clinical placements could be a stressful time for nursing students.

According to Simpson and Sawatzky (2020), being in an unfamiliar environment or situation is one of the stressors of clinical placement. This stress could lead to negative learning outcomes due to the impact on students' responses and behaviors. It is common for students to have anxiety during clinical placement. Therefore, it is important to know how we can help students to reduce their stress.

Another important step toward a successful clinical placement is a detailed orientation to the assigned unit (Robinson et al., 2008). Robinson et al. showed the importance of preparing students prior to sending them to the placement. They explain that clear and detailed instruction by staff/instructors could be the

answer. Clinical instructors and staff educators should have on-the-job training in advance about this strategy. The orientation should happen prior to the first day of placement.

Photo courtesy: Sarah Saleh, UCQ 2nd Year Student

Although the formal orientation will still be a part of the plan, the orientation will be stretched further than the first day when students will get the answer to their questions (Robinson et al., 2008). Therefore, students will continue their orientation after the formal orientation day where they raise their questions and get their answers. It is beneficial to cover the details about the building, unit, number of staff in each shift and who the students may work with, number of patients, and where everything could be found in an orientation. Sending students, a welcome package with some of this information before the formal orientation could help with the students' stress.

Among various clinical teaching strategies and pedagogies, most studies established the need for more psychosocial support for clinical nursing students (Ulenaers et al., 2021). The authors stated that one of the steps in supporting students could start with recognition of the situation students are involved in and giving them more time to unwind for a successful clinical outcome. Moreover, to help students to have a positive experience, nursing instructors need to help students feel accepted and welcomed by the care team and facility. Creating an environment where students feel accepted and fit in requires an open culture of trust and resilience in both students and educators (Ulenaers et al, 2021).

According to Grealish et al. (2013), working with facility nurses could help students to learn more about their scope of practice. However, some students reported that staff could be inconsiderate of the students who are not as skilled and do not provide them learning opportunities because the students could slow down their workflow (Melincavage, 2011). Melincavage recommended in-service training for staff about positive interactions with students. Brown (2011) mentioned that health science students' level of satisfaction is related to how they had been treated as part of the team. (Gidman et al., 2011) also highlight the importance of relationship between students and their instructors as it helps them to feel like being a member of their clinical team during their placement. It refers to students having opportunities to interact with their preceptors/ clinical instructors.

A study by Andrews et al. (2006) also showed that students valued positive relationships. As it is evident in literature, the sense of belonging to the care team and the ability to interact with educators openly and freely are important in students's

satisfaction and positive experience during their clinical placement.

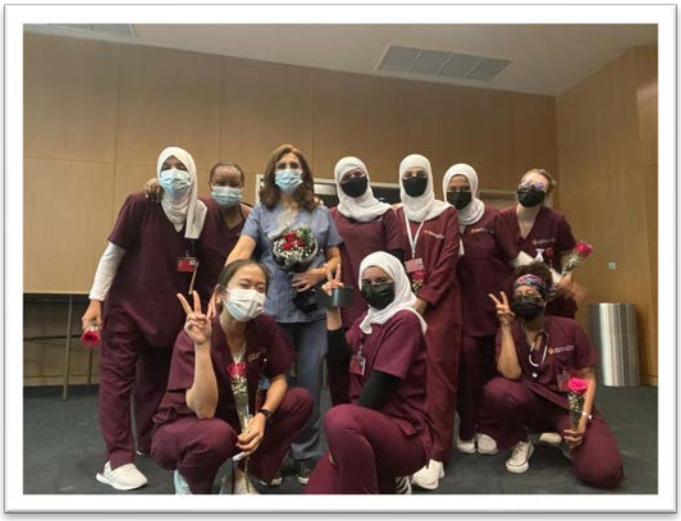


Photo courtesy: Michaela Maegan Atupan, UCQ 2nd Year Student

Clinical instructors act as a bridge between the university and the clinical placement health care facility. They are familiar with the educational curriculum and suitable learning assignments, activities, and expectations for the level of students (Budgen & Gamorth, 2008). The success of clinical placement has other components. Baumbusch et al. (2014) highlighted that sessional instructor had some challenges of having clarity about what students learned in the class prior to the clinical placement.

Therefore, familiarizing the sessional instructors is another essential success key for students' clinical placement. According to this study, educators' level of familiarity with student's learning and curriculum prior to the clinical placement is important in the success of students in their learning.

Understanding the fact that students have their own challenges in the chaotic pandemic environment, paying attention to their health and wellbeing is important. Clinical placement is a major component of nursing education and supporting students in their learning journey requires an understanding of how students perceive and function during the placement while facing challenging pandemic and changed clinical environment nowadays.

Nursing Students + Dosage Calculations = Challenges

Nicole Boulais-McBain, Nursing Instructor

Among the skills required in a nursing program, the ability for the students to demonstrate safe medication administration is predominant due to the possibility of having a direct impact on patient safety. Teaching and learning about the 10 rights of safe medication administration includes the calculation of the correct dose. This right is known to be a problematic component for students to achieve accurately and sometimes for faculty to teach and offer guidance easily. The premise for precise dosage calculation requires a student to be numerate, implying that they must be able to identify what needs to be calculated and how to achieve the accurate result.

Coben 2000 (as cited in Hutton et al., 2010), defines numeracy as being "competent, confident, and comfortable with one's judgement on whether to use mathematics in a particular situation and if so, what mathematics to use, how to do it, what degree of

accuracy is appropriate, and what the answer means in relation to the context", which is without doubt a skill our students need to possess to safely calculate the dosage of medication to administer.

Photo courtesy: Sharon McCutcheon – www.unsplash.com

What are the issues?

The difficulties with numeracy for student nurses and poor testing results on dosage calculation are not new phenomenon (Alteren & Nerdal, 2015; Bagnasco et al., 2016; Eastwood et al., 2011; Owegi et al., 2021). Among the hurdles identified, nursing students seem to struggle with basic mathematic skills including multiplication of fractions, interpretation of information, conversion of measures, and the conceptualization of calculation enabling them to formulate an equation (Bagnasco et al., 2016). A systematic review on medication calculation assessments for nursing students revealed that mathematic anxiety, self-efficiency, teaching methods, and numerical ability were the main influencers in accuracy and precision of dosage calculation (Owegi et al, 2021).

The Blended Approach

Among the proposed teaching strategies to address these issues, a blended approach combining face-to-face teaching and a digital-based platform, has shown favourable results in improving students learning ability and the overall experience of dosage calculation (Aydin & Dinç, 2017; Gill et al, 2019; Mackie & Bruce, 2016; O'Reilly et al., 2020; Renmaker & Carlson, 2019).

Some of the advantages of using a complementary digital platform included the flexibility of usage allowing each student to progress and practice at their own rhythm and need, the boost of their confidence by allowing them to identify their area of difficulties with some quizzes outside exam time, and a better understanding of the relevance of numeracy in a simulate nursing clinical practice environment (O'Reilly et al, 2020).

What about us at UCQ?

