



BMS Student -Staff academic community: Insights from an IAD secondment project

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Why this project?

- **TPR 2018 outcomes:**
 - BMS students have a clear “BMS student identity”
 - No clear sense of BMS Student -Staff community

- **NSS results:**

“I feel part of a community of staff and students”

54.1% agreed (2018)

43.1% agreed (2019)

“Staff value students views and opinions about courses”

57.0% agreed (2018)

47.4% agreed (2019)

Why having an effective Student –Staff academic community is important?

- Increased student retention
- Increased student engagement
- Increased student academic performance
- Increased wellbeing
- Increased student and staff experiences

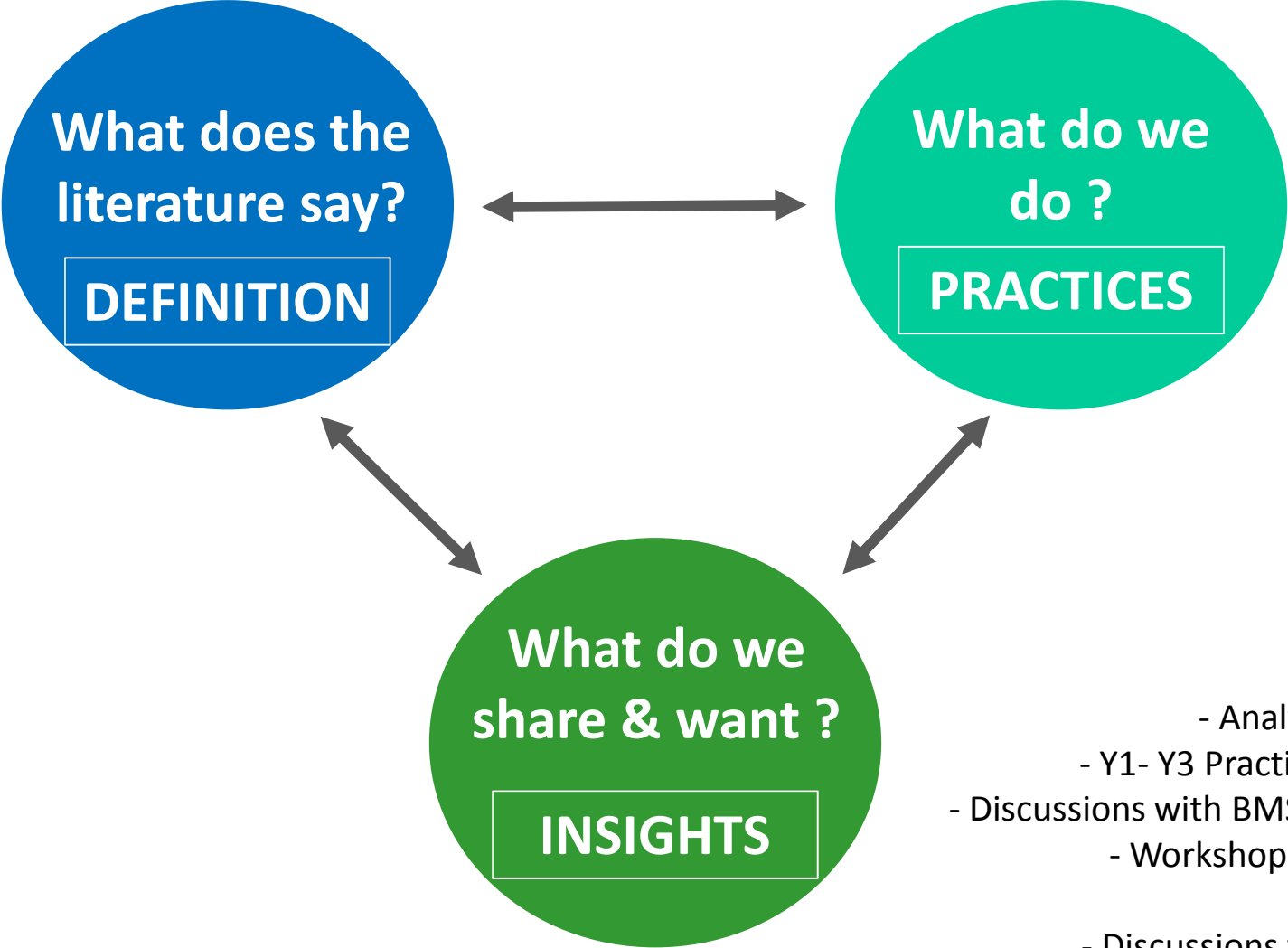
What does Student -Staff academic community means?

