

Assessment Case Study

Increasing Authenticity



Dr David Simcock - Increasing the authenticity of assessment for first-year nurses in a clinical subject.

Overview

In this JCU snapshot, we hear about an assessment task that is evolving toward becoming more **authentic** for nursing students. Initially, the coordinator was focused on helping students understand the basics of simple diseases related to physiological functions and to learn how to work in teams. The current assessment task that supports these goals has students working in small groups to create a 3-minute digital presentation (voice-over PowerPoint). However, the coordinator wants to give students the opportunity to apply their knowledge in more authentic situations, such as clinical handovers.

This snapshot describes the current subject and some of the ways the coordinator plans on making it more authentic and engaging for learners.

Valid. Fair. Authentic. Continuous. Transparent. Varied Methods.

About this subject

BM1011 Physiological Systems & Processes

Internal & Mixed Mode (online with residential week)

Townsville, Cairns, Mackay & Mt Isa Campus

Co-ordinator Dr David Simcock

Bachelor of Nursing Science, Diploma of Health

Assessment in the current subject includes a group project that focuses on the production of a multi-media presentation (voice-over PowerPoint).

This assessment task is designed to promote students' understanding of the basics of simple diseases related to physiological functions and to learn how to work in teams.

The subject outline provides scaffolding for students on how to work in teams and where they can access information and skills that can help with the development of the multimedia presentation.

Learning outcomes

Students who successfully complete this subject will be able to:

- ◆ Explain the function of the cardiovascular, respiratory, renal, endocrine and reproductive systems in maintaining a regulated internal environment within the body.
- ◆ Work effectively with group members to investigate the impacts of disease on the function of an organ system and communicate findings using appropriate scientific terminology.
- ◆ Analyse scientific materials to understand the basis of body measurements and use these measurements to determine whether the body is functioning normally.

(Aligned to **NMBA Nursing Standards of Practice (2016) 5.1**)

Assessment tasks

Group Presentation (20%)

Students work together in groups of four to create a three-minute digital multimedia presentation (voice-over-PowerPoint) to demonstrate their understanding of physiological function of an organ system and the effects of a specific disease, disorder, drug or environmental factor on the function of this organ system. Students need to use appropriate scientific terminology.

Another aspect of the task is around helping students learn to work in teams. As part of this task, the group needs to:

- ✦ actively discuss, establish and sign off on a code of conduct that is agreed upon by all group members
- ✦ set up a meeting schedule

- ✦ develop a task completion plan and allocate roles and tasks to each group member.

Clear instructions are provided around the process that students need to follow. This starts with a research phase where students self-audit their knowledge and knowledge gaps and work out what they need to find out and learn. They also start to think about what resources they need to locate for their multimedia presentation (e.g. music, video etc.).

Next, students are encouraged to think about the design phase. Here they need to think about their audience and presenting in ways that will help them understand and engage with the content, they also need to decide on what computer program they will use and what they need to learn about using it.

As well as writing their script and designing their storyboard, students need to present their storyboard and ideas to their group members and academic staff either face-to-face or online before proceeding.

Finally, students need to produce, edit and upload their multimedia presentation.

Each group member needs to state their contribution to the overall development of the artefact in the presentation.

Challenges

- ◆ Nursing students need to understand *why* they need to know the basics of simple diseases related to physiological functions.
- ◆ Nursing students need to be able to explain concepts in lay terms that are understandable to patients, other nurses and nursing students.
- ◆ Nursing students need to be better equipped for their handover role. For example, presenting to another nurse or medical team at end of shift as part of the handover process.
- ◆ Nursing students need to learn to work in teams. How do we teach students to work within varying team dynamics? How do we ensure all students in the group participate and contribute to the task? How do we get them to manage team disputes?

Possibilities for future assessment tasks

The coordinator is keen to bring more authenticity into the subject to better equip nurses to be able to articulate in a patient's vernacular. This is a fundamental skill that requires clear and concise use of language and professional communication skills. This kind of assessment task can also align well with the existing learning outcomes for the subject whilst bringing more meaning and authenticity for student nurses.

In the future, the coordinator is thinking about changing this task to a case study. Students would need to analyse the case, explain in plain English how the disease is affecting body function and present to others in a role play via mobile phone or virtual classroom. This would also allow for students to be assessed individually, as currently they all get the same mark.

Further to this, and with authentic assessment in mind, the coordinator would like to change case studies so they are more personalised and focussed on specific target audiences for patient-centred care (e.g. patients and families). This approach may make the assessment more meaningful for students.

Beyond this individual subject, the coordinator is considering the benefits of thinking about the course curriculum more holistically and developmentally in terms of 'growing' skills, knowledge and capabilities. For example, students learn to present clear clinical information in this subject, and in future subjects they are assessed on whether they are asking 'good questions' that allow them to systematically 'tease out' information to build a picture of what is happening with the patient and consequently, what needs to be done.

Technologies

- ◆ Narrated PowerPoint (not on camera).
- ◆ Windows Movie Maker is used to design and produce multimedia presentations.
- ◆ A free open access video streaming platform (e.g. Vimeo, YouTube) is where students currently upload their multimedia presentation and send the link to the subject coordinator.

Tips

- ◆ First, work out what you are trying to do. Ask yourself:
 - ◆ What do I want the students to be able to do?
 - ◆ What am I trying to assess?
 - ◆ How will I mark it?
- ◆ Consult with other staff in the course to ensure horizontal and vertical alignment of transferable skill development.
- ◆ Once you have worked out the subject and assessment design, **then** consider the technologies you need.
- ◆ Involve students in an iterative assessment process - use instructions and guidelines.
- ◆ Get help from an educational designer.