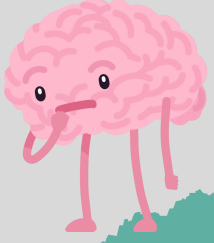


Mapping Capstone Projects in Sustainability Programs



Research:

Mini systematic literature review exploring the design, implication and aims of capstone projects within sustainability centred university degree programs.

But what are capstone projects?

Capstone projects are an alternative way to examine student knowledge at the end of their program. Unlike dissertations, capstones allow students to take part in project-based learning, developing their skills and course knowledge.

Introduction

Capstone projects are increasing in popularity among university degree programs. However, despite this growth, there has been little done to evaluate their design, implementation and impact.



Aims and Objectives

To review current literature to establish common practices within the design, implementation and aims of capstone projects among university sustainability programs.

From these findings, best practices and challenges will be highlighted, with the aim to help inform curriculum design of future and existing capstone projects.

Methodology

Searched Google Scholar database to find articles that met the inclusion criteria:

- published between 2000-2019
- written in English
- accessible through the University of Leeds
- contains the words 'capstone' and 'sustainability/sustainable'
- discusses a case study of a capstone course/project or pedagogy relating to capstone projects

Commonalities within designs:

- Overlapping aims e.g. to develop skills, to promote student reflection, to build on course knowledge
- Integrate off campus clients e.g. local communities, local businesses, non-profit organisations
- Facilitating multidisciplinary group work, directed at solving interdisciplinary problems

Results

Common problems associated with capstone design:

- Difficulties managing contact and relationship with external clients
- Difficulties of managing multidisciplinary groups on singular projects e.g. timetabling students and staff, large time commitment for staff

Recommendations

- Most literature failed to link capstone project design to a pedagogical framework --> there should be more understanding of the pedagogies inspiring capstone design e.g. problem-based learning and service learning
- No universal understanding of how to grade capstone projects --> work should be done to investigate the impacts rubrics and grading systems have on capstone projects
- No understanding of what makes postgraduate capstone projects different from undergraduate capstone projects --> more research to distinguish differences and guide their respective designs



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Please do get in touch!

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