SEDA Spring Conference 2025

Session Title: Evaluating the Effectiveness of Analytic Rubrics in Enhancing Self-Regulation and Collaborative Skills among Postgraduate Design Students in a Hybrid Learning Environment

Session Type: Practice Paper (15 minutes)

Main presenter(s): Dr Dilusha Rajapakse, Royal College of Arts

Co presenter(s): N/A

Session Summary: This session explores the role of analytic rubrics as a structured self and peer-assessment tool in postgraduate design education, particularly in hybrid and interdisciplinary learning environments. The study examines how rubrics enhance self-regulation, accountability, and collaboration by serving as a reflexive tool that actively shapes student learning behaviours. Through a mixed-methods approach, the session will present key findings on how structured rubrics-based self /peer assessment fosters deeper engagement, equitable participation, and reflective learning, offering an evidence-based, scalable model for collaborative design education.

Session Outline: This session will explore the effectiveness of analytic rubrics in postgraduate design education, focusing on their role in enhancing self-regulation, accountability, and collaborative engagement in hybrid and interdisciplinary learning environments. The discussion will be structured in three key stages: context and rationale, methodology, and findings with implications.

The session will begin by establishing the context and rationale for the study. It will outline the challenges of interdisciplinary collaboration in postgraduate design education, particularly in hybrid learning environments where communication, engagement, and equitable participation can be inconsistent. The role of self/peer assessment in guiding student learning behaviours will be examined, positioning analytic rubrics as a structured approach to support reflective learning and teamwork dynamics.

Next, the methodological approach will be discussed, detailing how the study was conducted over a 16-week hybrid learning unit at the Royal College of Art with 30 postgraduate design students from diverse disciplinary backgrounds working in six collaborative teams. A mixed-methods research design was used to capture both qualitative and quantitative insights into the impact of rubrics on student engagement. The session will explain how self and peer evaluations were conducted using an analytic rubric at the midpoint and pre-submission tutorial sessions, allowing students to assess their own and their peers' contributions. The data collection methods, including reflective statements and survey questionnaires, will also be outlined.

The session will conclude with a discussion of key findings and their implications. It will highlight how structured self and peer assessment fostered deeper engagement, improved communication, and facilitated reflective dialogue on role negotiation and accountability. By embedding rubrics as an iterative framework for reflection and dialogue, this research offers an adaptable, evidence-based model for improving student autonomy and collaborative learning in postgraduate education.

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