

Cooperative Learning: Making a Difference in a University Classroom Environment. (A01-cerrato211045-Poster)

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Abstract:

Cooperative Learning (CL) was used to teach 3 applied chemistry courses in an Agronomy School (EARTH University). Student centered activities played a major role in the development of all courses. Each class of 24 students was divided into learning teams of 4 members. Team members were selected based on their cumulative GPA to ensure each team had a high, medium high, medium low and a low performer. Team members were rotated every 5 weeks. CL structures such as pairs share, pairs compare, two stray-two stay, jigsaw puzzle and flash cards were integrated in most classroom and laboratory activities. Teams were challenged to improve their performance through an improvement point system (IPS). Competition among teams was also a part of the IPS, awards were not grade related. Student course evaluations were very high. Students gladly favored use of CL in classroom activities over traditional lecture teaching in other courses. Students grades improved greatly, a class average of 90% was attained as compared with an eight year average of 82%. It appears CL made a difference in these classrooms.

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Presentation Information:

Presentation Date: Tuesday, November 12, 2002
Presentation Time: 9:00-11:00 am
Poster Board Number: 130

Keywords:

Cooperative Learning, Experiential Learning, Classroom research