**Group Based Learning and Evaluation using One Page Reports**

**Groups -** In the world outside education, many decisions are made by groups of people who bring different perspectives to the problem at hand. Thus, group based, collaborative learning, and evaluation, provide a strong motivation to explore the available information, and training for future employment. Informal study groups are common in higher education; this process is simply a formalization of the usual practice.

**One Page Reports -** Industrial recipients of reports, like academics, prefer to read the first page (or summary) first and move on to more detail where necessary. Thus a succinct, semi structured reporting format is a useful communication tool.

“One page reports” must include: a title, course reference, the identity of the author, a date and reference / background material. In general, the content should include – introduction, evidence, analysis, discussion and conclusions. The report should make good use of words, pictures, charts, diagrams, tables etc.

**Collaborative Learning** - Groups of between 3 and 6 students will be established and their names communicated to the professor at the beginning of the course. During the class, the professor presents key material followed by a question. The students in the group then discuss the topic, add their own perspective and present a collective response. Following each class the student groups each submit a one page report.

**Posters** - At the end of the course the groups produce a comprehensive poster that reflects the key points of the course, or a pertinent case study.

**Evaluation -** The one page reports and posters are judged by the teacher and, perhaps, the class members. The following template should provide sufficient and reliable evaluation with a total between 0 and 9.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Score | Breadth | Depth | Presentation |
| 3 | Places topic in broader context with examples, cases and references | Presents sufficient details of purpose, theory, methods, evidence, analysis and recommendations | Presents an attractive, clear, easily navigable and quickly assimilated image to the observer. |
| 2 |  |  |  |
| 1 |  |  |  |
| 0 | Simply regurgitates class material, without analysis or elaboration | Omits underlying theory, presents insufficient evidence and applies minimal analysis | Unimaginative presentation with minimal references or links. |

The activity should be collaborative as all the group members get the same grade. Within group variation should be ignored as such requirements are likely to be divisive. After the course, students should be invited to offer their reflections on course content and format.

**E-Learning** - The methods described above are readily adaptable for e-learning – both for communication between the teacher and students and within the student groups. The Internet provides a rich source of information, but overt plagiarism should be discouraged. Note that education, from one perspective, is plagiarism.