

Learning project skills by organizing an international webinar

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Background: Nursing profession requires competencies for cooperation and project organizing. The curriculum of nursing students includes an introductory project skills course, the objectives of which are to enhance knowledge about the characteristics and leading principles of project work and give the possibility of practicing project skills in real life. The course is carried out in English to enhance the language skills of the students.

Aim: The students, with the help and guidance of teachers, organize an international webinar following the basic principles of project working. Working together with international partners gives a natural reason to use English language and so forth motivate Finnish students to study in English.

Implementation: Agreements with international and domestic key-speakers, Nursing college of Celje, Slovenia; Lublin medical university of Poland; Ounas Oulu campus and Oulainen vocational college, was made before the webinar. The online platform for the webinar was created and date, time and preliminary program was set before the course started. Students were divided into nine groups and then given specific roles: 1) project managers, 2) secretaries, 3) publicists, 4) advertisers, 5) webinar chairmen, 6) webinar moderators, 7) Finland introduction, 8) care of the elderly in Finland and 9) Feedback and evaluation -group. Groups 1, 2, 3, 4 and 9 concentrated mainly in planning and organizing the webinar and groups 5, 6, 7 and 8 planned, implemented or moderated content for the webinar. Four project meetings were called together by the project managers before the webinar and one after the webinar. The webinar was advertised for audience by the advertiser and publicist -groups. In addition the groups worked independently on their special tasks.

Evaluation: Organizing a webinar is a good method for learning project skills. The students appreciated that they were in charge of the webinar arrangements after the course started, and felt that they learned a lot by doing by their selves. International cooperation motivated studying in a foreign language. A webinar is an efficient and cheap way to enhance international cooperation. Project work is hard to learn only in theory, instead learning by doing is more efficient.