Photo courtesy: All & About Qatar – https://allandabout.com/community/education/university-calgary-qatar-event-prospective-students/

At UCQ, we are continuously trying to improve our program and with the development and implementation of our new curriculum, it is a perfect time to investigate our students' knowledge of dosage calculation and to address any gaps and enhance learning. Under the auspices of the Curriculum Committee, a recently established Working Group on Dosage Calculation has been created. The group's recommendations include to utilize two complementary digital platform to help our students with dosage calculation.

The first one is the Elsevier Evolve platform currently being used at UCQ. The working group believes that a more systematic insertion of the HESI case studies that includes dosage calculation questions and the Elsevier Adaptative Quizzing (EAQ) on dosage calculation would bring the most benefit from this platform, especially for our 3rd and 4th year students. The second resource recommended to directly address the difficulties faced by students in Year 1 and 2, is the addition of the Dosage Calc 360º digital platform by F.A. Davis.

A New Digital Platform to the Rescue

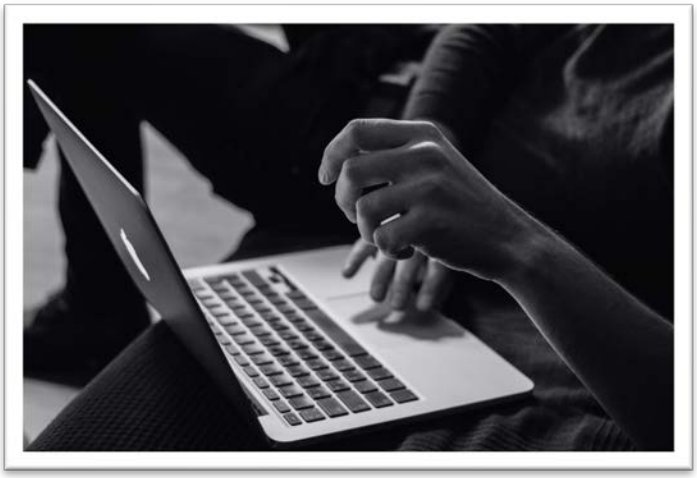
The Dosage Calc 360º platform offers 18 modules with 3 to 5 topics per module, all related to different aspects of dosage calculation, from basic math to titration of IV medication, going over concepts like intake and output, enteral feeding, and insulin administration. Going through the platform options, the student will find each of the topic presenting a short visual learning page including some videos, medication labels, or graphics (e.g., Medication Administration Record, syringes) to complement their learner's experience and a practice folder containing questions directly related to the topic they just completed. One of the main advantages of the practice folder is the availability of the rational for each of the question answered, allowing the student to solidify their learning as they progress through the practice questions quizzes. In addition to the practice folder, each of the 18 modules contains a module assessment for the student to test their understanding of the different topics covered in that module.

Recognizing the importance of practicing dosage calculation over time and the benefits of scaffolding related activities throughout our program, the Dosage Calc 360 º modules have already been mapped to the respective courses at UCQ by the working group and sequenced throughout the program.

Information sessions have been conducted with some faculty during the Spring 2021 semester, to provide support for the integration into the courses being planned for Fall 2021. Further in-service sessions are planned for early Fall 2021, so that all instructors can discover this new platform. Now that the Dosage Calc 360º resource has been explored and chosen, success lies with the instructors and all the students at UCQ, to ensure we utilized the platforms for the benefit of our students, instructors, and patients.

Creating Community Online: Strategies for Fostering Discussion in the Remote Nursing Classroom

Lida Larson, Nursing Instructor



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When the COVID-19 pandemic forced nursing schools to transition to remote teaching, nursing faculty faced the challenge of finding creative ways to develop classroom community in an online environment. However, "emergency remote teaching," a term coined during the pandemic, differs from traditional online distance education in important ways. While emergency remote teaching is "a temporary solution to an immediate problem," (Bozkurt & Sharma, 2020, p. ii), often combining synchronous and asynchronous online interactions, online distance education involves educational content carefully designed for online learners (Bozkurt & Sharma, 2020). Despite these differences, effective remote teaching entails creative adaptation of techniques from both online and in-person teaching to enhance student learning and foster classroom community (Pohan, 2020).

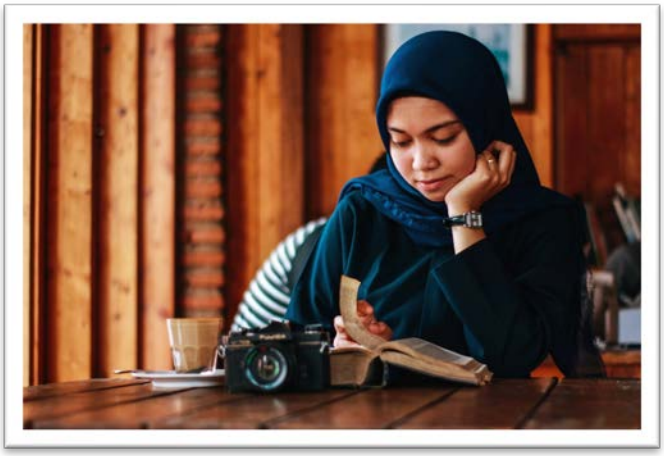
Classroom community is a key factor for student learning and engagement and is particularly important in online learning contexts (Berry, 2019). Community is defined as a supportive social group in which members feel a sense of belonging, shared commitment, and mutual concern (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). Moreover, communities dedicated to leaning are united by a shared goal, mutual academic and social support, and commitment to accomplishing a learning task or product (Lai, 2015).

A greater sense of community supports students both academically and socially. For instance, students participate more and experience deeper learning (Garrison, Anderson, and Archer, 2010), have improved emotional health (Pyhältö, Stubb, & Lonka, 2009), and are less likely to leave their academic course (Ke & Hoadley, 2009). In synchronous classrooms (e.g. Zoom, Skype), teachers play a vital role in cultivating community.

For instance, learning activities that encourage interaction and deep reflection enhance student engagement (Shea, Li, & Pickett, 2006), while discussion-based strategies reduce anxiety and increase student participation (Baran, Correia, & Thompson, 2011; Martin & Bollinger, 2018). However, according to Berry (2017), teachers must develop their skill with synchronous technologies to avoid overwhelming students. The aim of this article is to describe two discussion-based methods that have been shown to foster a sense of community in

synchronous classrooms, Quaker Read and Fishbowl.

Quaker Read Method



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Quaker Read is a reading and sharing activity that encourages active listening and critical thinking (Milner, Milner, & Mitchell, 2017). This method is modelled on Quaker meetings, which emphasize listening and reflection in a spirit of mutual benefit. Developed for studying literature, Quaker read works well with dense, meaningful passages that students can read in ten to fifteen minutes. First, students read a text closely and select a passage, line, or phrase that stands out to them. Next, without explaining the rationale for their selection, they read their passage aloud one by one until everyone participates. The key is for students to actively listen and critically think about the patterns and connections between their chosen passages. When everyone has read, students describe what they noticed with the aim of gaining greater insight into the text.

I employed Quaker read last semester while teaching Perspectives and Influences of Health. I introduced the students to the concept of social determinants of health using Mikkonen and Raphael's (2010) "Social Determinants of Health: The Canadian Facts.". This text is divided into sections describing each determinant, such as income and social status, gender, healthy workplaces, etc.

