

Producing bioethics websites

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Who (2001-2002)?

2nd year Medical Biochemists (n = 30)

2nd year Medical Students (n = 5)

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The Context:

A new module "targeting biochemical knowledge to medical problems"

- core for medical biochemists
- optional study skills module for medics

The Activity

Students work in teams of 4-5 to produce a website reviewing other web-based materials on a specified bioethical topic.

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Also give a 15 min presentation of their site to peers.

Aims and Objectives

Appreciate the science underlying a current controversial development in biomedicine

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Recognise the diversity of ethical opinion regarding the development of a current controversial development in biomedicine

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Use web-authoring software

Work as a member of a team

Tasks within project

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Researching info on the WWW

Tasks within project

Researching info on the WWW

Deciding which sites to include

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Deciding on criteria for rating websites, and applying appropriate scoring system

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Designing their website

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Designing their website

Implementing the design

The topics (2001-2002)

Genetic patenting

Therapeutic cloning and stem cell research

Use of human material (inc foetal tissue)

Genetic screening (inc PGD)

Use of placebos

Gene therapy

Marketing & pricing of pharmaceuticals

Animal experimentation and alternatives

The topics (2002-2003)

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Training

A lecture on how to author web pages
(using Microsoft FrontPage)

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Supported by hands-on exercise

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- instructions e-mailed to students

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- 2 hour session, supervised

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(using Microsoft FrontPage)

Supported by hands-on exercise

- instructions e-mailed to students
- 2 hour session, supervised
- their initial websites e-mailed to me for evaluation and feedback

Assessment of exercise

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66% for the website

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34% for the presentation

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Peer assessment to weight allocation of marks within a team (adapted from Conway *et al* (1993), *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education* 18:45-56)

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Contributing overall 20% to mark for module

Preliminary Evaluation

Questionnaire-based survey before and after activity (n = 32, score out of 10)

Category	Before	After	Change
Knowledge about Bioethics	3.06	6.72	+ 3.66
Interest in Bioethics	6.42	7.22	+ 0.80
Interest in Web authoring	6.06	6.56	+ 0.50

Changes 2002-2003

Altered topics (as above)

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Altered topics (as above)

Tighter briefing re science background

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Presentation of webs brought forward

- Main request in student evaluation
- More time to use each other's sites
- Clash with outside speakers removed

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