Making positive changes to students’ learning experiences: A tailored professional development tool

www.monash/pats

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Session overview

- Background
- A new form of Professional Development: *Peer Assisted Teaching Scheme*
  - goal-setting exercises,
  - analysis of informal student feedback
  - peer observation of teaching

- Findings and Outcomes
Background

- Director of Education Quality, Faculty of Information Technology (2008-2010)
- Quality control processes:
  - unit guides,
  - grade distribution reports,
  - lecturer reflective summary reports,
  - Student evaluations

- Faculty targets
  - Not more than 5% < 3.0
  - At least 75% of units >= 3.5
  - At least 25% >4.0

Faculty Operational Plan (2008-2010)

Unit Evaluation Questions

Item 1: The unit enabled me to achieve its learning objectives
Item 2: I found the unit to be intellectually stimulating
Item 3: The learning resources in this unit supported my studies
Item 4: The feedback I received in this unit was helpful

**Item 5: Overall I was satisfied with the quality of this unit**

Two open-ended questions:
What were the best aspects of the unit?
What aspects of this unit are most in need of improvement?

University Targets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colour Code</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
<th>Unit Measure</th>
<th>Characteristics of unit response distribution</th>
<th>Targets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outstanding</td>
<td>“overall” item median ≥ 4.7</td>
<td>A considerable majority of responses are “strongly agree”</td>
<td>5% of units have medians ≥ 4.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting aspirations</td>
<td>“overall” item median between 3.6 - 4.69</td>
<td>Responses are generally above “neutral”, the great majority are “agree” or “strongly agree”</td>
<td>80% of units fall in this band</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needing improvement</td>
<td>“overall” item median between 3.01 - 3.59</td>
<td>Responses generally “neutral”, majorly “agree” or “strongly agree”</td>
<td>10% of units fall in this band</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needing critical attention</td>
<td>“overall” item median ≤ 3.0</td>
<td>Responses generally below “neutral”, majority “disagree” or “strongly disagree”</td>
<td>5% of units have medians ≤ 3.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Less than 15% of academic staff hold a degree in university teaching and less than 12% hold a general education qualification (Bexley, et al. 2011)

• More than 70% of the academic workforce have not undertaken any teacher preparation program, not even a short course (Norton, 2013)
Rapidly changing global higher education sector

- changes in learning modes through technological advances (such as blended and online learning), as well as MOOCS.
- Increase in students working part-time
- an increase in students from low socio-economic backgrounds,
- increasing casualisation of staff,

For these reasons, many universities are now seeking new and innovative ways to professionalise the academic workforce and ensure the quality of university teaching and learning.
ZPD, Vygotsky, 1978
Situated Learning, Lave 1998

Benefits of PAL (Green, 2011; Topping, 2001; Boud, 2001, Arendale 2004; Hall et al. 2005)

Brookfield (1995)
- Student lens
- Peer lens
- Self lens
- Informed by theory/research

‘[T]he literature … confirm[s] that, in general, discipline based programs or ‘in-situ’ training is a more effective setting for teacher preparation programs (TPPs).

A number of studies also found that the effects of TPPs were more significant when they involved participation in communities of practice, mentoring, reflective practice, and action learning’

(Chalmers et al, 2011,p4)
What is Peer Assisted Teaching Scheme (PATS)?

PATS is a scheme uses a partnership scheme to:

- improve learning experience and learning outcomes
- enhance the quality of teaching
- build leadership capacity amongst teachers
PATS Process

Example OPVCLT workshops:
1. Interactive teaching
2. Teaching with technology
3. Peer Observation/Review of Teaching

Deliverables:
1. Strategy
2. Summary of feedback
3. Peer Observation/Review of Teaching
4. Critical Reflection
The PATS journey

- 1 faculty
- 10 participants
- 5 units
- 150 students

2008-2009
- Pilot PATS in FIT

2010-2011
- Trialed scheme across Monash University. 
  (Carbone, 2011; Carbone, Wong & Ceddia, 2011; Carbone & Ceddia, 2012)

2011-2012
- Improve PATS resources and processes and trial across five universities
  (Carbone, 2012; Carbone 2013)

2012-current
- Developing excellence across the Australian Higher Education Sector
  (Carbone et al 2013)

- 1 institution
- 42 participants
- 21 units
- 1000 students

- 5 institutions
- 57 participants
- 41 units
- 2500 students

- 14 institutions
- 100 academics
- 64 units
- tbc students

- 2008-2009
- 2010-2011
- 2011-2012
- 2012-current

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AUSTRALIAN LEARNING & TEACHING COUNCIL
Promoting excellence in higher education

Australian Government
Office for Learning & Teaching
EXAMPLES
PATS FINDINGS & OUTCOMES

- Better student learning experience seen through positive changes in unit evaluations
- Better overall faculty performance
- Supportive, collegial PATS experience
- Career progression, award nomination
- Scholarship of L&T publications and grant funding
- Overcoming barriers to making improvements
- Setting clear and targeted teaching improvement goals with strategies
- Engaging in the student voice and understanding areas that need attention

