FTCP Capston Project

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Descriptive Analysis

• Introduction
  - Potential Roles of Active Learning in the Courses Taught
  - Description of Courses Taught

• Things tried and results

• Avenues for future course enhancement
Managerial Accounting

• Unfavorable Facets to Active Learning:
  - Students need to understand fundamental concepts and analysis techniques
  - It involves intensive mathematical analysis

• Meaningful Aspects of Active Learning:
  - Business, a very complicated subject
  - Insights
  - Qualitative analysis required as well
Objectives of Active Learning

Active Learning Can Help

1. Understand potential managerial issues
   • Bring real practices and events into the class
   • Case studies

2. Develop skills to analyze and resolve problems
   • Software
   • Group discussion on managerial problems

3. Learn insights from managerial decision makings
   • Link accounting information to managerial decisions (course design)
   • Let students identify intriguing managerial issues in practice, discuss on the issues, and make their own suggestions
Courses Taught

• Introductory level
  - 78 students, sophomores
  - Business-major students

• Upper level
  - 35 students, seniors
  - Only Accounting-major students
Introductory Course

• Large number of students (sophomores) in a large classroom hinders effective group discussion activities
• It is important to get students interested in business practices
• Focus on “generic” knowledge
  - Objective 1
Advanced Course

• Mostly seniors who are supposed to learn rich knowledge from other courses and be better motivated

• Focus more on developing analytical skills and intuitions
  - Objectives 2 and 3
Things Done in Semester
(Introductory Course - Objective 1)

• Diagnostic test on the first day
  - Pre-requisite courses
  - Survey questions on important topics
• Discuss business articles with good practice on the class materials
Things Done in Semester
(Introductory Course - Objective 1)

• Pre-requisite courses
  - Identify the core linkage between pre-requisite and current courses
  - Review the core materials in the pre-requisite courses using the diagnostic questions during the second class
  - Students had fun in taking the test with no pressure!
Things Done in Semester (Introductory Course - Objective 1)

- Survey questions on important topic - opportunity cost
  - Ask two questions without mentioning the word "opportunity cost"
  - Less than 40% of the students correctly understood the concept. (Whether to answer consistently on two independent but identical questions)
  - After the discussion using the survey, 95% (71 out of 75 students) answered correctly about the subject on the test. (Class average was 65%)
Things Done in Semester  
(Introductory Course - Objective 1)

- Discuss business articles with good practice on the class materials
  - More “attention” during the class discussion
  - More active “participation” during the discussion
  - Compare to the last semester, higher percentage of students made correct answers on the subject explained in relation to those real practices (73% over 65%)
Things Done in Semester (Upper Level - Objectives 2 & 3)

- Course Design
- Group Discussion
- Project Assignment
Things Done in Semester
(Upper Level - Objectives 2 & 3)

• Course Design
  - 6 modules
  - Ignore the order of textbook chapters, but add case studies and updated examples
  - Combination of lecture, problem solving, and class discussion on case studies/real practices relevant to each module
Things Done in Semester (Upper Level - Objectives 2 & 3)

• Group Discussion with Problems
  - Indebted to the peer faculty reviewer
  - Useful excel functions (Laptop-based course)
  - Observation 1: students helped one another
  - Observation 2: one group came up with a better idea than me in producing function codes!
Things Done in Semester
(Upper Level - Objectives 2 & 3)

• Project Assignment: A Research on Successful Cost Management in Practice
  - First, I discussed some examples during the class
  - Then, I had students find and analyze other pertinent examples in the real business
  - A kind of volunteered work, but almost 60% (20 out of 34 students) turned in their reports
Concluding Remarks

• Several things have been tried, yet at the toddler’s stage

• Avenues for future course enhancement
  - More group works (group assignments and group discussion), even for the introductory course
  - Take the project more seriously, targeting “Undergraduate Research Conference”