



# Effective Project-Based Strategies to Stimulate Student Engagement

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# History and Concerns

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## ○ History

- Not challenging
- Lacked rigor
- Not relevant

## ○ Concerns

- Management core
- Upper level
- Critical subject area



# Objectives

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- Stimulate interest in the subject area
- Foster a high level of engagement
- Challenge students
- Rigor appropriate for upper level course
- Transferability of knowledge to real world situations
- Develop ability to present and defend ideas before a critical audience



# How - Engagement

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- Self-selected teams
- Competition between sections and teams
- Frequent written reports
- Frequent presentations of progress reports
- Feedback from other students



# How: Challenge and Rigor

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## ○ Challenge

- Creative projects
- Interaction expert resources on and off campus
- Research through unfamiliar sources

## ○ Rigor

- Five 7 – 12 page section reports
- Revised and consolidated final report
- Defense before a panel of faculty and staff



# How - Transferability

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- Real world change projects
- Experienced red tape and road blocks
- Conflicting views/agendas among stakeholders
- Need to address constraints in process
- Convince a panel of the merits of the proposed change



# How – Accept and Give Criticism

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- Students as faculty/administrators
- Criticism as a tool to perfect the final report

# Student Feedback

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- My interest in the subject increased:
  - Much more than other courses 19.5%
  - More than other courses 43.5%
  - About the same as other courses 34.0%
  - Less than other courses 3.5%
  
- Projects fostered a high level of engagement:
  - Very effective 16.0%
  - Effective 48.5%
  - Moderately effective 35.5%

# Student Feedback

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- The work load for this course in relation to other courses was:
  - Very difficult 30.0%
  - Somewhat difficult 46.5%
  - Just about right 23.5%
- The use of class time for presentations and critiques were:
  - Very effective 57.5%
  - Somewhat effective 32.0%
  - Moderately effective 7.5%
  - Somewhat ineffective 3.5%

# Student Feedback

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- Feedback on assignments was:
  - Very effective 56.0%
  - Effective 36.5%
  - Moderately effective 5.5%
  - Somewhat ineffective 2.0%



# Benefits of the Course Model

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- All requirements were clearly defined
- Understood where to focus
- Allowed for assignment of research among group members
- Segments coincided with the textbook



# Benefits of Frequent Presentations

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- Weekly Presentations
  - Allow for continual progression
  - Ability to identify errors and make appropriate changes
  - Enhance preparation through classroom critiques
  - Expand comfort level with topic



# Benefits of Frequent Presentations

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## ○ Final Presentations

- Enable group to deliver comprehensive work
- Teach benefits of preparing and practicing



# Lessons Learned

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- Prepare students for future courses
  - Strategic Management – capstone course for Business
  - Current Issues in Management – senior level course
  - Management Seminar – capstone course for Management



# Lessons Learned

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- Ways to avoid procrastination
- Maintain composure during preparation and delivery of presentations
- How to work well with a group, understand group members and keep an open mind to others' ideas



# What We Would Do Differently

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- Smaller team size
- PowerPoint for all presentations



# Small Group Activity

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- How could you use a term project model to engage students at your school?



Questions?

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