Plan for a SoTL Project

by Lori Strauss Conestoga College

|  |
| --- |
| **Research Question**  What are you curious about?  What would you like to know about strategies that might hinder and/or help students to learn, in your course?  Do you want to know if an activity, assignment, or teaching strategy “works?”  Do you have a question about how to help your students learn a particular skill?  **Include considerations of any ethical concerns with the research you are planning.**  **Do summary sheets provided for student review after each lecture have a positive impact on student learning?**  PSW1375 Each module (lecture) is designed with **a self-directed study**, the student is expected to complete prior to the lecture. It includes readings from the text, sometimes an H5P activity to reinforce or check learning**. Lecture** – is delivered via zoom. **Self-directed** study where student completes any evaluations that may have been associated with the lecture. Every lecture has a summary worksheet. There are **summary sheets** for each of the main topics delivered in the lecture. It includes fill in the blank question, complete the sentence questions, matching activities, summary of content tables, each can be 1-3 pages. There can be 1-5 of them for each lecture. All answers can be found in text or lecture slides (provided in advance). Students are not expected to submit them and have not been provided an answer sheet to check their answers. Student do not receive a mark for them.  It is important to note here this course is delivered 3 hours each day with one hour also for self-directed study (mentioned above) so a total of 4 hours a day. |
| **Identify challenge/outcome related to learning that is related to your question.**  Describe the learning in a way that suggests how you might *measure* it using either qualitative or quantitative methods.  I want to know how many students used the summary sheets.  I want to know if they didn’t why not.  I want to know if they did, did it positively impact their learning.  I want to know if there is a positive correlation between quiz marks and use of summary sheets.  **Qualitative:**  I want to know how many students used the summary sheets.  I want to know if they didn’t why not.  I want to know if they did, did it positively impact their learning.  ***Student perception:*** I would find out from students if they felt the use of the summary sheets improved their learning. This would be through a focus group, meet with students to ask open ended questions about how they used the summary sheets and if they felt it contributed to their learning of the content. How they know it improved their learning. Did they consistently use them? How did they use them, e.g. (Right after the lecture or right before a quiz?) How long did it take to complete them? What made it easy to use the summary sheets. What made it difficult to use the summary sheets? Do they believe not being provided marks impacts their use of the summary sheets?  **Quantitative:**  Develop a ***survey tool*** with the following questions:  (I want to know what percentage of students used the summary sheets.)  Did you use the summary sheets provided with each lecture? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No  (I want to know if they didn’t why not.)  If no what were the barriers to use. (select all that apply) \_\_ no marks associated with them, \_\_\_ took too much time to do, them \_\_ they didn’t impact my learning \_\_ I didn’t know they were available, \_\_\_ other (please comment), \_\_\_ answers were not provided.  I want to know what percentage of students who completed them, felt it positively impacted their learning.  If yes, did it positively impact your learning? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No  I want to know if there is a correlation between quiz marks and use of summary sheets.  There are 4 quizzes in the course. Each quiz could have the survey attached to it as a condition to entry of the quiz. We would have results 4 times in each course. I would compare the results of the yes with the results on the quiz percentage. Compare it quiz to quiz and semester to semester. |
| **Describe the instructional activity, assignment, or teaching strategy that will promote student learning on the outcome you identified.**  SoTL projects might investigate the impact of a *modification* to an existing strategy or assignment. Describe how the new approach differs from the old approach and why this modification might change student learning on this outcome.  I would explore if provision of the answers to the questions on the summary sheets would increase use of them.  I would further explore if there is an impact of providing the answer sheet on the quiz marks.  Further modifications would be dependent upon the results of the qualitative research.  Current state: students are provided the summary sheets but their use is not monitored.  Current state: We as faculty don’t know if the student is populating the accurate answers on the summary sheets when they study or review. As a result, it may be detrimental, and we don’t know.  Current state: Keeping the summary sheets up to date with lectures and current text is labour intensive.  Current state: We don’t know if students use the summary sheets. |
| **Describe the evidence that would persuade an external audience that the new or modified teaching strategy improves student learning on the targeted learning outcome.**   1. Strong positive correlation to use of summary sheet with passing grade quiz marks. 2. High (80%) student use of summary sheets. 3. An increase in the percentage of students using summary sheets once answer sheet provided. 4. An increase in percentage on quiz marks on those who completed the summary sheets once answer sheet is provided. 5. Increase perceived benefit from students perspective in follow up student perception focus group. |
| **How and where would you publish, present, or disseminate this work?**  I would present the results at the team Annual Program Review meeting when we explore strengths and weakness of the program, and recommendations for modifications to the course.  Consider providing results of study to student to demonstrate the positive impact of use of summary sheets (if indeed it did demonstrate an positive impact on learning) in the course shell in the description statement of the summary sheets. |

Adapted from: C. J. Stanny, E. M. El-Sheikh, & H-M. Chung (2009) ***Getting Started with a SoTL Project***

Center for University Teaching, Learning, and Assessment <http://uwf.edu/cutla/>