Each student was assigned a section to read for ten minutes. After reading, students wrote down a significant passage, line, or phrase. I then explained the instructions for Quaker read, and that each person would share their passage in no particular order, listening carefully for key words, phrases, and concepts. As the students read, we began hearing repeated phrases, such as “inequity”, “vulnerability”, and “support networks”, all of which indicate the role of social determinants in shaping health outcomes. This served as a launching pad for further discussion in Zoom breakout rooms, where students were paired with classmates who read different sections to compare and contrast their understandings.

Fishbowl Method

A second discussion-based strategy that enhances classroom community is the Fishbowl. In a traditional classroom, fishbowl discussions take place with seats arranged in concentric circles. The inner circle hosts four or five students who discuss a topic or question related to the learning objectives (Milner, Milner, & Mitchell, 2017). While the inner circle discusses, the outer circle listens quietly.

After the inner circle concludes its discussion, students in the outer circle can comment, question, and contribute to the discussion, either to the whole class or to the students in the inner circle. In a Zoom classroom, fishbowl can stimulate engagement, though students may need assistance with turn taking, as in my experience, Zoom can reduce students' ability to perceive and respond to body language.

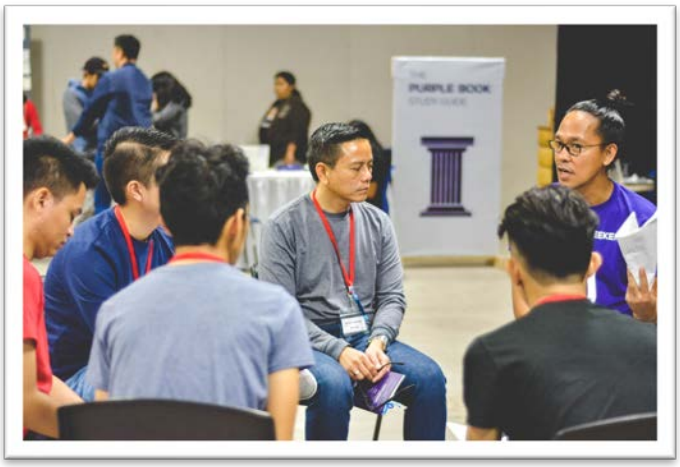


Photo courtesy: MD Duran – www.unsplash.com

This strategy worked very well in my class. After a brief presentation of challenges to primary health care delivery, I asked four students to volunteer to be in the fishbowl for ten minutes, to discuss the question of "What are the top three challenges to delivery of primary health care in Qatar?" The rest of the class was asked to mute their microphones, but they were allowed to make comments in the chat box. After ten minutes, the students in audience were given the opportunity to join the conversation. One by one, students shared shared their views and elaborate on their chat box comments, either agreeing, disagreeing, or presenting new challenges not previously discussed.

Discussion-based methods like Quaker read and fishbowl are effective tools for enhancing students' participation, engagement, and sense of community in remote teaching and learning contexts, and these methods can be adapted to platforms like Zoom with a modicum of effort.

Using Family Assessment Portfolio (FAP) Assignment to Create Enduring Understanding in a Concept-Based Curriculum

Daphne Kennedy, Nursing Instructor, Lead Experiential Learning Center

Photo courtesy: Jove Duero – www.unsplash.com

Introduction

Transitioning to a concept-based curriculum has involved re-conceptualizing the courses in the nursing program. A major change to the program was the dissolution and subsequent combination of the NURS 403 (Care of Childbearing and Childrearing

Families) and NURS 421 (Nursing of Families) courses. Concepts related to these courses overlapped, and as such, their content topics aligned well and were integrated into the newly created course, NURS 314, Families in Transition. One key concept that was addressed to a great extent in both courses was *family dynamics*.

The ability to perform a family assessment is integral to the development of UCQ graduates who focus on the entire family in their nursing practice (University of Calgary in Qatar, 2021). Although family assessment is part of the concept of family dynamics, the following course concepts are interrelated to the CFAM genome - reproduction, spirituality, development, reproduction, sexuality, stigma, social functioning, and spirituality. The Wright and Leahy's Calgary Family Assessment Model (CFAM) theory and practices (Shajani & Snell, 2019) was an integral part of the discontinued courses.

It is an integrated, multidimensional framework that is used to guide nurses' completion of accurate, complete, strengths-based, and family-centered assessments. It consists of three categories, structural, developmental, and functional, which serve as a clinical organizing framework to help families solve problems. When using the CFAM, nurses ask questions to obtain an image of the family as it exists at a specific point it time. In the newly developed NURS 314, learners will need to learn not only how to perform a family assessment but also the theoretical bases of the model and the inter-related concepts.

To ensure conceptual teaching that places an emphasis on deep learning with enduring understanding that transfers to the clinical situation in NURS 314, I developed the Family Assessment Portfolio (FAP) assignment. The assignment is designed to expose learners to course concepts and problems and enable them to see how the concepts and facts interact in a real-life situation. It would challenge them to investigate the literature and make associations between concepts and variables, which is essential to ensuring deep, meaningful learning that transfers to practice (Ingnatavicius, 2017). In the sections below, I will explain how the FAP was designed to support conceptual teaching and learning, provide learners with opportunities to build on previous knowledge, allow students to reflect on learning, and provide students an opportunity to apply the concepts in context (Ingnatavicius, 2017, p.78).

The Family Assessment Portfolio Assignment

When providing family-centred care, nurses understand that the illness experiences of an individual do not occur in isolation but in connection to the whole family. As such, nurses must "think family," and be able to complete family assessments to decrease the suffering of the family (Shajani & Snell, 2019). Throughout the course, relevant aspects of the CFAM were integrated into lessons. For example, when learning about the concepts of family dynamics and genome, learners completed their own family pedigree following steps outlined in the CFAM. The family consisted of their family-of-origin (family of childhood) or family of procreation [family formed with (an)other person(s)]. Learners then conducted a comprehensive family assessment to demonstrate their ability to apply the concepts.

The assignment was completed in four unfolding components that had to be completed in sequence prior to submission of the final comprehensive FAP. The first three major components of the portfolio were created in class throughout the course; the final component, the Family Assessment Portfolio, was completed outside of class. In class, learners developed initial versions of each of the major components of the CFAM (structural, developmental, and functional assessments).

The requirements of each component aligned with the CFAM and learner outcomes. Learners submitted draft versions of these at the end of the assigned class. In addition to formative feedback given to each learner on submission of the first three components, a grade was also awarded. This helped to scaffold the learning process as learners were expected to reflect upon and incorporate this feedback to refine the components of the CFAM prior to the final submission as part of the FAP.

Alignment with Conceptual Learning

The aim of conceptual teaching is to prepare learners for practice. When designing instruction and evaluation, educators need to ensure that learners have the opportunity to learn the data and facts about the course concepts. They then need to provide learners with the opportunity to apply this information to patient situations to develop further deepen their understanding. When designing instruction for concept-based curricula, educators need to ensure learners understand the facts accurately and that they are able to translate knowledge into practice.

