

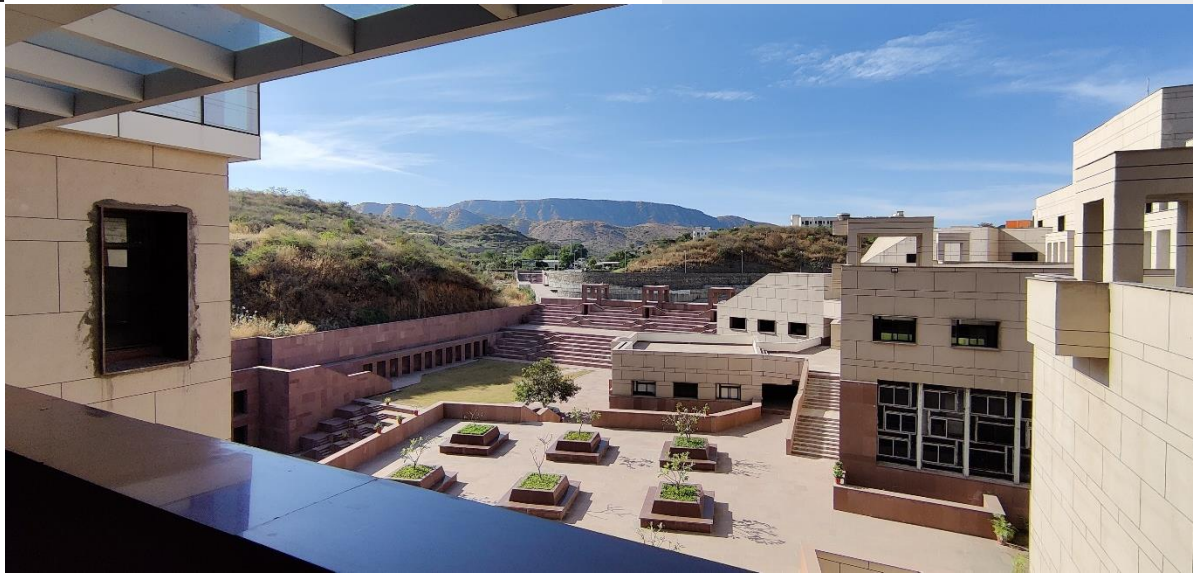
CTL Newsletter

Monthly Newsletter of the Centre for Teaching and Learning at IIM Udaipur



भारतीय प्रबंध संस्थान उदयपुर
Indian Institute of Management Udaipur

December 2022
Volume 1, Issue 3



Greetings for the New year!

We are happy to present our third issue of the CTL Newsletter before we enter into the new year. In this edition, we have our very first faculty interview where we discuss an innovation in teaching. We present a conversation with Prof. Shobhit Aggarwal where we discuss the Management Games elective that he offers in the MBA 6th Term in fair detail. If anyone among you would like to share your thoughts about other innovations in teaching, learning, evaluation or any related activities, please let me know so that I can interview you for the same

In this edition we also present brief summaries of 3 articles that could be useful to faculty in their role as teachers. The first discusses how student socialization could be an important channel for achieving the objective or providing responsible management education. The second deals with achieving a state of flow- concentration, control and enjoyment- in the classroom. The third is an article that discusses how teachers can create an educational environment that supports transformational education.

Wish you a Happy New Year 2023!

INSIDE:

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING THROUGH BOARDGAMES. A CONVERSATION WITH PROF. SHOBHIT AGGARWAL

A discussion where we try and understand the process of designing and offering a course – Management Games – delivered entirely through boardgames.

BRIEF NOTES FROM THE SCHOLARSHIP OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

Responsible Management Education as Socialization: Business Students' Values, Attitudes and Intentions

Capturing Flow in the Business Classroom

Teaching for transformation

Experiential learning through boardgames.

A conversation with Prof. Shobhit Aggarwal

To begin with, can you briefly describe the course that you have designed and offer to MBA students in term 6– Management games?

Management games is a general management course, and each module is independent of the others, unlike regular MBA courses which are generally sequential. For example, when I teach corporate finance, concepts taught in sessions 4-6 are crucial for understanding what is coming up in the subsequent sessions. But in management games, these modules are independent of each other. Secondly, I have been cognizant while preparing that I have at least one module from the major functional areas – Marketing, OBHR, Finance, Operations, etc.

