

disproportionate manner on the most disadvantaged sectors (UNEP, 2007). Student learning is therefore of direct and practical relevance when it is 'making a difference' for disadvantaged groups and communities in the tropics and beyond as future social welfare workers incorporate environmental sustainability into their professional practice.

Criterion 1: Approaches that support learning and teaching that influence, motivate and inspire students to learn

Over the last decade one of the major challenges facing us as environmentalists and social welfare educators is overcoming student resistance to the inclusion of the environment and ecological justice as core aspects of social welfare education. Such resistance is not unexpected given the anthropocentric orientation characteristic of traditional social welfare education. We have learned that we therefore need to actively engage, inspire and motivate students, awakening a desire on their part to explore fields and areas of meaning for their own professional practice. We have used many different approaches and strategies as part of this process, including the following:

A Focus on Praxis and Passion

We believe students begin to take an interest in new areas of learning when they can see that the values, know

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passion, enthusiasm and motivation are contagious and the demonstration of our own engagement as activists and practitioners helps to inspire and motivate students to learn. One manifestation of this is the use of our own experience and practice as case studies in socio-environmentalism. For example, a community-based forum on sustainable development was organised by staff in the subject in 2003. This event was documented and has subsequently been included in subject teaching as a case study example, which students can analyse and learn from.

We were very early adopters of the use of online learning technologies and amongst the first subjects at JCU to use Blackboard LMS when it became available. We continue to make extensive use of LearnJCU both as a repository of materials and as a site promoting interaction amongst both distance and on-campus students. Use of the Discussion Boards has, for example, been incorporated into subject materials as a way of promoting the development of communities of learning. We have also made use of technologies such as vodcasting to further motivate and engage students and to better ensure clarity of assessment requirements.

- x I really liked the use of YouTube for brief summaries of what was required, or to motivate. These were succinct and very helpful
- x All aspects of the subject were well organised and relevant. The regular comics and emails assisted to maintain interest and motivation. Discussion Board postings were very well supported by students and lecturer
- x Excellent help available through LearnJCU site for this subject – exceptionally comprehensive

Innovative experiential approaches

In our pursuit of teaching methods that facilitate and enhance student learning around eco-social justice, we have utilised a range of different classroom approaches. We make use of activities outside the classroom, including

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- x A new and exciting area of social work. Lots of scope for innovation and originality
- x Highly interesting, very thought provoking

Statement on sustained student learning, engagement and recognition

Direct feedback from students via formal James Cook University teaching evaluations reveals consistently excellent scores in both SFS and SFT measures, over a sustained period of time. A decade ago, in 1997 and '98, for example university evaluations (JCET) demonstrated the high standards of teaching, with aggregated responses to 5 questions on lecturing quality (on a scale of 1-6 with 6 being the most positive) as follows:

Subject Evaluated	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	
WS3014 (average of two years - '97 and '98)		5.550	5.750	5.750	5.550	5.600