Ingnatavicius (2017) notes that the essential components of teaching conceptually in nursing education include teach with balance, purposeful learning, purposeful reflection, manage the learning environment, and emotion matters. The emphasis must be on understanding as opposed to memorization (Ingnatavicius, 2017, p.75). As such, the FAP assignment was designed to support instruction, stimulate thinking, and help learners create ideas and generate plans of action.

The FAP assignment as an instructional and evaluation method provided the opportunity to fulfil these components. This was achieved by ensuring that students were taught with a balance as they had the opportunity to consolidate learning while purposefully applying the CFAM through feedback provided to validate learning within a case that mattered to them.

Teach with Balance

The design of the activities and components of the FAP provided a balance between content and application. This approach recognized that although learners understand their families, they do not have an understanding from a nursing perspective. The FAP assignment provided a purposeful learning experience where learners built on their own existing knowledge. Through application of the theory of the CFAM in their own families, learners were able to develop deep learning that they could transfer into the clinical setting. It is important to note that the assignment was limited to a recent time-period to ensure accuracy of information about the family. The inclusion of their own family as the “client” was essential to this assessment. If a generic case study was used, for example, learners might not readily see the value and benefits applied to a fictional family.

Incorporating their own individual families helped them not only apply the information but see how the theory relates to actual families.

Purposeful Reflection

The submission of the draft version of the first three components of the FAP provided learners with the opportunity to have in-time guidance as they applied the theory, but also receive formative and summative feedback. Learners were expected to purposefully reflect on their ability to understand and apply the theory by incorporating a revised version of the various components into the final FAP submission (Ingnatavicius, 2017). The importance of reflection was also demonstrated by intentionally including learner response to feedback in the final grading criteria. Reflection is essential to learning and enhances the connection to theory as learners apply their learning to practice.

Managing the Learning Environment

Through completion of the first three components in class, the learners were provided with an opportunity to complete the assignment without any unnecessary distractions or stress in their external environments. They did not, for example, have to manage time at home where they had expectations from their families or try to book quiet spaces on campus to complete the assignment. They also had their peers and instructor in the class with them as they completed the assignment for real-time feedback and support. Although some of the learners may not have had the time to complete each component to their own high standards, the submissions were designed as drafts and were meant to be a tool for students to receive feedback.

In addition, as the learners worked in class, the instructor was able to ensure that they focused on their task. Instructors are able to create a quiet learning environment and ensure that learners focused on theory application in such activities. Instructor feedback and classroom management, as well as management of learner self-expectations, can reduce the cognitive stress learners will normally feel when completing assignments outside of class.

Emotion Matters

While the introduction of concepts through lectures is important to provide the foundation of facts and theory, learners are not easily engaged during lectures and need a variety of active learning strategies (Lee, Schull & Ward-Smith, 2016). The in-class assignment completed for the FAP, fostered positive engagement with the material. The incorporation of their own families as the “client” enhanced the emotional connection to and interest in the application of the content. In contrast, providing a generic case study might make the assignment easier to mark and facilitate group work, however, it does not facilitate an emotional connection to the content and might encourage academic dishonesty.

Conclusion

The Family Assessment Portfolio (FAP) assignment supports conceptual teaching and learning in the nursing classroom. Intentional, conceptual instructional design ensured that learners applied course concepts with real families. This approach enables effective introduction and application of the course concepts and evaluation of course learner outcomes, as well as encourages student engagement.

Using Second Language Acquisition Principles in Online Classes

Angela Waigand, EAP Instructor, Nursing Foundation Program

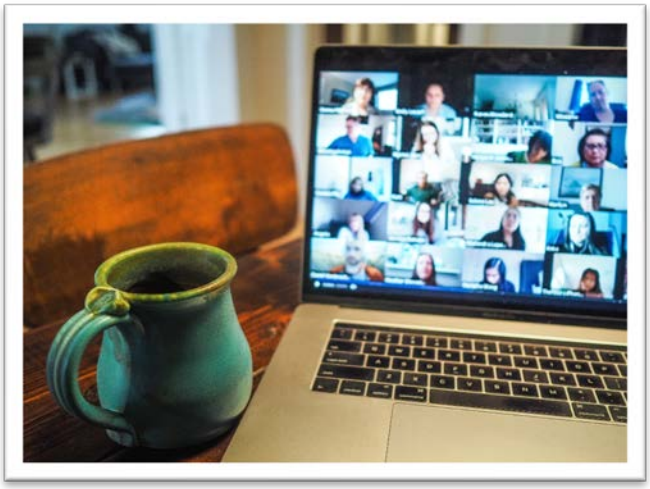


Photo courtesy: Chris Montgomery – www.unsplash.com

Learning occurs through language, but around the world, students in English-medium higher education institutes may encounter issues comprehending course materials and lectures, in part because some of them lack the language proficiency to learn course content effectively (Chin Leong, 2017; Hellekjaer, 2017; Kirgoz, 2014). For students in the United Arab Emirates, learning in English is reported to place a heavy cognitive demand on students "because they exert a double effort to process the content and simultaneously decipher the language" (Belhiah & Elhami, 2015, p. 19). In Qatar, a survey of students at four universities on their views of learning in English found that students reported insufficient levels of proficiency in English and believed that that they did not learn as well as if they had studied in Arabic (Ellili & Alkhateeb, 2015).

As many of the students at UCQ are second language learners, it is important that we ensure that all students have the opportunity to succeed. Knowledge of second language acquisition theory may help instructors address the needs of linguistically diverse students (Mehisto et al., 2008; O'Dowd, 2018). For the past two decades, some universities throughout Europe have used second language acquisition principles in their course design and teaching practices to help their students studying course content in English. Below are three of these foundational principles with suggestions on how to incorporate them into your online courses.

Principle 1: Students need to feel comfortable in their learning environment as too much anxiety may hinder the comprehension of language (Dornyei, 2005; Krashen, 1987).

Building a rapport with students can go a long way towards alleviating their anxiety. In an online learning environment, it can be more challenging both to build rapport with students and to gage their levels of anxiety. Based solely on feedback from my students, I have found the following practices effective for my students.

- Weekly Zoom backgrounds showcasing instructors' backgrounds can take students on a geographical history of your life can give students a glimpse of you as an individual, which may make them feel more at ease.
- While it is more difficult to gauge the feelings of students online, regular check-ins and check-outs can help.

For example, students can be asked to rate their energy level or confidence in ability to complete a task on a scale of 1-10 or with an appropriate adjective. This can be done via chat or anonymously via a survey tool such as Slido (n..d.), which can be incorporated into a PPT.

- Quiet time can allow students to process information individually and reduce anxiety for students feeling overwhelmed with content. This may be as simple as two minutes to think about a topic related to course material or students may be given an opportunity to respond nonverbally, such as posting emojis, doodles, or pictures on a Jamboard or on the white board with the annotation tool in Zoom. Although this takes time away from course content, it gives students to process the language and, thus, the content, allowing deeper learning.
- Open self-selected breakout rooms for students after class for ten minutes may give them an opportunity to network informally outside of class. Such a forum may help them build community, which may alleviate the anxiety of online learning in isolation. Unfortunately, they now rarely have such opportunities. Informal breakout rooms after class allows them a slightly more "normal" campus experience.