- Numerous terms: Learning community, community of practice, academic community
- Group of individuals from our deanery who study, research or teach Biomedical Sciences.

Aims of the project

- To define Student- Staff academic community in the BMS context.
- To explore staff and student perceptions of/ aspirations in Student - Staff academic community in BMS.
- To identify the contributing factors to effective community building.
- To identify good practices to build on and draw recommendations for enhancing the BMS Student- Staff community

Methods



- Literature review
- Analysis NSS data/ comments
- Y1- Y3 Practices review in UG courses
- Discussions with BMS Staff, PG & UG students
 - Workshop on academic community
 - Survey UG Students
- Discussions with UoE staff (non BMS)

Environment and practices should encourage students to feel part of community by giving them:

1. A welcoming home.
2. A shared collective identity.
3. An opportunity to develop their own learning by working with others.
4. An opportunity to direct (some of) their own learning.
5. An opportunity to share in advancing knowledge via research.
6. An opportunity to contribute to their and wider community.

Our Practices

Year	Course Name	Group work	Create ER	Design LO	Design Asst	Research project	Societal outcomes
1	Biomedical Sciences 1	yes	no	no	no	no	no
1	Our Changing World	yes	yes?	no	yes	no	no
1	Medical Biology 1	yes	no	no	no	no?	no
2	Cells to Organisms 2	yes	no	no	no	no	no
2	Biomedical Sciences 2	yes	no	no	no	no	no
2	Microorganisms, Infection and Immunity 2	yes	no	no	no	no	no
3	Clinical Biochemistry and Endocrinology 3	yes	no	no	yes	no	no
3	Mechanisms of Brain Development 3	yes	no	no	no	no	no
3	Pharmacology 3	yes	yes?	no	yes	no	no
3	Biomedical Sciences 3	yes	no	no	no	no	no
3	Anatomy and Development 3	yes	no	no	no	no	no
3	Applied Pharmacology 3	yes	no	no	yes	no	no
3	Clinical Immunology & Haematology 3A	yes	yes?	no	yes	no	no
3	Clinical Immunology & Haematology 3B	yes	yes?	no	yes	no	no
3	Medical Microbiology 3	yes	no	no	yes	no	no
3	Neuroscience 3	yes	no	no	no	no	no
3	Reproductive Biology 3	yes	no	no	yes	no	no
3	Physiology 3	yes	no	no	yes	no	no

Learning opportunities in Year 1 – Year 3 courses in the Biomedical sciences programme

Our Practices

Environment and practices should encourage students to feel part of community by giving them:

1. A welcoming home. ✘
2. A shared collective identity. ✘
3. An opportunity to develop their own learning by working with others. ✓
4. An opportunity to direct (some of) their own learning. ✘
5. An opportunity to share in advancing knowledge via research. ✓
6. An opportunity to contribute to their community and wider community. ✘/✓

What do students and staff perceive?

- Lack of one home
- No clear collective identity
- "Fragmented experience" (UG Std)
- Independent cluster of communities (PG Std, Staff)
- Clear "Us versus Them" divide
- Individuals are seen positively. In contrast, groups are seen negatively
- Numerous "Campus legends": Generalised statements circulated amongst students without evidence. Eg "BMTO is badly organised", "Academics do not care about students", "Marking is subjective"...

What do students and staff value and want?

- Students and staff value the same things:
Diversity-Support- Enthusiasm-Inspiration (BMS STRENGTHS)
- Students and staff want the same things:
Trust & respect, Togetherness, contributions feeling valued.
- Promoting factors:
Human interactions and communication, distribution of power and reflection.

Where do we go from here?

- Optimise the time students and staff are together. Emphasis on intra curriculum potential.
 - Where/ How to provide these opportunities in our curriculum? In our core courses?
 - How to bring more choice/ freedom at scale?
- Clarify BMS community vision, BMS identity and sense of belonging.
- Consider the human/ social dimension of teaching and learning.
 - How to encourage interpersonal knowledge vs teaching at scale?
- Reconsider the place of students in the deaneries activities.
 - How to create new ways for students to contribute rather than fitting in existing structures.

Thanks!

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