

The 4th HKUST Teaching & Learning Symposium 2011
Notes of Group Discussion Session

Group : PBL
Session : PM (2:30 pm – 3:15 pm)
Chairperson : Prof Lilian VRIJMOED (PolyU)
Note-taker : Dr Tak HA (HKUST)

- 1. Possible solutions: Based on the sharing done by faculty & students on “Strategies for Engaging Students in Research and Inquiry” in the afternoon session, further produce possible solutions for the identified challenges.**
- 2. Future Actions: Identify future actions for moving forward. How should we take the undergraduate research and inquiry agenda forward?**

- After a recap of the morning discussion, the chair led the group to discuss ways of engaging students and motivating them to participate in inquiry-based learning.
- A number of different ways to motivate students to participate in IBL were suggested.
 - ❖ Learning by doing involving a lot of hands-on experience was suggested as an effective way to motivate and engage students.
 - ❖ The research projects should be relevant and interesting and having a real impact on the community.
 - ❖ Students should be given the chance to choose what projects they want to engage in. This will enhance their sense of ownership of the projects and their feeling that they are doing something significant.
- Promoting and sustaining IBL
 - ❖ To promote IBL, it was suggested that students who had gone through IBL should be involved. They should be encouraged to share their experience with other students, especially through word-of-mouth.
 - ❖ Students involvement was also considered important if we wanted to scale up IBL. Scaling up IBL for large classes is quite a challenge. Inviting senior students to act as mentors for junior students is one way to tackle the manpower problem.
 - ❖ Service learning was suggested as a viable option for scaling up IBL. Overseas experiences about service learning were shared and discussed.
 - ❖ There was also the suggestion to turn internship into an IBL experience.

- Final year projects
 - ❖ There was a lot of discussion of Final Year Project (FYP). While some participants reported that to promote IBL they had recently decided to make FYP compulsory for all students enrolled in their programs, others said they had decided to go the opposite direction, taking it out of their program's requirements mainly because it was too demanding.
 - ❖ To help students cope with the challenge of FYP, it was suggested that they should be helped to build into their FYP really early on, say from year 1, by involving them in project work throughout the programs.
- Program level thinking - It was pointed that most IBL initiatives were conceived and implemented at the course level. Little consideration has been given to IBL at the program level. Questions such as how IBL contributes to the program level intended learning outcomes merit special attention.