The way the course works is that students first see videos and read rulebooks about the game that they are going to play. In the game, they will require a particular skill to do well. After the game is played, we do a debrief session where we discuss about who won the game, why did they win, what are the skills that you could have learnt. Most of the skills students used in the games would have been covered in prior electives or core courses. So, this course reinforces concepts and skills that they have already learnt in the program.

What was your motivation to design this course almost exclusively in experiential learning pedagogy?

I have been doing this kind of course for a long time now. I was part of a startup in 2011 which made games. I have been playing board games for more than a decade now and they had one boardgame which I thought could be a beautiful learning tool. I designed a corporate training

around it, and then later while doing my PhD at IIM Bangalore, that game was used in one of the core courses where it was used over two sessions in every section. Then last year, I expanded the scope and designed an entire course around it.

Why did we design this course around this pedagogy? As a participant who had attended a fair number of corporate trainings over 3 years, my feedback to HR was that either they were boring, or I already knew most of the content. So as a teacher, I needed to solve these two problems. Now if you are teaching through boardgames, boredom is out of the picture. When the learning debrief happens after the game, even if students theoretically know the concepts, they immediately realize, that when it came to application, they could only apply 40 or 60% of what they know. So, I don't need to point out that gap. Students realize on their own that they might know something theoretically but couldn't practically apply it. Hence, it solves both the problems that I mentioned earlier. I started with corporate, but then realized this extends to academic training as well.

Can you describe the time and effort involved in crafting such a course? What resources were most useful? What was the process like?

To design one module which is one game- one skill- one major concept, it takes at least 3 months of effort. The process starts with defining your learning objective. Then you search for games that fit, because designing a new game is an even longer process. I shortlist 4-5 games which I then proceed to borrow or purchase copies of, and I test it with a few people- in my case, my teaching assistants. Then, if the learnings are not emerging, we go back to the drawing board, find, and test a new game. Sometimes, the game by itself is not adequate but if you tweak the rules, it serves the purpose. Each time you tweak the rules the game must be retested. If the first 3-4 games are not good enough, then you may even have to go back to searching. So, it is a very cyclical process. On average, it takes between 3-6 months to design one module. My course has 6 modules, and it has taken quite some time to put that in place.

What other resources did you utilize? Are you a member of some boardgame communities?

For testing the games, I involve the TAs, but I have a very strong group of gaming enthusiasts in Udaipur. I have more than 50 boardgames in my personal library. Earlier I would play 5-6 times a month but since I have a small baby at home, the frequency has come down- maybe twice a month. There are people from within IIMU community as well as from outside. There is one other faculty member who is also a big a fan of boardgames and a few of our common friends from outside the campus. I look out for new games online as well. I must have played more than 300 games. In addition, I am a member of communities where I get recommendations from experienced professionals.

DO you think some concepts lend themselves to being taught through games better than others?

There will be some concepts that are easier to deliver using games. Earlier, I thought that maybe softer skills are more easily delivered using boardgames. But yesterday, I taught Game theory which is core economics and mathematics. I think if I really put my mind to it, I can find or design a game that can be used to teach it once I understand the contours of the concept thoroughly. Just that designing one may take even a year. I don't think there is any particular type of concept that can be delivered better through games. So far, whatever concepts I picked up, I have been able to design the module.

Do you think that teaching using boardgames is inherently multidisciplinary?

Some games would automatically have learnings from multiple disciplines, but I think it's very similar to cases in the classroom - you can choose to focus on a particular facet. So far, the course that I have designed, is by design multidisciplinary. My next, and I should say very ambitious project, is to gamify every session of a pre-existing course, say for example the courses on Valuation or

Corporate Finance where all concepts are delivered through games.

Your course is split into 6 modules where instead of the usual readings/cases, students must come prepared with the rules after watching videos and reading rulebooks. How has your experience been with this different kind of preparation?

