5ydd Gynhadledd Dysgu ac Addysgu

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# Crynoldebau / abstracts

Encouraging engagement with outside reading

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Reading primary literature is an important academic skill that students studying biosciences need to gain during their undergraduate education. The ability to understand, criticise and integrate information in published manuscripts is required in all bioscience-based jobs or career paths, whether this is an academic career or a career outside academia. Outside reading can also enhance the students’ understanding of a topic, giving a different perspective or examples from those presented in the lectures, and giving greater detail for studies that are presented during lectures. Ultimately, assessment of student work also highlights the requirement for students to demonstrate outside reading in exam essays, coursework essays, and other written work.

Unfortunately students rarely demonstrate excellent evidence of outside reading during examinations.

My session will highlight information gathered during a project carried out on my PGCTHE course and over the following year since completion. Firstly, I will outline the students’ perspective, particularly why they think they struggle with integrating outside reading into exam revision material.

Secondly, I will provide information about the simple technique I have used to encourage and direct outside reading, asking questions directly related to the lecture content at key points during the lectures, for which the students have to read papers provided on Blackboard to get the answers.

Thirdly, I will present the results from using this technique, both in terms of the influence it has had on exam performance and the students on whether they feel this has helped them with developing this important skill.

Some other members of IBERS teaching staff have already started to use this technique, and I hope to encourage additional Aberystwyth University staff to do so where outside reading in an integral part of their students’ degree.