

Team Teaching

*The Pros and Cons, the
Ups and Downs – our
Personal Experience*



Chisholm

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Team Teaching – Why?

- Mainly due to behavioural issues;
- Teacher stress and isolation because of above;
- Multi level abilities and work paces within one class;
- Chronic absenteeism;
- On-going LLNP enrolment;
- Working with a growing number of students with a variety of problems, requiring counselling services;
- Impact of said behaviours on rest of campus environment.

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Team Teaching – Our Vision

We seemed to be placing students in exactly the same environment which had failed them at secondary school – the traditional classroom coupled with an overly authoritative approach and rules which seem, “designed to piss off young people.” (Michael Carr-Gregg)

Our hope was that the different physical layout and approach would help to eradicate previous negative classroom practices.

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Team Teaching – What?

Two classes in three classrooms taught by two teachers simultaneously.



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Team Teaching – What?

A mixture of self-paced,



small group tutorial work



and traditional whole class instruction.

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Team Teaching – What?

An “Are you ok today?” approach.

“I’ve done more work in six months than I did in a whole four years at high school.....you guys really care.” D.S.

We have the backup of the other teacher being present to be able to invest the time (and we have need to do it a lot!)

“You learn more here and get treated well.”

J.M.

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What are the Pros?

- Presenting students with something different;



“Most students are here because the traditional set-up did not work well with us. This course is more flexible for our needs.” S.W.

“It’s a lot more mature having it set up the way it is because it’s less like school.”

B.H.

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What are the Pros?

- Students are more responsible and pro-active with regard to their own learning;

“I really liked the way that the course was presented. The self paced work style was very helpful. I found it the best system that I have encountered for the learning process.”

G.E.

“It’s good being able to choose what to work on.”

C.E.

“I like working at my own speed.”

Z.B.

“It’s much less stressful.”

D.M.

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What are the Pros?

- Dissipation of noise levels in a larger area;
- Working with a teacher with a similar teaching philosophy;
- Both teachers being available to assist all students with learning AND manage their behaviours;

“Having two teachers in the classroom is very helpful because you never wait for a long period to be helped. The teachers are very understanding.” V. K.

- Colleague support

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What are the Pros?

- Teachers are seen as facilitators.
This allows for relationships to be developed;
- Easier accommodation of absenteeism;
- Plenty of materials for faster paced learners to retain engagement;
- A less stressful environment for slower paced learners;
- Students can see where they're up to and how much they have yet to do.

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What are the Cons?

- When the teachers do not have complementary or similar styles;
- Tracking possibly double the number of students;
- Marking for possibly double the number of students;
- Administration for possibly double the number of students;

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What are the Cons?

- Timetabling constraints;
- Some would argue self-paced learning only suits students who have a fair reading ability (ie who can follow written instructions);
- Students who do not (or will not) take responsibility for their own learning.

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In Conclusion...

Let's not get too carried away with how different a classroom can be.



“A classroom is a classroom is a classroom”

In the real world, we still have to operate within the confines of the curriculum we teach.

Where to from here?

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