Teaching and Learning Seminars across the University of Warwick

In this webpage, the WIHEA Teaching Reward and Recognition Learning Circle have brought together case studies on some of the teaching and learning interest groups and seminar series that take place across the University of Warwick. The intention is to provide information on the diverse range of activities that take place to inspire as well as to provide practical advice for those interested in education and pedagogy.

Case Study 1: Warwick Medical School (WMS)

WMS have an established Medical Education Interest Group that organizes seminars, publishes newsletters and more. The work of this group is also very clearly highlighted in the Interest Group webpages so rather than write a case study, we provide a link here for colleagues to explore.

[Medical Education Interest Group (warwick.ac.uk)](Medical Education Interest Group)

Case Study 2: Mathematics

The Maths Teaching and Learning seminar series features talks by both internal and external speakers on mathematics teaching and learning, education research and outreach. Topics so far include e-assessments advice; making maths lectures interactive; dealing with maths anxiety; and creating accessible maths content. There are around three events per term, and while the seminars have been held online so far, they may become hybrid.

Most talks do not require high-level maths background knowledge. All are welcome to attend, and sometimes undergraduate students attend. It's a good idea to have occasional talks that are relevant to (or even aimed at) students. Seminar talks are a great way to engage students in the teaching and learning process.

More information including slides and recordings of previous talks can be found on the webpage:
https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/sci/maths/research/events/seminars/areas/mathematicsteachingandlearning/

Siri Chongchitnan

Case Study 3: Statistics

The Statistics Teaching Forum isn't called a seminar series since on many occasions it is a workshop or something else. The forum is a mixture of formal seminars and other activities. The forum has both internal and external speakers, and a range of different approaches are taken. Examples of different approaches are:

- Formal seminar based around a speaker's presentation
- Workshops with practical examples. These have ranged from those that involve discussion-based practical examples, to idea-generation on a particular topic or topics
- A series of "blitz" talks, think 5-minute learning and teaching jams
- Short talks of around 15 – 20 minutes from a range of speakers

Both teaching-focused and research-focused staff are encouraged to contribute. The informal/formal nature means topics are wide-ranging and often include personal experiences. Examples include:

- Comparative judgement in mathematics using Moodle
- Accessibility
- Online learning in statistics
- Reflections on personal experiences of x, y or z
- Active learning in statistics
- Technology-enhanced learning
- What does "excellent" teaching means in maths and statistics
- Student partnerships in statistics education

Martyn Parker

Case Study 4: Philosophy

The Philosophy Teaching Exchange (PTX) is a space for peer support and dialogue on matters concerning teaching and learning in the Department of Philosophy. It emerged out of necessity as a means for organising an effective and co-ordinated response to the challenges to the Covid-19 pandemic, but as these challenges have evolved the PTX has continued to be the default home for the sharing of good practice and discussions about the Department's priorities around teaching and learning. Meetings of the PTX are arranged on an ad hoc basis in response to emerging needs and challenges (for example, the imminent return to more face-to-face(f2f) teaching provision) but happen typically once or twice each term, sometimes more frequently at more challenging times. Historically the meetings have taken place online via MS Teams, but the PTX is moving to introduce f2f/hybrid meetings in the coming academic year. Topics covered so far include: blended teaching and learning; online seminars; module planning and design; academic technology; digital reading lists; peer-to-peer support; outreach and working with school-aged children; and inclusive teaching and learning resources.

The exchanges are usually experience-based and are aimed at addressing needs that are widely shared among people responsible for any teaching in the department, although the PTX would be interested in introducing more research-based sessions informed by pedagogic literature. Speakers tend to be from Philosophy or occasionally from other parts of the University (e.g., academic technologists; faculty senior tutor; faculty WP co-ordinator). Anyone responsible for any teaching provision in Philosophy is a welcome member of the PTX, including postgraduate tutors, and academic technologists and members of the IT team (e.g., for assistance with Moodle or other learning technologies).

If another department seeks to set up their own Teaching Exchange, our advice would be to think carefully about (1) the shared needs of those responsible for teaching in your department, because thinking in a needs-based way ensures relevance and can motive attendance, and (2) how you can identify and showcase existing areas of success, which might help to address those same needs if shared more widely (e.g., if your SSLC reports good engagement with a particular module, teaching method, or tutor, etc, consider building a session around sharing and celebrating this success). Equally, however, use the space for sharing and discussing as-yet-unresolved challenges, as it can be supportive just to hear that your colleagues are going through similar experiences as you.

David Bather Woods

Case Study 5: Economics

The Economics Teaching and Learning Seminar Series was re-launched during the pandemic at the start of the second term of online teaching. Guided by student feedback, we invited colleagues to give online presentations on 'what had worked for them' in terms of teaching methods and technologies in the previous term. Crucially, teaching-focused, teaching and research focused colleagues and professional services colleagues have presented over the past eighteen months, highlighting that these seminars are for everyone in the department. There are around five seminars in each of the two main teaching terms per academic year.

The seminar series has evolved over time. Seminars are now hybrid (sometimes with cake for in-person attendees); there are now both internal and external speakers; and while some sessions still focus on providing practical advice, economics pedagogy research papers are also presented.

Caroline Elliott

Case Study 6: Radical Pedagogy Network

These case studies offer a great opportunity to promote a new network, the Radical Pedagogy Network.

This is a new network with seminars starting in autumn 2022. Initially, seminars are planned to be termly but this is up for discussion. The intention is to have in-person events where possible, but we would prefer to make the decision collectively once we launch officially: hybrid sessions are likely.

We intentionally take a very broad interpretation of what is covered so that folks can present formal research papers (case studies; theoretical analyses etc); share formal classroom practices or proposals; or discuss non-institutional approaches to 'radical education'. Topics we'd like to gauge interest in are things like: anarchist education; critical co-creation pedagogies; Black liberation education movements; free schools; queer liberation pedagogies; inclusive/liberatory education through games; decolonial pedagogies; liberal education; education for sustainable development/eco-pedagogies; and more. We, in particular, would like to ensure non-institutional and informal educational concepts are well-represented.

Both internal and external) speakers will be invited, and we are very open to work in progress/informal events; and anything the group agrees to hear. All are welcome to attend, including students (UG, PG, etc), and professional services. We're also very happy to have external folks come along too.

If other groups or departments are considering setting up a pedagogy network or seminar series, we'd encourage more groups/networks especially at an informal level (discussion/reading groups, work in progress, that kind of thing). Advice would be to think carefully about access: a little money can go a long way, but without that it's hard to fairly compensate external speakers, students, etc.

Gavin Schwartz-Leeper, Liberal Arts