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Apr 22nd, 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Facilitating Learning through Events

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Person, Jack W., "Facilitating Learning through Events" (2022). *University of Montana Conference on Undergraduate Research (UMCUR)*. 14.

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Learning Assistant Courses:

Event Management (BMGT 401)

Principles of Entertainment Management (BMGT 402)

As a Learning Assistant for two 6-week courses, I had to get to know my students quickly to impact their learning.

Event Management - BMGT 401

- In BMGT 401, **students were required to host an event for the Montana Food Bank Network** before the course was over. They needed to raise \$300 **without any starting budget.**
- **Students in BMGT 401 ended up raising over \$13,000 for the Montana Food Bank Network - more than all six previous classes combined!**

Principles of Entertainment Management - BMGT 402

- In BMGT 402, **students are required to complete an experience, internship, or applicable task related to entertainment management.**
- Examples of these experiences include:
 - Working the **Hasan Minhaj** show
 - Helping with an **ESports** event for **Can the Cats**
- As the LA and an employee with UMEM, **I organized students from 402 for load-in and load-out for the Hasan Minhaj show. Also being the runner, I picked up Hasan and worked the entire show.**



This is a photo from our first day of class. I recorded thorough attendance charts in Excel every day of class, and often used photos in addition to the Excel spreadsheets to verify every students' location in case of contact tracing.

How can a Learning Assistant benefit courses in Events & Entertainment?

What is a Learning Assistant?

- As a Learning Assistant, I was able to **help students learn how to manage marketing, logistics, ticketing, sales, and every other aspect of the events they hosted.**
- I learned a lot about **how to facilitate conversations, propose thoughtful questions, and promote learning-by-doing.**
- My professor was able to have someone to **bridge the gap between himself and the students** in the class.

How have your views of teaching and learning changed?

- I initially thought teaching was primarily about lectures.
- Now I have come to the conclusion that **teaching is just as much about participation and engagement.**
- I also think that material is more efficiently learned through **practical experiences** like working shows and discussion.

How did your practices develop this semester?

- I began as a Learning Assistant just taking attendance, and ended up doing the following:
 - **Organizing crews for large-scale events**
 - **Lecturing on my own during class time**
 - **Helping students raise \$13,000 for the Food Bank**

Which course readings, class discussions/activities, and assignments influenced your changes in views/practices?

- **"What if we Lose the Lecture?"** -Sam Scott
 - This article about active learning & the dramatically active learning environment of BMGT 401/402 prompted me to **embrace the benefits of engaged students.**
- **"Ask the Right Questions"** -Patricia Blosser
 - This paper on **open and closed questions**, when partnered with our class discussion and activity regarding open questions, I found my questions in class change.
- **Virtual Midterm Evaluation Presentations**
 - The activity where we shared our evaluation feedback with one another was very helpful for me, because I found **common weaknesses and strengths.**
- **Inclusivity and Bias - Project Implicit**
 - After taking some of the Implicit Association Tests, I found it useful to see **where my biases appeared** without my conscious knowledge.

Impact of the Learning Assistant Role

- I have developed the following skills as an LA:
 - **Soft skills** - leading conversation & guiding learning
 - **Hard skills** - lecturing to a large class
- I have also **honed my understanding of the material**
 - Reflecting on my experience with the course has helped me comprehend the topics covered.
- **Feedback from class:**
 - Our midterm feedback evaluation was useful for me to understand my own behavior as an LA
 - Helped **focus on weaknesses** (public speaking)
- **Next Steps as an LA:**
 - Continue to practice public speaking
 - Practice **awareness** when it comes to inherent bias and personal mental state (tired, disengaged, etc.)
- **Strengths & Impact - Keegan Lundman feedback:**
 - "Students seem very **comfortable** with conversing with you and **asking questions**"
 - "You gave informed, **useful answers**"
 - "You and Professor Morelli have a **great rhythm** during class during different activities"

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Mike Morelli

Notes on Learning Assistant Jack Person's performance:

- **Jack was prepared and engaged for every class. His interaction with his students peers always took a calm and measured tone and led to real discussion.**
- **Because our courses rely heavily experiential learning, Jack's willingness work with others and lead when required and listen at other times, served our courses, and our students, extremely well.**