

Promoting Voice and Choice: Student Led Discussion in Higher Education for Sustainable Development

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Abstract

This presentation will showcase a novel approach to student-led discussions as a means of fostering deep learning in higher education for sustainable development (HESD). The approach includes the use of engaging course readings, written reflection assignments, random selection of facilitation leaders, and implementation of discussion. The theoretical foundations of the approach will be discussed, along with the author's informal observations from its implementation in upper-level and introductory-level courses. This serves as a case study to illustrate the potential impact on HESD courses. The benefits of the model include increased student choice and voice, heightened student accountability, enhanced engagement, and promotion of diverse perspectives. Additionally, the shift from the traditional "sage on the stage" instructor role to a more facilitative "guide" role will be discussed. The author will also detail the assessment rubric used by students to evaluate themselves and its integration into the assignment grade. The importance of frontloading the assignment and providing students with guidance on the student-led discussion process will also be highlighted. The approach has significant implications for use in HESD and can be applied across various subject areas.

Keywords: deep learning; facilitation, interdisciplinarity, experiential learning, transformative education