5 The Use Of Moodle Board In Active Learning
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Summary of Teaching & Learning Context

Subject domain: BSc in Pharmacy Technician

Group size: 15 students

Stage of Programme: Year 3

The TUS Department of Learning and Teaching in conjunction with DCU have developed a GDPR compliant platform that allows students to create digital "post-its" on a virtual board. Moodle Board shares much of the functionality of commercial software such as Padlet® but located within the familiar environment of Moodle. Moodle Board allows students to share text, images, videos and website URLs, opening up endless possibilities for the creation of engaging student activities. I use Moodle Board to facilitate creative thinking, problem solving and peer learning as part of my approach to active learning.

Implementing the Strategy

The Moodle Board plugin can be selected as an activity within the Moodle virtual learning environment. Step-by-step guides on how to create and use Moodle Board are available under recommended resources below. In advance of a face-to-face session, I set-up a Moodle Board to prompt students to think about a problem or situation and to share their contributions anonymously with their peers. During the class, I revisit the Moodle Board and use the student contributions as a prompt for further discussion. Sometimes, I will ask students to rate the top contributions to the Board. I also have the option of categorising or arranging the contributions posted under emergent themes, in collaboration with the group. Having a clear lesson plan in advance of the face-to-face session, is essential in maximising the benefit of this strategy.

Your Observations/Reflections

Moodle Board is relatively simple tool with enormous potential to encourage active learning. Unlike much of the commercially available education technology, it is quick, easy to use and endlessly flexible. I frequently use the tool to encourage student engagement as part of a flipped classroom approach.

I find that allowing students time to consider a problem and generate ideas collectively on Moodle Board in advance of a class maximises the potential for learning during each live session. Like many asynchronous learning activities, I find that posing thoughtful and considered questions and framing the activity carefully in the context of the planned future lesson leads to the best outcomes.

I have also found it essential to revisit the Moodle Board contributions during the live session to validate student contributions and encourage students to take the time to contribute to Moodle Board activities in the future. The reaction to Moodle Board has been overwhelmingly positive with students commenting on how easy it is to use.

The option to include websites, images and videos with Moodle Board posts is also something that is widely appreciated. If you are interested in a new approach to encourage students to collaboratively engage in active learning, I would highly recommend giving Moodle Board a try.

Recommended Resources

How to create a Board activity on Moodle (Video)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CQnAezg00K0

How to create a post on Moodle Board (Video)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uIBOsxFMLSw

How to access details of Moodle Board submissions
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4uj1hOR8SzI

Written Moodle Board Guide
https://moodle.com/news/board-plugin-virtual-board-postits/?utm_campaign=plugins&utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=social&utm_content=1634098146

Ideas for using Moodle Board
https://enhancingteaching.com/2021/01/04/5-uses-of-moodle-board-to-engage-students/