

“What, Why Democracy?”

Fostering Graduate Skills Development with Innovative
Teaching Methods

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Some Serious play



Reflection

- ▶ How did you feel during this task?
- ▶ Which skills do you think this activity would help develop in students?
- ▶ What are you taking away from this so far?

Our Experience

The Challenge

What are the top ten skills that employers want?

1. Teamwork
2. Planning and Organising
3. Time Management
4. Flexibility
5. Analysing and Investigating
6. Initiative / Self Motivation
7. Drive
8. Verbal Communication
9. Written Communication
10. Commercial Awareness

Source: <http://www.kent.ac.uk/careers/sk/top-ten-skills.htm>

Innovative Teaching Methods – Film Project

- ▶ PO233, “Core Issues in Comparative Politics”
- ▶ Compulsory Module for Politics Students, optional module for other 2nd year students in PAIS
- ▶ Film project entitled “What, Why Democracy”
 - ▶ Fits into the overall approach of research-led teaching of the module
 - ▶ Aims at developing transferable skills, whilst fostering the core skills on the module
- ▶ Example:
http://www.mediafire.com/watch/hr4cht3h89017f8/comparative_film_project_final_draft.mp4?

The Challenge – How did we do?

1. **Teamwork**
2. **Planning and Organising**
3. **Time Management**
4. **Flexibility**
5. **Analysing and Investigating**
6. **Initiative / Self Motivation**
7. **Drive**
8. **Verbal Communication**
9. **Written Communication**
10. **Commercial Awareness**

Reflection – The Student Perspective

- ▶ At first, skepticism. Expectation of theory and methodology.
- ▶ A jump into the cold water?
- ▶ LEGO forced you to think and apply theories in a real context.
 - ▶ Group work stimulated exchange of ideas
 - ▶ Combination of learning with practical skills
- ▶ The film project resulted in critical, evaluative conclusions about democracy
- ▶ Large array of practical skills that can handily be used in employment interviews
- ▶ It's the balance between academic (research) skills and the application of transferrable skills that make this module so commendable.

Reflection – The Teaching Perspective

- ▶ Out of the comfort zone ...
- ▶ This is FUN to teach!
- ▶ Satisfying ..., deeply satisfying
- ▶ Assessment route?

Questions and (hopefully) Answers

Any Questions?