

Learning and Teaching Conference 2012

Abstract 4E

Inspiring Critical and Imaginative Learners: An Interactive Workshop on Creative Geographic Writing

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This workshop aims to highlight the benefits of creative and interdisciplinary writing methods in the undergraduate and postgraduate classroom through a discussion and demonstration of their use in Geography. These methods can enhance student confidence (Barney & Mackinlay, 2010) develop critical thinking through creativity, and create new opportunities to explore key concepts as well as using creative expression and the imagination.

By exploring the concept of creative geographical writing through interactive exercises we hope to demonstrate the potential that this approach has to empower students in their learning, and also to generate new and creative working relationships between staff and students (a key aspect of good practice in learning, assessment and feedback).

This workshop will begin with a brief introduction to the use of creative writing and its development in recent undergraduate and postgraduate programmes - Geographical Thought Course and the MRes in Human Geography - and the responses from students to this alternative classroom activity.

Participants will then be invited to experience different writing activities in order to convey some of the potential these bring to the learning experience. The 'hands on' experience will also demonstrate the different ways in which creative writing can be incorporated into the classroom.

Finally, this workshop will turn to a broader discussion among participants of the potential development of these exercises in other disciplines and situations.

References

Barney, K. & Mackinlay (2010), 'Creating rainbows from words and transforming understandings: enhancing student learning through reflective writing in an Aboriginal music course.', *Teaching in Higher Education*, 15, 2, pp.161-173

Outcomes

*Understand the aims of creative geographic writing *identify key learning and teaching concepts that underpin creative geographic writing as practised *Be able to develop the concept for their own discipline and teaching situation *Have written creatively and experienced a 'taster' of the sessions used for postgraduate and undergraduate students.

