# THE EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT OF ONLINESKILLS THROUGH ONLINE GROUP DISCUSSION

## Associate Professor Jacqui Taylor, Dept of Psychology

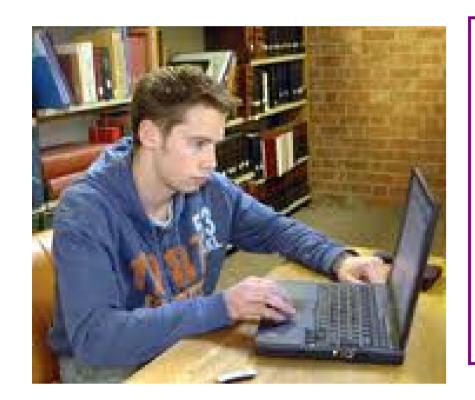| Problems | Solutions |
|---|---|
| Difficult to assess skills developed in online group discussions | Assess each message/discussion for critical evaluation, team working and leadership |
| Difficult to ensure learning has taken place and that students understand this learning | Reflective essays |



**Factors when setting up online discussions -> impact on message quality and student engagement**
• Task type – collaborative?
• Group composition - random allocation?
• Moderated or laissez faire?
• Synchronous / asynchronous?



**Tasks:** Participate in 3 online discussions (15% x3)
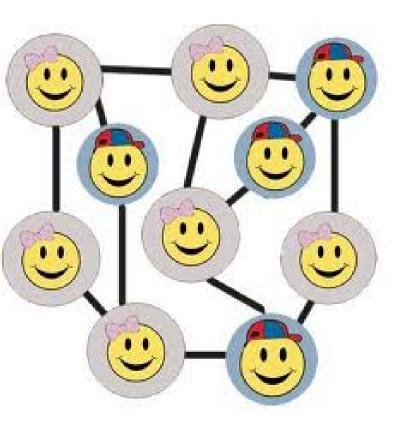Lead one online discussion = 55%

**Assessment 1**
Assess each message for evaluation
Assess initial and final message for co-ordination
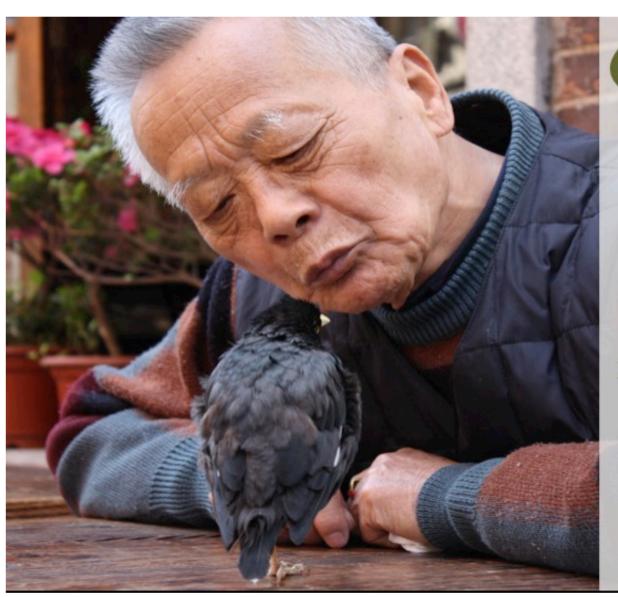Holistically assess discussion leadership skills



We do not learn from experience …we learn from reflecting on experience.

*John Dewey*

**Assess Critical Evaluation**
- questioning / building on previous messages / research
- extent and timeliness of resources used e.g. recent and not already covered in lectures
- reflect on credibility of sources (academic + other media)

**Assess Leadership / Teamwork Skills**
- encourage interactivity / motivating comments (social presence)
- initiate: definitions, boundaries, plan
- summary: research and views
- weave research and responses into questions

**Assessment 2**
Reflective essays on:

Processes (50%)
- link to group theory and online research

Content (50%)
– identify how understanding of the topic changed
- reflect on credibility of sources (academic + other media)
- links to personal experiences
- apply theory to wider context

## CONCLUSIONS

Assessment methods need to be modernised, to reflect changes in learning activities taking place with Web 2.0 -> consider experiences / expectations of current generation

Consider individual differences in assessment, e.g. students with written communication difficulties or English as a second language