Peer Assisted Teaching Scheme
http://www.monash.edu/pats
Eg: Positive changes to unit evaluation results

Table 1: PATS Pilot in FIT unit evaluation results 2008-2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Pre-PATS</th>
<th>Post-PATS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>UW-Item 5 Median</td>
<td>Enrolment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIT 1_09</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIT 2_09</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIT 3_09</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIT 4_09</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIT 5*_09</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NEW UNIT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIT 6_10</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIT 7_10</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIT 8_10</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIT 7*_11</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIT 9_11</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIT 10_11</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIT 11_12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First time teaching the unit</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIT 12_12</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIT 13_12</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIT 14_12</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIT 15_12</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>289</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Carbone, Wong and Ceddia 2011; Carbone, Ross & Ceddia 2013)
Overall faculty (IT) performance

Unsolicited Email
Hi Ange,
... I just wanted to let you know that all your hard work has paid off.

Cheers,
Academic Staff member
Faculty of Information Technology
12/5/2012

1. The Faculty was ranked fifth in the university – the highest ranking achieved in the last 5 years;
2. Our unit evaluations have been improving constantly, and we have the lowest percentage of units now in the “needing improvement” category since 2009. Additionally, we have the highest proportion of units considered “outstanding” since 2009.
3. We have the highest response rate (45%) across the University. This should mean our performance data is quite reliable.

For many semesters a significant focus of our development efforts have been units that are, in university terminology, "in the red zone". Such units have been given additional support in the form of programs such as PATS. These efforts have paid off and together we have successfully managed to move many units out of this range....

Faculty of Information Technology
Semester 1 Rankings
- 2008 ranked 9/10 (mean 3.61, Uni 3.79)*
- 2009 ranked 6/10 (median 3.91, Uni 3.94)
- 2010 ranked 7/10 (median 3.93, Uni 3.96)
- 2011 ranked 6/10 (median 3.97, Uni 3.97)

Faculty of Information Technology
Semester 2 Rankings
- 2008 ranked 8/10 (mean 3.68, Uni 3.78)*
- 2009 ranked 8/10 (median 3.90 Uni 3.94)
- 2010 ranked 6/10 (median 3.95, Uni 3.99)
- 2011 ranked 5/10 (median 4.00, uni 3.99)
Carbone & Ceddia, 2012; 2013; Carbone et al 2013

Engaging in the student voice

Areas most in need of improvement

Course/Unit
Lecturer
Lecture
Tutor
Tutorial
Lab
Assessment
Resources
Off Campus
LMS

Lecture-structure
Lecture-duration
Lecture-delivery mode
Lecture-access

Assessment-organisation
Assessment-practice
Assessment-evaluation
Assessment-quantity
Assessment-support
Assessment-timing

Off Campus-support
LMS - Accuracy
LMS-quantity
LMS-ease of use

resources-availability
resources-content
resources-quantity
resources-readings

Lab-activity
Lab-length

Tutorial-type of activity
Tutorial-scheduling
Tutorial-length
Tutorial-clarity
Tutorial-alignment

Tutor-support
Tutor-response time
Tutor-presentation
Tutor-organisation

Course-challenge
Course-content
Course-relevance
Course-structure
Course-workload

Lecturer-control
Lecturer-knowledge
Lecturer-organisation
Lecturer-presentation
Lecturer-support

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Carbone & Ceddia, 2012; 2013; Carbone et al 2013
Positive conversations to improve teaching

**Barriers**
- Personal
- Student
- Department/faculty
- Institution

**Goals and Strategies**
- Teacher, Course
- Assessment, Activity
- Administration, resources
- Students

**Creative L&T ideas**
Unexpected Outcomes

- Mentees went on to become mentors
- Several mentors/mentees nominated for a teaching award
- Mentees and mentors publishing innovations: eg: “conversation sim”
- Mentees and mentors submitting grant proposals

New flavours of PATS emerging
- Scholarship L&T
- Harnessing digital technologies
- Making good units even better

- Mentors granted promotion
- Mentors appointed in positions like Associate Deans (Learning and Teaching), HoS, Directors
PATS SUPPORT and RESOURCES
http://monash.edu/pats

Peer Assisted Teaching Scheme
PATS Website [http://www.monash.edu/pats]

- About PATS (background, partnership types, process and resources)
- Impact (changes in unit evaluations, video experiences of participants, outreach, publications)
- News and Events (newsletters, events and symposia)
- Online workbook (registration, PATS co-ordinator, PATS participants)
References


References

- Carbone, A., Ross, B., Ceddia J. (2013) Five years of Taps on Shoulders To PATS on Backs In ICT, Proceedings of 18th Annual Innovation and Technology in Computer Science Education (ITiCSE’13) University of Kent, Canterbury, England, 1-3 July
References


Questions

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