Project Title:

Lifespan development: interactive learning through multi-media
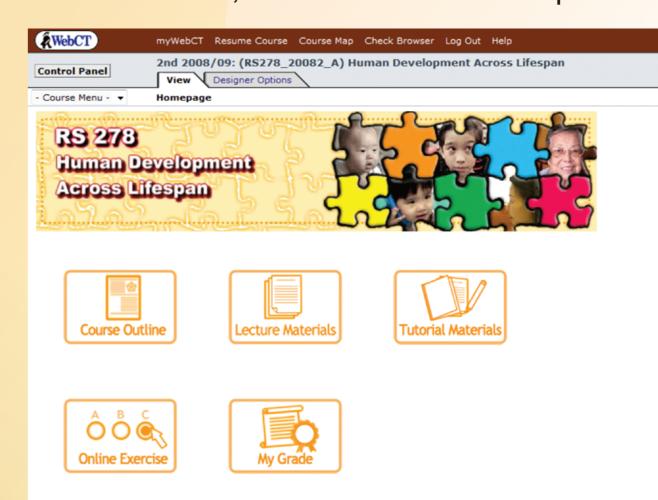
Name/s:

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Department:

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Project Description:

RS 278 (Human Development across Lifespan) is a course designed for Year 1 physiotherapy students. Many challenges were encountered when teaching this course in previous years, including limited teaching hours, copious amount of course material, and inadequate opportunities for problem solving and knowledge application. The project aimed to solve these problems by creating an e-learning component which features various video-based online tasks. Through the use of multi-media, the students have ample opportunities to learn about lifespan development in an interactive and interesting way, without resorting to rote memory. The task-based approach is much more engaging than the traditional lecture format and provides the students with more experiential learning. Each week, students are given a clinical scenario along with the associated video clip and asked to answer a few open-ended questions. These video-based online tasks were aimed at providing students with opportunities to practice their observational and evaluative skills and to use them to solve clinical problems in a flexible and interactive learning environment. The project is in line with one of the missions of the University: "To provide Academic Excellence in Professional Context through providing programs that are application-oriented and produce graduates who can apply theories in practice."

Project Objectives:

The overall aim of this project is to foster critical thinking, effective observational and evaluative skills, all of which are essential qualities for a competent physiotherapist. The objective of this project is thus compatible with our departmental goals to prepare students to be competent health professionals and active learners.

(1) To provide an opportunity for students to observe age-appropriate behaviors in a multi-media format.

(2) To provide the students with more experience in evaluating physical, psychosocial and cognitive status in people of different age groups, with and without disabilities.

(3) To promote students' interest in the subject through the completion of online tasks in a visually engaging e-learning environment.

Project Deliverable/s:

More than 500 video clips were produced for this VP(AD)-funded project, and classified into different categories according to age group (infancy, childhood, young adulthood, late adulthood) and function (motor, sensory, cognitive, psychosocial). These video clips were then used frequently in lectures and tutorials and to facilitate class discussions. Some of the clips were also used to create pre-class online tasks for each of the 10 course modules. In these tasks, students were given a clinical scenario along with the associated video clip and asked to answer a few open-ended questions. These tasks were intended to help the students prepare for the lecture each week.

Project Evaluation:

This project also received very encouraging feedback from the students, 70% of whom agreed or strongly agreed when asked whether they enjoyed blended learning. The project ideas were also shared with colleagues and thus influenced the development of other new video-based e-learning projects . A completion report was filed in July 2009, and the feedback from the Departmental Teaching and Learning Committee (DLTC) and Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee (FLTC) was very positive. The overall rating for the project was "good."

Almost all of the students completed all of the video-based tasks assigned, with an average score of 9.9/10. The majority agreed or strongly agreed that the video-based activities had helped them to achieve two of the main course objectives: (1) to be able to identify age-appropriate behavior and motor abilities across the lifespan within the normal population (83%) and (2) to be able to apply their knowledge of lifespan development to real-life situations (80.5%).

Most of the students (70%) agreed or strongly agreed that the video-based activities had strengthened their self-learning attitude and facilitated their mastery of the subject matter.