

2024 Showcase 2 – Abstract

Enhancing Student Engagement and Connection through the Zoom Whiteboard in a Multi-Disciplinary Career Development Unit

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Embedding a faculty-wide, compulsory career development unit is an effective strategy for enhancing student engagement, career readiness, and graduate outcomes. The "ERT2004 Career Development & Professional Practice" unit, developed collaboratively by the SCU Careers Team and the Science and Engineering faculty, aims to achieve these goals and better prepare students for work-integrated learning units.

Introduced in 2022, this core Careers unit is delivered in a six-week block format to first and second-year students across Engineering, Environmental and Marine Science, and Regenerative Agriculture disciplines, both online and face-to-face. Challenges include tailoring content to engage diverse disciplines, connecting with mature-age students who may not immediately see the value of career development, and addressing the university-wide issues of attendance and engagement.

To overcome these challenges, we have employed innovative teaching practices, notably the use of the Zoom Whiteboard. This tool has been instrumental in transforming learning experiences by facilitating real-time interaction, enabling students to engage with peers, make comments, and use emojis, regardless of their study mode. The Whiteboard breaks down barriers often associated with online learning, fostering a sense of connection and belonging among students.

The Whiteboard's flexibility extends to recorded sessions, allowing students to engage with activities asynchronously. This helps maintain a sense of community, even for those who cannot attend live sessions. The unit's Whiteboard consists of ten pages, each aligned with weekly activities, including an introduction page, resource-sharing page, and a 'how-to' guide. During class, students are directed to the Whiteboard via PowerPoint slides that correspond to the relevant activities. Their responses are then incorporated into future discussions, such as capturing early definitions of professionalism to revisit in later weeks.

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Student satisfaction ratings for the unit are above the University mean, with feedback highlighting improved career readiness and confidence. Students specifically appreciated the interactive nature of the Whiteboard, with comments like, “Zoom Whiteboard kept it super interactive, which helped me stay motivated and engaged in classes.”

My presentation will showcase how the Zoom Whiteboard can be effectively utilised as a tool to engage and connect students across multi-modal formats. By demonstrating its application in both online and face-to-face settings, I will highlight how this innovative approach aligns with and enhances the Southern Cross Model. The presentation will illustrate how the Whiteboard fosters a more interactive and connected learning experience, ultimately boosting student engagement and satisfaction.

You can access a copy of the ERT2004 Whiteboard here - <https://zoom.us/wb/doc/UzM-D9JbQG6xLQVZfUqjvw>

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