

An Online Tutorial that teaches Legal Reasoning and Reading Skills to EAL Business Students

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(Acknowledging Michelle Picard)

1

Introduction

Teaching project: • Blended learning: integrating e-learning with traditional face-to-face teaching
• Online tutorial: interactive e-exercises

Course: • Corporate Law (M)

Aim: • Basic understanding of commercial legal issues
• Legal reasoning and literacy skills

Students: • Non-law
• Business students

Student profile: • 85% International EAL students

Project Rationale

Novice law students

- Lack “domain-based knowledge”
- Lack knowledge of legal reasoning process

International EAL students

- Language and literacy difficulties
- Cultural, social, personal challenges

Explicit Pedagogy

<p>Legal Reasoning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Material fact identification • Issue identification • Rule identification • Application of law to facts • Tentative conclusion (Wade, 1990 -1991) 	<p>Genre Method</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explicit instruction on “moves” of law (Cope & Kalantzis, 1993) • Focus on content, structure, sequence and features of legal language • Emphasising legal literacy and reading skills
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4

[Com-Law Link](#)

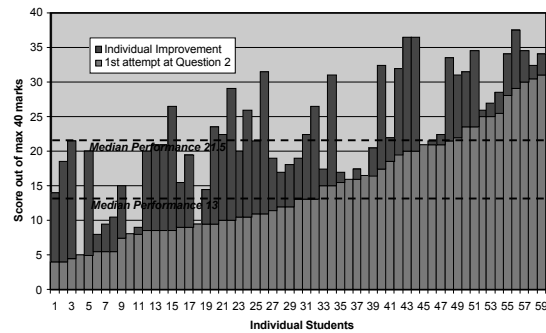
Implementation of Online Tutorial

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Lecture 1 •Factual scenario of legal problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Students get access to Online Tutorial which relates to Question 1 (already attempted) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Face-to-face tutorial - discussing Online Tutorial
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Students attempt (on their own) Question 1 and Question 2 relating to legal problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Students complete Online Tutorial •Students re-attempt and re-submit answer to Question 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Students present on Question 3

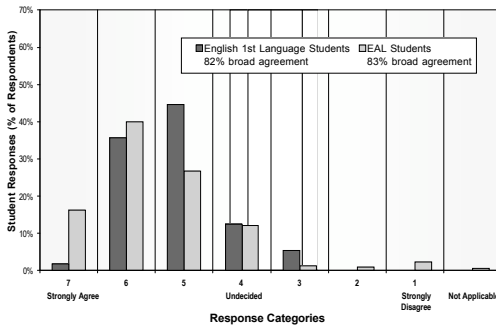
Evaluation of Online Tutorial (Work in progress)

- Pre- and Post Testing
- Survey of Student Experience of Learning and Teaching
- Focus Groups

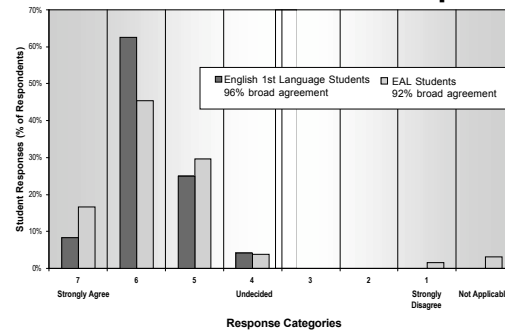
Individual Student Performance With Improvement After Completing Online Exercise



Trend - Student Survey: Usefulness of Online Tutorial



Trend - Student Survey: Usefulness of MIRAC Concept



Samples of Student feedback (open-ended survey question)

What are the best aspects of the Online Tutorial?

- New
- In case I forget something, I can refer back to it
- Flexibility – you can repeat it until you understand
- Enough time to listen, read and understand. No need rush.
- Help me to improve how to solve the legal problems
- A good opportunity to get used to corporate law language
- Break it down into small parts which is easy to understand
- Help me to improve how to solve the legal problems
- Learn legal language

11

Samples of Student feedback (open-ended survey question)

What improvements could be made to the Online Tutorial?

- The more examples the better
- I still prefer face-to-face tutorial because it has instant interaction with tutor
- It would be better to offer a complete suggested answer. In that way we can learn how to organise and write in the exam.
- Give more interpretation of legal language and standard answer
- Would have been good to see how final answer/advice should be presented in exam – how much detail/background needs to be included.

12

Current status of project

- Evaluation process being finalised
- Online Tutorial offered to 2nd semester 2008 Corporate Law students
- MIRAC method introduced to additional Masters course: Commercial Law (M): 2nd semester 2008

13

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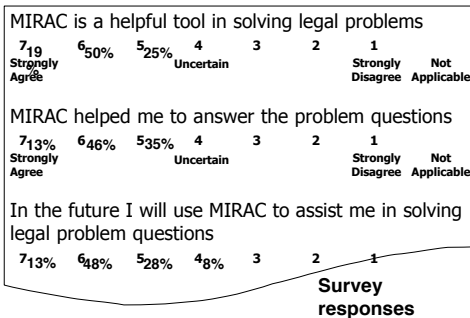
14

Back Up Slides

QUESTION 2					
CRITERIA	LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT			MARK	
CONTENT: Were the key issues identified and discussed in sufficient detail showing a broad understanding of the topic? Were the relevant legal rules adequately identified and discussed?	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Very good	7/5	First Attempt
					Second attempt
STRUCTURE: Was the question broken down into the different issues and were they coherently and logically addressed with appropriate structure?	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Very good	6	First Attempt
					Second attempt
LEGAL ARGUMENT / REASONING: Was there adequate application of the legal rules to the facts of the question? Was an argument made that was substantiated by relevant legal authority ? Was information integrated to support the argument?	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Very good	7/0	First Attempt
					Second attempt
CONCLUSION: Was an adequate tentative conclusion drawn where the various legal arguments were summarised?	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Very good	6	First Attempt
					Second attempt
WRITTEN EXPRESSION: Was the writing style clear? Was the answer easy to read with adequate grammar, punctuation, spelling, good sentence structure?	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Very good	6	First Attempt
					Second attempt

Survey: Student Experience of Learning and Teaching - MIRAC

Students responded to the following statements:



Survey: Student Experience of Learning and Teaching - Online Tutorial

Students responded to the following statements:

