Connectivity for better learning and teaching outcomes

Connecting for learning: onshore and offshore students interact via social media

Presenter: Trudi Aitken, Academic Support and Development Lecturer – Students Supporting Student Learning, Centre for Student Success, Victoria University, Melbourne.
Outline

• Explore the aims, design, implementation and evaluation

• Discuss this online Student Mentoring program at Victoria University

• Respond to any questions about this or other Student Mentoring programs at Victoria University
Students Supporting Student Learning
Student Mentoring Programs
Semester 2, 2016

SSSL

PATs

Trident

SSSL

PASS

Study Space

Student Writing Mentors

Student Rovers

Various Engineering Units: College of Engineering & Science: FP

Engineering Maths & Physics: College of Engineering & Science: FP

AIS: College of Business: FP, CF
ADM: College of Business: FP, CF
Business Statistics: College of Business: FP
Business Law: College of Law & Justice: FP, CF
Bioscience 1 for Nursing, Human Physiology: College of Health & Biomedicine College: SA, FP

All colleges: FP, SA, CF, CQ

All Colleges: FP, FN, CF & SA

victoria university
Melbourne Australia
VU- Victoria University
CUFE - Chinese University of Finance and Economics

• First year Bachelor of Business students
• Victoria University accredited
• Accounting for Decision Making (ADM) unit
• ‘Just in time’ pre-exam academic assistance
• Synchronous online delivery
• Adapted existing program
Student Mentor sessions (6 hours contact time) =

4%

12

$287.50
• 4% increase
• 12 more students passed (than 2014)
• 8 contact hours, 2 hours planning, development & feedback
• 10 hours @ $28.75 for three week peer-led learning intervention cost the university: $287.50
Unit results 2014:2015

2015: 81%
2014: 77%
Student Mentors at VU
PASS (Peer Assisted Study Sessions)

- Internationally recognised peer-learning
- Unit-specific academic support
- Different to lectures, tutorials and labs
- Facilitated by two Student Mentors who have previously achieved high grades in that unit
- A voluntary, free academic assistance program
- Students learn together
- Collaborative learning environment
Hi CUFE students, I am Mary, a student mentor from SSSL Team of Victoria University. I am here for assisting all of you preparing for the accounting exam. This is not a formal interview time so please do not be nervous. As a senior student major in Accounting, I am very glad to share my experiences and strategies with you. Feel free to ask anything this subject～
那么约好时间就到这里啦～祝大家期末一切顺利啦 下周的国科考试也考必过～

11-28-15 6:02 PM

谢谢学姐～

11-28-15 6:21 PM

祝贺同学们剩下的考试顺利！国科必过！

12-1-15 4:22 PM

See you soon!

12-1-15 6:27 PM

Sure, okay. Let's try...M...

12-1-15 5:00 PM

祝贺同学们剩下的考试顺利！国科必过！

12-1-15 4:22 PM

祝贺同学们剩下的考试顺利！国科必过！

12-1-15 4:27 PM
Questions asked by the CUFE students in the WeChat sessions

Number of responses per question

- Exam preparation and strategies (60)
- General accounting information (33)
- VU Collaborate/WebCT access (29)
“develop English skills”

“classmates study with each other and we can discuss the difficulty problem”

“We chat freely”

“I learn a lot from the senior grade student for how to prepare for the examination”

“I can get information quickly”
When did these sessions run?

• Across three weeks leading up to ADM exam
• Two hour sessions offered twice a week
• Timed for maximum student connectivity
• Variation in weekly uptake
Evaluating the program

- 165 enrolled ADM students
- 59 enrolled in the WeChat group sessions
- 140 completed evaluation survey
- 123 students said they would participate in a future WeChat Student Mentoring group.
## Non-attendees reasons for not joining the WeChat group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of respondents</th>
<th>Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Did not know about the group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Forgot about it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Was not sure how to join</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Did not: have the time/have any questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Seldom uses WeChat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Student Mentor feedback

• Adaptation of PASS facilitation challenges
• Requested more training beforehand and advice
• Boundaries
• One student mentor for all sessions
• Built their own confidence
• Smaller groups may encourage engagement
Future program considerations

• Developing student understanding of the support
• Clarifying the role of the Student Mentors
• Encouraging participation in English
• Contacting other Chinese partners
• Exploring funding opportunities
WeChat

**BENEFITS**
- Student-friendly
- Synchronous
- Conversation thread easy to follow
- Allows for question and answer
- Can upload photos - resources

**CHALLENGES:**
- Gatekeeping
- Technology accessibility
- Useability on PC
• https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d-_nDjmTQP4
Student Mentor training and development

- Recruitment process
- Pre-semester training
- Tutorial observation and feedback
- Weekly online reflective practice
- Continued regular weekly development for delivered by the SSSL teaching team
- Development interview
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Having a Student Mentor in my tutorial...</th>
<th>n=82</th>
<th>Agree/strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Was helpful overall</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helped me to understand the subject</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helped me feel positive about attending</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved my confidence about the subject</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helped me develop effective study strategies</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helped me develop different ways of studying</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved my friendship networks</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helped my approach to other subjects</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helped me to manage time better</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>