

AU Learning and Teaching Conference 2016

Enhancing student engagement beyond assessment;
embedding extra-curricular activities within a module.



PS31620 Social Psychology of Music

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Psychology



Learning outcomes

- Demonstrate an understanding of what music psychology is in general, in addition to developing a more specialized focus that draws on social psychology approaches to music.
- Identify the key researchers and current debates in the field.
- Identify further, and engage with more specialized areas of social psychology that have not previously been explored.
- Identify the ways in which social psychology can aid our understanding of musical behaviour and experience by discussing the relevance of social theories to music.
- Identify the methods used in social music psychology research.
- Critically reflect on the role that music plays in everyday life.



Module overview

- Weekly readings and preparation: Extensive engagement with published research.
- Assessment:
 - 20min individual oral presentation of a research proposal (50%)
 - Seen exam (50%)
- Timetable:
 - Weekly two-hour session
 - 3 workshops
 - Drop-in sessions
 - One-day conference
 - Weekly 'Try Something New' feature (3 hours)



Defining engagement

“Student engagement is concerned with the interaction between the time, effort and other relevant resources invested by both students and their institutions intended to optimise the student experience and enhance the learning outcomes and development of students and the performance, and reputation of the institution.”

(Trowler, 2010, p.3)



Defining engagement

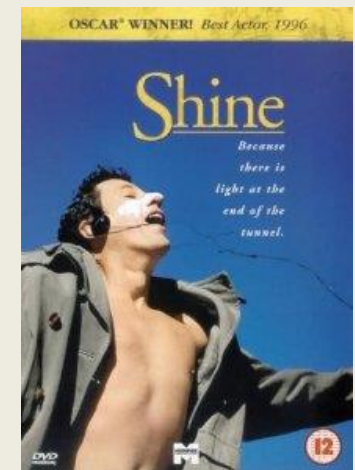
Trowler and Trowler (2011):

- Little evidence in the literature to suggest that students are engaged beyond their own learning.
- Students are most commonly shown to be customers of engagement, rather than collaborators.
- Student engagement is understood to have the following dimensions (both positive and negative):
 - Behavioural (e.g., good attendance)
 - Emotional (e.g., interest/enjoyment)
 - Cognitive (e.g., going beyond requirements, seeking challenge)



Engaging further with the module

1. Blog discussions
2. Attending live performances
3. 'Try Something New'





Feedback

Blogs:

"The blogs maybe should be marked, didn't take part as didn't feel the need to".

"I think the blogs either need to be made compulsory or taken out."

Try Something New:

"Constantly wanted to attend unfortunately other aspects (work, essays) got in the way."

"Didn't engage as was busy with other assignments. If was on assignment definitely would have prioritised this."

"Didn't engage because I have been busy with other work & didn't think it would help with lecture revision."



Feedback

“I really liked this element and would love to think it would continue into other years to help them with a more holistic attitude towards music”.

“Try something new was a really great part of the music psychology module for me. I enjoyed it because, although I was sceptical at first, it introduced me to a lot of different musical experiences that I now really love. As well as this, it helped me to learn to appreciate how music is used, as well as the importance of it in film to evoke emotions etc., which tied in nicely with the module and complemented it really well. I wanted to carry on try something new after the module had finished as I felt it had benefitted me a lot, not just educationally but also in other ways too. I wanted to continue expanding my tastes and trying new things, and also really loved going to it every week as it was a nice way to relax in a nice atmosphere and take a break from all the hard work of the third year. It also kept me thinking about some of the things I'd learnt in the module! I think because of this I've found out that you don't know if you're going to enjoy something unless you try it, and that the different preconceptions and stereotypes you might have of different styles of music, or other things like ballet, opera, musicals for example, can stop you from experiencing something you might really enjoy. I've really appreciated this feature of the module and I'm glad I decided to give it a go. It helped me engage further with the module content, opened my mind to new things, and has overall been a really great and enjoyable experience!”



Enhancing levels of engagement

1. Emotional ('not my type of music' Vs evoking emotions)
2. Cognitive ('kept me thinking about things I learnt')
3. Behavioural ('other things getting in the way')

Enhancing student engagement:

- Increase emotional investment in activities
- Make links between engagement and learning more explicit
- Consider physical restrictions for participation



References

Trowler, V. (2010). *Student engagement literature review*. The Higher Education Academy, York.

Trowler, V. and Trowler, P. (2011). *Student engagement: Toolkit for leaders*. Leadership Foundation for Higher Education.