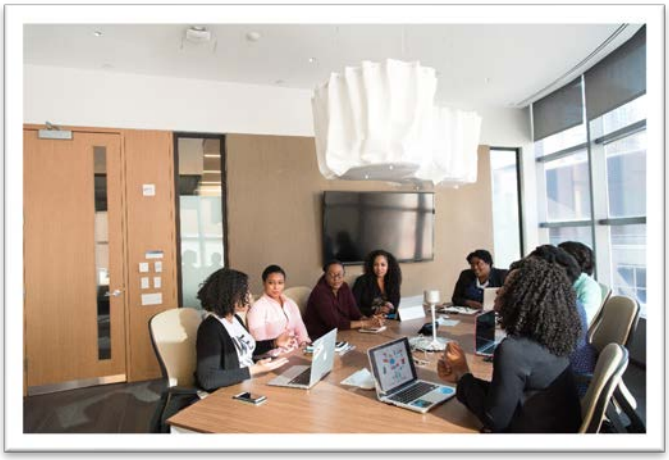
Principle 2: Language and content are best learned when language input (reading and listening) is slightly beyond the students' language proficiency level (Echevarria et al., 2004; Krashe, 1987). For content beyond their proficiency levels, certain scaffolding strategies may help make the language more accessible to students.

Photo courtesy: Nick Morrison – www.unsplash.com

- It is easy to talk too much when you are teaching online, so remember to pause and slow down. Record your Zoom sessions, which can also allow students to review at their own pace. Zoom provides relatively accurate transcriptions of your speech Pausing and slowing down can also ensure that the recordings are even more accurate. Encourage students who are struggling to review segments of the class Zoom recordings.
- When you are writing instructions or creating a PPT, keep it simple. This may be even more important in the intense online teaching world. Use bullet points and avoid overly complex sentences. This does not mean simplifying the course material; it means simplifying the language to explain the course material.
    - *Original sentence*: Because of the syntactic and lexical complexity of this sentence, pupils whose first language is not English may suffer from a cognitive burden that may lead to undue stress and anxiety while they are endeavoring to parse utterly ridiculous sentences such as this one.

- *Simplified sentence*: Use simple sentences and vocabulary with second language learners. Otherwise, it can be difficult to understand and might lead to stress and anxiety.

Principle 3: Learners are more likely to understand content when they have the opportunity to interact with others and negotiate meaning (Echevarria, 2004; Long, 1996).



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- Give students an opportunity to discuss the content in mini-breakout rooms. Put students in breakout rooms and have them do a quick think-pair-share activity for just a few minutes. Allow Zoom to assign students to breakout rooms and give them a strict time limit with a task. This could be done with one or more of the RSQC2 techniques (Angelo & Cross, 1993): recall, summarize, analyze, question, connect, or comment. For example, in pairs or groups students could be asked to recall material just covered and/or jot down a question. Then ask each group to share responses in the chat box. This time for discussion will deepen their learning and will help you to see misunderstandings and address questions more effectively.
- Unlike in a physical class where an instructor can glance at the room to see which groups are on task, it is more problematic in breakout rooms. To address this problem, create specific tasks to be completed and shared by the end of the allotted time in breakout rooms. The output from the groupwork can be shared on sites such as Google slides, Padlet, or Jamboard.

These are only a few suggestions, all of which require little time for instructors to incorporate, but they may lead to better gains in the uptake and retention of course material for our learners, which is ultimately our goal.

Building a rapport with students can go a long way towards alleviating their anxiety.

-Angela Waigand

Academic Integrity in Transnational Higher Education

Faisa Farah, Nursing Instructor

According to the University of Calgary (UC) student handbook on academic integrity, academic integrity is a commitment to, and the demonstration of, honest and responsible scholarship that has six core values including honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage (UC, 2019, P.3). Deviation from the six core values is considered academic misconduct and can lead to disciplinary actions ranging from a requirement to attend academic integrity workshops to suspension or expulsion from the university depending on the severity and nature of the situation (UC, 2019).

Cheating, fabrication, falsification, and plagiarism are considered different forms of academic misconduct (UC, 2019). Examples of academic misconduct include attempts to gain an improper advantage in academic activities including, copying from another student's work, creating, or using false records, altering, or attempting to alter work or records, and presenting the ideas, expression of ideas or work of another individual as your own or without properly citing them (UC, 2019, P.3).

There are various reasons that can lead students in higher education institutions to commit academic misconduct including peer pressure, the perception that the consequences will be minimal, the perception that instructors do not care, will not notice, or will not report it, and pressure to obtain higher grades (Eaton et al., 2017; Mahmoud et al., 2020; Stoesz & Yudintseva, 2018).

Photo courtesy: Colourbox – www.colourbox.com

Additional reasons include factors such as prior educational experiences related to academic integrity, as well as societal attitudes such as teacher centered learning environments that encourage memorization and repetition (Akbar & Picard, 2020). The impact of these factors further exacerbates students' academic integrity experiences in educational settings such as transnational higher education settings.

The phenomenon of transnational education, the creation of education campuses in other countries is becoming increasingly more prevalent among Western higher education institutions (Ryan, 2011, Lemke-Westcott & Johnson, 2013). Transnational campuses bring foreign academic standards, requirements and expectations which are often embedded in educational programs in the host countries (Rostron, 2009; Ryan, 2011; Lemke-Westcott & Johnson, 2013). As a result, some aspects of the program including academic integrity might not be well understood and can lead to misunderstandings. Learners in transnational higher education settings in Qatar face additional barriers such as English as second language, possible lack of

opportunities to learn about plagiarism, appropriate paraphrasing, and citation skills in elementary and secondary grades (Mahmoud et al., 2020; Akbar & Picard 2020; Rostron, 2009). Given these conditions, students in transnational higher education settings in Qatar maybe more vulnerable to academic misconduct due to lack of experience and exposure to academic skills that promote academic integrity.

Potential Solutions

Considering there are various reasons that can impact a student's ability to maintain academic integrity, the question is *what can be done to support students?*

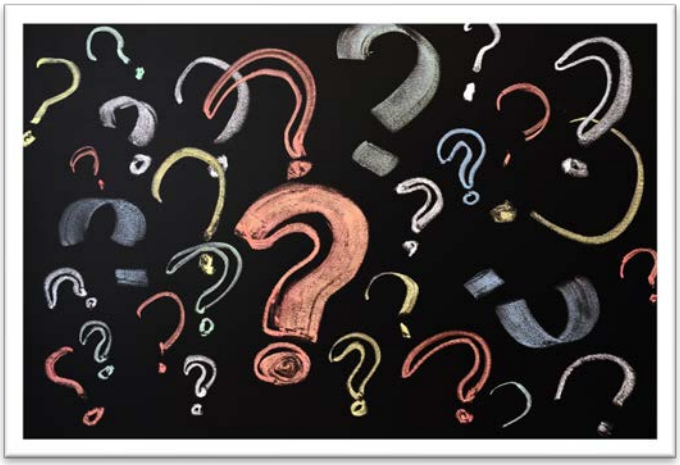


Photo courtesy: Colourbox – www.colourbox.com

An institutional culture of academic integrity that shifts the emphasis from punishments for breaches of academic integrity towards prevention and education is essential (Akbar & Picard, 2020). For this to happen, transnational higher education institutions need to build networks that focus on ensuring students are aware and have access to resources that will support the development and maintenance of academic integrity. In addition, more support systems and mechanisms should be developed to support vulnerable student including those who speak English as a second language and those who are educationally less prepared or struggle to understand the concept of academic integrity without sufficient assistance (Akbar & Picard, 2020).

