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Environment courses at the University of Gloucestershire encourage the use of active learning, based on Kolb (1984) and Perceptions of Understanding (Blythe & Aslao, 1998). Developing reflective practice is an important yet challenging part of this approach. An active learning induction, developed in conjunction with the Centre for Active Learning (CeAL), and the pedagogic approaches in the Skills4Sustainability module seek to introduce and embed these skills.

2 - INDUCTION

The student induction provides a good student experience but we need to build on this to develop their skills for active learning.

4 - THE EVALUATION

We could get the students to work in groups for their induction field activity and they could produce a ‘digital story’ as a way of encouraging them to engage and reflect on their activity.

5 - THE MODULE

The use of podcasting will allow staff to make available additional information, including personal book reviews and information about their immediate environment.

5A - DIGITAL STORYTELLING FEEDBACK

Student feedback on the use of digital stories was positive. Responses to the induction evaluation showed that 53% were positive; 29% neutral; with 18% disliking this approach.

6 - REFLECTION

Reflection is not an individual process and can be accomplished through staff, or even the students, on their own. This is a new module combining both the old skills module and introducing the students to sustainability.

6A - PODCASTING FEEDBACK

I would have liked the digital storytelling to have been slightly more embedded.

7 - FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

Based on this pilot it is intended to further embed these approaches in the induction and Skills4Sustainability module, continuing this evaluation and research. Use in other areas and contexts are also now being considered. For example, a group of students is being asked to create a digital story as a means of developing their skills for active learning.

REFERENCES

The authors would be interested to hear of examples of the use of digital stories or podcasts and would welcome the exchange of ideas and experiences.


Gloucestershire, Kingston and Royal Veterinary College, London


Centre for Active Learning (CeAL) http://www.glos.ac.uk/ceal: CeAL is nationally recognised Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning at the University of Gloucestershire

IMAPLA - IMAPLA is a UK Higher Education Academy funded eLearning research project led by the University of Leicester, and including universities. Kingston and Royal Veterinary College, London: http://ingress.ac.uk


