Festival of Learning Showcase Session

Facilitator: Dr Ranjna Kapoor, Lecturer, Department of Communication and Cultural Studies; Professor Dawn Bennett, John Curtin Distinguished Professor, Research and creative Production, Faculty of Humanities and Curtin Academy Fellow; Dr Rajinder Kaur, Associate Lecturer, Engineering Operations; and Associate Professor Nicoleta Maynard, Director Engineering Education Development and Curtin Academy Fellow

Strategic theme: Leading in innovative education and a rich, interactive learning experience

Subject Title: Perceptions of professional identity and classroom community among first year student engineers

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Brief Description: This study investigated the perceptions of 67 direct- and 82 pathway-entry first-year student engineers in relation to self, the profession, and their classroom community. Professional identity is a continuing, socially constructed process informed by interactions with community and industry. The development of classroom community is another aspect of emerging identity and is also positively related to academic success. Given that students are active agents in this development, it is likely that exposing the relevance of learning to future profession will enhance engagement, identity development and sense of community. This study was located within a common foundation year. The unit included foci on professional identity and teamwork, thus the team was able to employ established pre- and post-test measures to test the efficacy of teaching strategies relating to self and community. A mixed method ANOVA was used to compare pre- and post-test scores for each participant. Preliminary results indicate that the first-year students already identified as professional engineers and considered themselves part of a classroom community. There was no significant difference between pre- and post-measures; however, pathway-students scored significantly lower on the classroom community scale (F=4.8, p<0.05). The latter finding indicates that pathway students may need specific support in developing their learning communities. The next phase of research will seek to develop socio-cognitive strategies and intrapersonal skills at the unit level.

Time/Day: Tuesday 17 March 2015, 10:30 – 11:00am

Duration: 30 mins

No. of Sessions: One

Venue: Building 400:Room 249

Special Requirements: No special requirements are needed