For instance, academic integrity focused activities during lunch hours held at the beginning of each academic semester can highlight the significance of this concept and support conversations happening in the classroom. Furthermore, institutions can allocate ongoing additional resources such as support from writing centers and workshops. Fostering and maintaining academic integrity in transnational higher education institutions requires collaboration of multiple stakeholders such as students, faculty, universities/colleges, and society (Bertram Gallant, 2008, Eaton, 2020; Kenny et al., 2016). Every stakeholder has a responsibility to examine what is required of their role to foster academic integrity and employ the necessary strategies to support the institution and students.

The inclusion of academic integrity across the curriculum provides opportunities for organizations and their faculty to utilize academic integrity as teaching and learning imperative (Bertram Gallant, 2008). Faculty can integrate academic integrity in every course by having continuous dialogue with their students and creating supportive learning environments that encourage the submission of assignments created with integrity. Finally, both faculty and students can promote academic integrity by acting as 'champions' promoting academic integrity in the organization (Akbar & Picard, 2020). Faculty have a dual role of being a resource for colleagues and students. One way faculty can

can demonstrate ethical practice is by ensuring their work is done within the guidelines of academic integrity. Student champions can be the bridge between the institution and the student body and are well positioned to support their peers.

Conclusion

Application of the principals of academic integrity is vital to student learning and development. Although there are barriers that can prevent the application of academic integrity, there are multi-prong solutions educational institutions can employ. Having an organizational culture that values and commits to academic integrity is the first step. The provision of support and resources for students most vulnerable to academic integrity breaches is crucial in order to help them develop the skills required to maintain academic integrity. Educational institutions can shift their focus from stopping students from engaging in academic misconduct to one that encourages how students learn and ultimately fostering a learning environment in which students develop personal integrity and professional ethics (Bertram Gallant, 2008).

Group Guidelines for Effective Collaboration

Nganga Ambi Sinnasamy, Nursing Instructor

Collaboration is an intricate concept with multiple attributes, including sharing the role of planning, goal setting, decision-making, problem-solving, assuming responsibility, working together cooperatively, communicating, and coordinating openly (Gardner, 2005). During the move to online teaching, students engaged in group work using

Photo courtesy: Mimi Thian – www.unsplash.com

technology application for effective communication such as Google Meet and Zoom to discuss team collaboration. In his book, "The 42 Rules for Collaboration," Coleman (2013) identifies guidelines for effective collaboration, in practice however, we that the following four rules helped guide the group work we embarked on in class – sharing a common goal, structured communication, accountability, and processes for conflict resolution. The following information presented will discuss these guidelines in more depth and provide consequences if they are not adhered.

Share a Common Goal

Knowing why you are collaborating is important for all group members to have a clear vision so group goals can be achieved (Coleman, 2013). Group members who consciously reflect on the goal of the collaborative experience contribute to building an open and trustworthy collegial relationship. When group members do not share a common goal, cohesiveness is broken and can hinder the

development of new knowledge and learning (Coleman, 2013). Therefore, groups should reflect on the question, what is it we are trying to discover here? They should engage in discussions to arrive at a shared understanding of their goal.

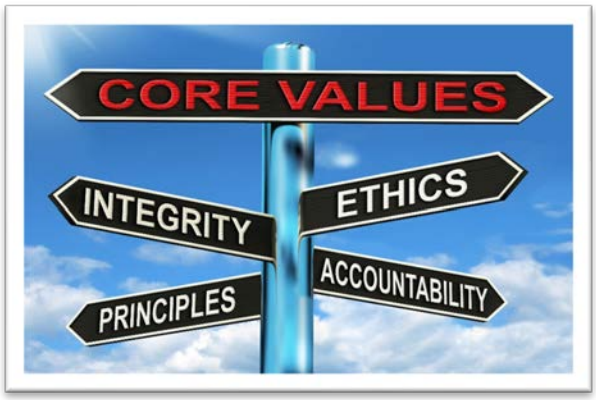
Structured Communication

Clear communication is vital to successful collaboration. Coleman (2013) presents ten elements for effective communication within groups: set clear intentions, define group roles, be accountable, value members, have evidence for achievements, express concerns, negotiate, address consequences, conflict resolution, and ensure members agree with the guidelines. Establishing guidelines for clear communication ensures that each member feels valuable and able to contribute equally (Coleman, 2013).

Photo courtesy: Akson – www.unsplash.com

This author also highlights how these communication strategies will aid in reducing group conflict and unrealistic expectations by group members. If communication is poor for example, the group will set a date and time to reconcile over communication platforms such as WhatsApp to highlight key issues and pinpoint critical areas for action. After highlighting the issues that need to be solved, the group will proceed to demonstrate a commitment to change and return to adhered communication guidelines.

Accountability



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Accountability provides transparency and builds trust among group members (Coleman, 2013). The idea of connecting a task to a person is referred to as hyper collaboration, which works to close any gaps or oversights that might occur during group work (Coleman, 2013). In addition to group accountability, individual accountability requires an internal motivation consistent with the shared goal of the larger group. Each group member is responsible for carrying out their assigned task and is held accountable to contribute equally (Yadin & Or-Bach, 2019). If group members are not held accountable for their contributions, other group members may be required to compensate, causing an unjust distribution of tasks. Consequently, group expectations require individuals to be transparent

and work collaboratively to determine a potential solution.

Process for Resolving Conflict

Conflicts and concerns are common situations when team members are required to collaborate. Finding solutions for each situation as it arises is imperative to help the group get back on track to ensure sustainable collaboration. Coleman (2013) developed steps to resolve conflicts called the *7-Step Conversational Map*. The steps include (a) attitude for resolution by having a mindset to work out conflict; (b) telling your story, listen carefully to all the situations, and move toward resolution; (c) listening for preliminary vision of resolution by looking for a solution to address all concerns; (d) deal with the emotion, clearing the air, and letting go of disappointment; (e) seeing a vision for the future and understanding the foundation of a new agreement; (f) crafting a new agreement for a new future; (g) resolution where the group can move forward and direct the energy to achieve desired goals (Coleman, 2013). These seven steps provide clear directions for group members to solve conflicts and enable them to resume collaboration.

Conclusion

According to Moeini (2020), when group members connect, opportunities arise to determine roles, boundaries, tasks, and responsibilities. Effective collaboration amongst groups is imperative for group success. Collaborating effectively ensures that group goals and objectives are achieved with communication as a key factor in establishing group roles and dynamics.