Couple of things help here. In the course workshop I make it clear that the amount of preparation needed before a module is going to be 3-4 hours. If you are not willing to put in that effort you will suffer because everyone else on your table will know the rules and you won't, then you will be at a disadvantage and not score well. Over and above that, there are 6 pre-read quizzes that tests students on the rules of every game before it starts, with negative marking which has overall 35-40 % weightage for the grade. While this design of assessments helps, I have observed that the students opting for the course are those who want to enjoy while learning, and you can only enjoy when you know the rules. So far, over two editions of the course, I haven't come across anyone who wasn't adequately prepared.



What were some of the benefits/advantages that you experienced while running this course in this format?

I precisely knew the advantages and costs beforehand. The biggest advantage is that retention levels are fabulous. Compared to lecture/discussion, when you play and end up losing a game because you didn't apply a concept, the probability of you remembering that is very high. That's reflected in student feedback some of

whom have said that I will remember these concepts for at least 10 years! Second advantage is that engagement levels are super-high, never a dull moment. In a regular class, individual students can and do tend to switch off, here you cannot afford to or want to because you are playing a game. These two advantages ensure very high effectiveness of learning outcomes. There weren't any unanticipated benefits or costs because this course evolved over a long period of time and learnings were incorporated in each cycle.

When you conceptualized the course, you may have anticipated some challenges that you might face. What were these challenges?

The first challenge that I faced was course scheduling. Unlike other pedagogies, a game can take 1.5 hours to 2.5 hours. Some games can even extend upto 5 hours, and I can never know in advance. When I am scheduling, I need two things – some buffer time, and continuous sessions. Due to these reasons, the course may extend by 1-2 sessions beyond the plan. Second challenge is classroom infrastructure. Because boardgames require tables around which 4-6 students can sit and play. I need 13 tables for a class of 50 students and regular classrooms cannot accommodate that, I need a classroom with a flexible layout. The third challenge is that I cannot increase the number of participants beyond 50 as that would require 19 tables. Some games are fairly complex and they require oversight and a class of 75 would need at least 5 TAs which can be a constraint. I would say that the resource requirement for this course is very different from the usual courses.

There is an ongoing debate about how blended learning is here to stay. In this course there is so much verbal/non-verbal and physical interaction between participants, within and across groups. What challenges do you anticipate if this course was to be offered in a blended mode?

When I offered this course to corporates, many

came back asking can you offer this in an online format. For me as an educator the effectiveness of the training is paramount and all my current 6 modules in this course require physical presence and participation. So, the modules in their current form cannot be taken online. But that does not mean that it can never be done. I am currently working on some existing and new modules which can be designed to be delivered online. My hunch is that the hard skills lend themselves to being delivered well online. Soft skills may be difficult because I lose body language, non-verbal communication and also because your behavior will change when you are sitting physically in the room or sitting 300 miles away in the comfort of your home. Hence, if I need to bring the real person out, I need them sitting across the table. So certain skills I believe are going to be very difficult to deliver online while maintaining the same level of effectiveness.

Can you describe the flow of a typical module?

1.5 hours is actually the shortest duration of a game in this course. I first share the rulebooks and videos to the participants. When the class starts, I administer the pre-read quizzes. After the answer sheets are collected, I ask if any rules need clarification, and usually some are required. Then I start the game and I and the TAs are moderating the game mostly ensuring rules are not flouted. The biggest challenge is to keep a straight face when participants are making monumental blunders. By now, my TAs are well-trained not to give away anything by their body language or reactions. This is followed by the debrief session where we discuss the learnings and discuss what could have been done better. This is followed by a presentation where I share conceptual learnings and that is when most students have that 'aha' moment. That is the usual flow of a class. The quizzes account for 35-40 percent of the grade and the rest depends on their performance in each individual game. Grading is relative to the table on which the student plays the game and normalized across the rest of the participants.

Brief notes from the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

Responsible Management Education as Socialization: Business Students' Values, Attitudes and Intentions

Debbie Haski-Leventhal, Mehrdokht Pournader,
Jennifer S. A. Leigh
Journal of Business ethics (2022)

Socialization is the process by which individuals acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to be successful members of society. In business education, this manifests through formal training, collective experiences, and sequential processes. Responsible Management education (RME) is an approach that seeks to develop students' values, attitudes, and behavioral intentions to be responsible managers. Socialization in business schools needs to take into account the formal curriculum, co-curriculum, and hidden curriculum to create an ethical community among students.

