

Case Study History of Economic Thought

Resuscitating the Wrong Opinions of Dead Men

CONTACT

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(x3485) (student feedback to follow)

CONTEXT

Second year compulsory economics module, new, designed to introduce a number of key economists from Adam Smith to Amartya Sen. Students switching off in lectures where focus on one economist and his ideas. Some content heavily theoretical, seminars on discussion of relevance today = challenging even though YouTube used to lighten it. Students not reading either. Radical rethink needed. Discussed with RM alt ways of delivering this and using a flipped classroom. Discussions led to academic poster idea + presentation in Hub

INTENDED OUTCOMES

Students would produce a group poster + 2 sides of A4 content overview. Exhibition. Original idea was 2 halves - present to each other, then present to staff. Prize for the best. LOs = all students to be aware of and know key ideas of major economists. KD to weave the story later in lectures.

THE PROCESS

Once process agreed (KD + RM) 4 weeks of lecture programme abandoned. KD discussed feedback from students with them and acknowledged it wasn't working on both sides. New approach for next 4 weeks. Intro exhibition and reasons for doing it. Not assessed, but module delivery so not optional. Some discontent! Not KD avoiding lecturing, just diff approach. (1) Put into groups and allocated economist (considered acc to group members) + overview of plan; (2) 15 min group progress appt with KD to review draft content; (3) Draft poster; (4) exhibition and presentations. Highly structured to ensure delivery. 12 groups, 12 economists.

THE BENEFITS & CHALLENGES

B: diff way of getting students to engage with content; team work, poster production; chance to talk to other staff and students about their economists; public presentation = motivator in the absence of assessment; independent research and analysis. C: getting students to stick to time schedule and to come for appt; research + reading (in spite of 3 core texts being avail); finding relevance + applic to today.

KEY POINTS

Will definitely repeat, but make it assessed. More structured exhibition needed for student led part (some practical hindrances). Worked well. Run it earlier in the year when fewer assessments and more time, student engagement - all students know a reas amt about 1 economist, some know much more, engagement higher than in lectures, real buzz at exhibition, staff impressed with quality, metacognitive skills.

Staff and students were impressed by the standard of posters & presentations. Worth repeating!