



香港城市大學
City University of Hong Kong

Thinking creatively: The process of innovation

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Abstract:

To generate a learning product that is deemed to be innovative, an ability to think creatively is a "must". Though the learning products can be evidence of creativity and innovation, the learning process being involved can bring invaluable experiences to the learning.

In the General Education course, "Psychology for Young Professionals (GE2129)", one of the assessment tasks is asking students to design a poster and a booklet that introduce how

psychology knowledge can be integrated into the knowledge of their own disciplines. The learning products of this assessment task have also been chosen as evidence of learning outcomes in the present Discovery-Enriched Curriculum (DEC) framework of CityU education.

Specifically, students from different majors formed groups of five (this group size has been found to be optimal for effective peer learning based upon previous research on cooperative

learning) to work on a self-chosen goal (choose a profession to study on it, search for information, design a poster for presentation in class, and write a booklet). This problem-based

learning approach (solving ill-defined problems that are one of the attributes of CityU graduates) can give a strong connection between the knowledge they learnt in this course to

future professional lives in the society. Though this assessment task provides a very good opportunity for students to discover, and be creative and innovative, many students (especially

year 1 students) lack sufficient training in thinking skills and problem solving strategies to complete the task in a systematic manner. In addition, students with diverse backgrounds (e.g.

with different majors, some groups has members of international students) create some hurdles (e.g. ineffective communications among group members) for competing the task effectively. It

at least partly accounts for the poor quality of some submitted products.

Anchored on the assessment task (i.e. the poster and booklet production), this project aims to develop thinking skills and problem solving strategies of students enrolled in this course. The

focus of this project is not only to enhance the quality of learning products (i.e. the poster and booklet) but also to improve the quality of the learning process (though deepening students'



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learning experiences and engaging them into the learning process further).

By employing students completing this course (especially high achievers of this course) as

mentors for new cohort of students, students can have opportunities to extend, deepen, and reflect on their learning even after completion of the course. Though guidance of experienced

mentors, mentees can work more effectively on the task and can have a more deep learning experience. This arrangement can benefit both cohorts of students (mentors who completed the

course and mentee who are currently enroll in the course) and can enhance the learning quality of this course. This approach can also alleviate the heavy demand on the lecturer for a large

class teaching (e.g. there will be 20 groups for a class of 100 students). This project will employ a project coordinator to prepare materials and training workshops for mentors, and to

monitor the overall implementation of the project. Mentors will help each group to work on the task (i.e. the poster and booklet) efficiently. Aside from papers, visual images will be produced

to archive the learning process and the learning products. Students will be encouraged and facilitated to make good use of technology (e.g. Social networking Apps, E-learning platforms)

in the learning process and on the learning products. These paper and visual deliverables (after

ethical clearance as required by the University) will be valuable resources for teaching and learning of this course. Outstanding deliverables will be selected for DEC and relevant

competitions within and outside the community of CityU.

The current class size of this course is 60 enrollments and there is a plan to enlarge the class size for 80 or more (depending on its feasibility). If successful, this project can demonstrate

how the class size of a GE course can be increased with high teaching and learning quality.

Experiences gained from this project can also inform the University on what resources are required for moving from medium to large class size teaching.