Development of a Sustainable, Student-centered, Teaching and Learning Resources Repository for Construction Students: Integrating In-class and Out-of-class Learning Activities

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Abstract:

Construction is multi-disciplinary, involving several separate branches of fields like engineering, management, economics and finance. To facilitate students of construction to learn effectively such a multi-disciplinary subject, teaching has to go hand-in-hand with the appreciation of their practical applications in order to understand how basic concepts are put into practice in a complex construction project. To this end, one of the best ways, apparently, is to let students explore and experience the process and complexity of a construction project through organized site visits; such out-of-class activities actually form an integral part of our present (and also the coming 3-3-4) curriculum, as indicated in our pedagogy model, developed through years of observation of teaching and learning effectiveness in our programme. The objectives of our site visits are three-fold, namely:

(1) To motivate students' learning interest and thus enhancing their general academic learning attitude;

(2) To provide students with opportunities to broaden their view in construction;

(3) To reinforce what they learn in class.

Regular site visits are either arranged by staff or organized by students themselves. During such visits, students have the opportunity to learn and discuss with professionals, observe and record various construction activities through photos and video, and collect other information in various formats. This collected information provides an important and invaluable source of references for learning among students in our Division. Although students have to submit reports upon completion of the visits, such invaluable information collected has not been systematically stored in any easy-to-share format in the past and thus making such invaluable information difficult to be fully utilized in enhancing students' learning.

In view of the importance of site visits to our students and the necessity of systematically storing information collected from site visits and better utilization of such resources, it is proposed herein to establish a sustainable, student-centered, management system and learning resources repository for our students. The system is intended to be installed on our Divisional e-learning server, which could be easily administered and managed by the proposers and our in-house computer technicians. The system

also integrates with Blackboard and makes use of some commercially available tools (like various Google tools and YouTube), if necessary.