UCQ Students' Voices

Learning During a Pandemic

Aliya Muzafar, UCQ 1st Year Student

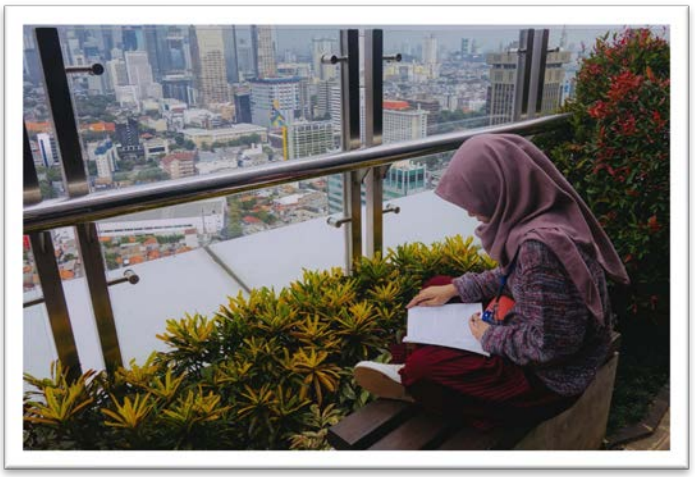


Photo courtesy: Satria – www.unsplash.com

Don't look for excuses, find solutions instead.
- Aliya Muzafar

2020 and 2021 has not been the same or easy educational years for every student around the world. For students like us in health and medicine career, it was even more difficult as we learn by engaging, practical, group, and teamwork. In my opinion we have passed the time with hardship, which put us through difficulties toward achieving success. Accepting the fact, it has brought a lot of positive

changes too in our learning style and mentally solving matters on our own.

I will not deny the fact that this past year has brought a huge change in our behaviors, for some positive and for some negative. Majority students will not find it easy when a system is automatically switched from in-class learning to online learning. It is human nature that needs some time to acquire new knowledge and adjust to a new system. The organization and system are responsible too to create such an environment and facilities that can help students for achieving better outcome and not only focusing on the grades but by implementing active learning approaches to engage students or to understand the lectures delivered.

Our instructors did their best they could for us. We were supported with a lot of facilities and support from university to lead us towards the success during each semester. We were lucky enough for the engagement we had in our class that made it feel less likely to make difference if we were on campus. Great strategies that worked include the use of active learning techniques. Our instructors applied different methods for students to engage, enhance presentation skills and so that we understand the value of teamwork and collaboration.

Some activities were done for grading and some just for experience such as most of our instructors gave an optional online quiz to have an idea whether we understood the lecture or not. Some instructors also did quiz before class starts for the previous lecture so that if there are any questions for clarification will spend some time on it. We also had group work/ participation which helped most of us to be able to know our colleagues and have the confidence to speak and engage so that no students are left out and everybody participation and will help every student to be active and have chance to speak.

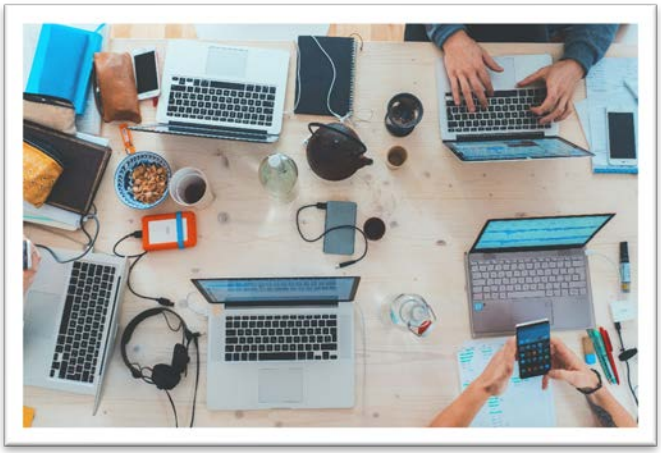
Finally, it was also important to have a break between lectures. This was one of the most important need for every student as this would refreshen everyone's mind to be more active in listening the lecture and to get some energy to continue Infront of the screen. Although they were not too long but was better than not having it.

Things that would help us learn even more in the future include always continuing to use PowerPoint presentations, so that we can easily follow the conversation and come back to review it. If most of the readings assigned were included in PowerPoints, I think that would made it a lot satisfying for us to understand the topic in depth. Another point is that when class hours can be very long, it would be a lot better if the hours are divided into synchronous and asynchronous hours so that we can prevent fatigue.

Learning Online During My First Year

Tabarak Gulrez, UCQ 1st Year Student

When I pictured my first year of university, learning, working, and attending classes remotely was the last thing I could have imagined. I have made it through my first semester as a nursing student and now charging my way through my second semester. As I look at the classes, quizzes and experiences that lie ahead this semester, it is a perfect time to reflect on all that I learned from last semester and strategies that helped me the most in understanding my lessons.



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It has been hard but rewarding few months that have made me fundamentally re-evaluate what is truly important during times of struggle and challenge, especially for my first digital semester. The last semester was a constant battle for me and it taught me to stay motivated and focused. I had planned to try a different approach; each day, my goal was to set aside 30 minutes to an hour right after my classes to recap all of the things I learned and kept the weekend for my assignments.

One of the most interesting things I learned that there are no questions too stupid to ask. I believe that curiosity and courage are essential in learning. The best thing I learned was to be flexible and to not get worked up when things did not go according to plan. It may appear simple but believing in myself helped me the most and it still does. I strongly believe that visualization, such as mind maps and flashcards can enhance the learning. For me, having rich discussions in breakout rooms and recording our discussion in Google Docs is effective for recapitulating lessons (think-pair-share).

Other than this, student reflection on learning is essential. I have been doing my reflection on discussion boards and forums on my D2L. With this, I can share what all I have learned or what I want to know more about with my instructors. I believe that to improve the teaching strategies it is important to modify the teaching resources and make it more creative. So, providing collaboration and socialization opportunities in the online conducive classroom is critical for a positive experience among peers and instructors.

Tips for Creating an Engaging Online Class

Zehra Salahuddin, UCQ 1st Year Student

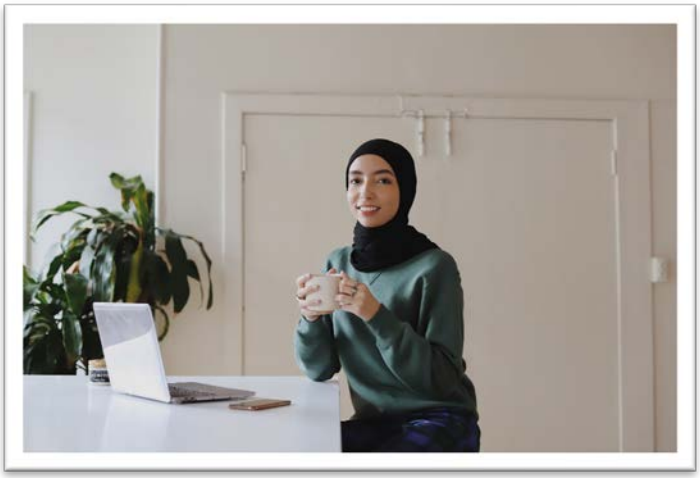

Photo courtesy: Good Faces – www.unsplash.com

I am a first-year nursing student and all my classes this year have been online via Zoom. All the instructors did an outstanding job in teaching content I needed to learn for the semester. Few ideas that I believe would make the experience for future students even more engaging, include the following:

Providing clear instructions for students before they are assigned to breakout rooms in Zoom. It is also a good idea to ask students to use the "yes" and "no" features in Zoom just to get a consensus in the class if they understand the instructions. I suggest this because the breakout room is limited, and a great deal of that time is spent making sure everyone understands the activity instead of working on the activity.