This study demonstrates the importance of business schools in developing students' ethics, particularly self-transcendence values, CSR attitudes and intentions. Business schools have a critical role to play in educating and socializing new generations of leaders and citizens by shaping their attitudes and intentions. While the RME literature has emphasized reform in the formal curriculum, there are other powerful socialization influences from the co-curriculum as well as the hidden curriculum- the unofficial, unintended and implicit messages communicated by the institutional, instructional and programmatic priorities. Hence the need to develop 'ethical community' both inside, and outside the classroom, with consistent messaging in all aspects of socialization.

Capturing Flow in the Business Classroom

Yi Maggie Guo and Young K. Ro

Decision Sciences Journal of Innovative Education (2008)

In MBA classrooms, students often talk about how in some classroom sessions things reach the next level in terms of the intensity, engagement levels, and the quality of the discussions in the class. These classes become memorable because the skill of the faculty combines with the high commitment and preparation of the students. These sessions come close to the concept of flow in the classroom which is characterized by concentration, control and enjoyment.



This article examines the concept of flow in the business classroom. It discusses the importance of flow in the learning process, how it can be captured in the classroom, and how it can be used to improve the learning experience. Motivating and engaging students is crucial. Flow experience provides intrinsic motivation, hence factors that induce flow should be considered. Clear and fast feedback is one of the most effective factors to induce flow, so instructors should pause during lectures, give mini-reviews, and provide discussion questions throughout the learning session. Interaction is important to avoid distraction, and interactive teaching styles such as group discussion and hands-on simulation create the right conditions. These techniques can be applied to modern business education settings to improve the relevance of learning topics and increase student satisfaction with their instructor.

Teaching for Transformation

Patricia Cranton

New directions for adult and continuing education- Contemporary viewpoints on teaching adults effectively (2002)

In this article, Patricia Cranton describes transformative learning in a simple, elegant way. After a brief discussion of Mezirow's transformational learning theory in the larger context of Habermas' conception of three kinds of knowledge, she offers a succinct summary of the key facets of an environment that supports transformational education.

She discusses several teaching strategies that can help nurture such an environment like creating events that expose students to multiple perspectives, ensuring articulation of assumptions, critical self-reflection, encouraging openness to alternatives, and participating in discourse, among others. Transformational learning takes time, and it is difficult to measure, even more difficult to practice as a teacher. But this chapter reads like an unhurried, afternoon conversation full of valuable advice from the deep insights of your favorite teacher.

Feedback

Please click on the link below to share your feedback and comments and to let us know what kind of content you would like to read about in future newsletters.

<https://forms.gle/oT73PwW9tafiTmXb7>

For queries or for making a guest contribution, please contact the Centre for Teaching and Learning at ctl@iimu.ac.in

©2022, IIM Udaipur, all rights reserved.

Updates from CTL

FDP for Management faculty from Udaipur region

IIM Udaipur will be organizing a Faculty Development program for faculty of Management Institutes from Udaipur region as a part of its CSR activities. This program is aligned with our mission to contribute to the development of the region by supporting the faculty involved in Management education.

The program will run from 2nd -6th January 2023 and I am happy to share that the program has received an overwhelming response in its first edition. Initially we planned to have 25 faculty participating in the program, but we had to increase to 40 to accommodate the demand. The CSR department of IIMU led by Shanu Lodha has ensured wide publicity and a strong and diverse cohort for the first edition. The group includes 65% women faculty, 83% have a PhD, and together they represent 9 Universities.

The program is intended for faculty of management and will take participants through some of the foundational elements of the scholarship of teaching and learning which are generally overlooked in Management Phd programs. Participants will also gain exposure to technological and pedagogical innovations and techniques in management education.

Professors Ashok Banerjee, Amish Dugar, Jayant Nasa, Kirti Mishra and Shobhit Aggarwal will be anchoring some of the sessions. The pedagogy is a mix of conceptual discussions, participant exercises, and demonstrations. The program has been designed and coordinated by the CTL with guidance from Prof. Ashok Banerjee and Prof. Sandhya Bhatia. This IIMU CSR initiative is being organized at a nominal cost to participants.

-Joel Xavier