Another idea for the breakout rooms is that to ensure that everyone participates in the activity, it might be best to ensure that each breakout room has only 3 students, so they are not too many. If there are more than 5-6 students in one room for an activity, it will be important to either assign each student a task for the activity or go into to each breakout room and ask each student which task each of them is completing. Often, the leader of the activity in the breakout room struggles to include or delegate the tasks to other students and what ends up happening is three or four students have a task for the activity, but that last student chooses not to participate or does not have any task to work on to contribute to the collective. If there was more monitoring from the instructors, they would be able to address those issues.

Finally, when we our instructors are upbeat and excited to be in the class, and build a rapport with us students, that makes us feel like they care, and in turn we would feel more motivated to participate and engage more with the activities and others.

All instructors did an outstanding job in teaching and content I needed to learn for the semester.
-Zehra Salahuddin

My Learning Experience

Jawaher Matiullah, UCQ 2nd Year Student

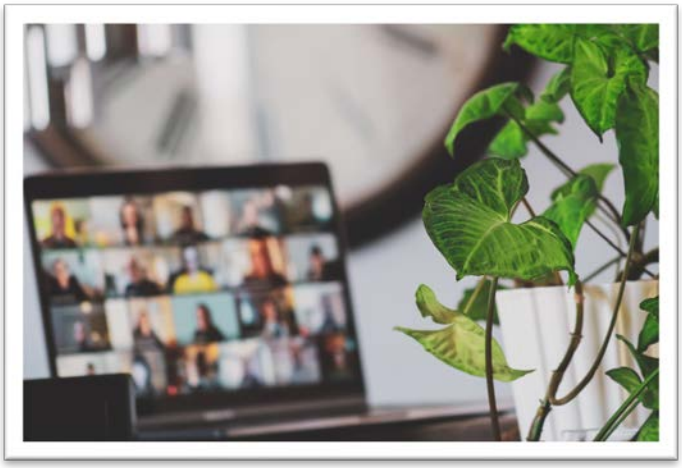

Photo courtesy: Sigmund – www.unsplash.com

The past academic year was very tough for me due to online learning method. However, my instructors did their best to make sure I learn and absorb all the knowledge that was delivered through Zoom online classes. It went well in a way that all my instructors helped me in managing time throughout the courses by engaging me and my classmate to learn actively through different learning strategies.

Activities such as Breakout Rooms, Kahoot, Jamboard, presentations, and open discussion sessions helped me collaborate more with my classmates and instructor and actively learn our daily topics. One of the teaching strategies which worked best for me was open discussion sessions where instructors made sure to give a chance to every student to express their viewpoints.

I think different teaching strategies should be promoted in each course depending on the type and material of course. It is best to reduce the amount of teaching strategies used in the class at one time. For example, if we have to complete four in-class assignments aside from discussions posts, readings, and watching videos. Plus, we might also have to complete the questions on the Jamboards, Padlet, Breakout Rooms, and open discussions in one class to complete. All of these activities in one class can divert the student's attention from the main topic and make it hard to focus on the same topic. Courses with lot of material to understand can limit the number of activities students have to complete to allow students focus more on the topic or use few activities to concentrate the focus on the topic.

Moreover, I really thank all my instructors for their continuous efforts and hard work in making Zoom classes interesting and knowledgeable.

A Positive Experience Learning Online

Razan Ali, UCQ 1st Year Student

In this academic year I learned so much from all the instructors. I would have to say the best learning method for me was the opportunity to rewatch recorded lectures. If I did not understand a concept the first time I was taught, I could go back and listen again until I got it, and it also provided me with the opportunity to do my own handwritten notes. I figured out the best teaching strategy that the instructors delivered were the practice questions using the Kahoot platform, others include short quizzes or discussions, and discussion boards.

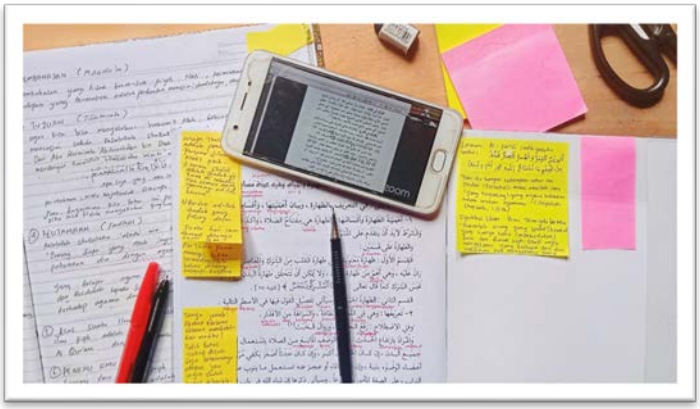

Photo courtesy: Wulan Sari – www.unsplash.com

They actively made me memorize and understand more about the concepts that I learned about. This was since they enabled us to use our own critical thinking and memorization skills as well as providing explanations for the right answers.

In my point of view, the teaching strategies that my instructors used in this academic year were helpful and do not need to be improved. They tried their best with teaching us in the right way by implementing things such as group work, using some beneficial technology methods, and trying to make us engaged in several ways. I do have one small point though; since we are in this pandemic relying mainly on technology, perhaps the instructors can include applications that provide a variety of practice questions that help us in our nursing topics like anatomy, pharmacology, and pathology. Overall though, it was a very positive experience.

Strategies to Adopt to the New Way of Education

Anonymous

Photo courtesy: Christine Hume – www.unsplash.com

The online learning has been a great shift for all of us, not just the students, but instructors and every other faculty member. Nursing is a profession that requires more of hands-on practice and experience. Even the theory lectures had topics that needs in-depth understanding, which was easier to teach and understand in person, but we are all trying to adapt to this new way of "education". Some of the active learning strategies I have experienced include the using Breakout Rooms, grouping students, and using the technique of reverse classrooms where the instructors assign us topics to explain it to the rest of the class.

However, it is important to monitor that all the students participate in the reverse classroom as sometimes contributions from the group members varied. Some might never join the conversations, and some might do it by themselves. Also, sometimes students find it difficult to understand and explain entirely new topics on their own. Finally, when we prepare a page/slide on the assigned topic to present it before the class, it is important that they upload those PowerPoint slides on D2L for us to refer back as we can learn more and understand all we did not catch while the other students were presenting.

Playing Kahoot has always been my favorite way of interactive learning. It triggers our critical thinking, gives us an idea about what kind of questions we can expect on exams, and sometimes also activates the competitive mode within us to get the first rank.

> *The online learning has been a great shift for all of us, not just the students, but the instructors and every other faculty member.*
>
> *- Anonymous*

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