

Open Mic SIX: Critical Thinking
A forum for discussing how our teaching
can make the invisible visible in Business & Society courses

Since IABS 2013, a group of IABS Fellows has presented a session specifically dedicated to conference participants sharing ideas about our teaching and, although we are not all Fellows, we would like to continue the tradition. These sessions have seen solid turnout and great discussion and are an asset to the members able to attend.

Session Description

The “open mic” concept is loosely patterned after a common feature at nightclubs, comedy clubs, and other types of entertainment businesses where people can come “up to the microphone” (the mic) and say pretty much whatever they want. It provides equal opportunity to seasoned performers as well as novices. This approach does not restrict what can be sung, said, or performed. It is an open forum, in its purest form.

Previous session facilitators have served to diplomatically re-direct the conversation to others who had not yet contributed and/or to limit the time that an individual would speak, but neither “guideline” has had to be enforced. Every session attendee has been afforded the opportunity to speak, and at one point a non-facilitator has even asked directly if the newer faculty members in attendance had something to share. A very professional, respectful, and collegial atmosphere has emerged throughout each Open Mic session and we plan to continue this trend.

For this session, the organizers will kick things off with their own examples of how they are “making the invisible visible.” For example, critical thinking is often difficult to see in our students, but we have several approaches we take to ensure that our students are engaging in the process that we will share. Once the initial examples are given we will ask audience members to contribute their own ideas and suggestions on the topic. Should the conversation wane at any point we will be prepared with questions focusing on the conference theme to jumpstart the dialogue.

In an attempt to reach as many members as possible, if accepted, the session facilitators will post a targeted announcement of the session on IABS-L a few weeks before the meeting. All attendees will be invited to share their thoughts, raise issues, voice concerns, probe others for answers or suggestions, or whatever they care to contribute. The session does not have a set timeline, or time devoted to wrapping up the session; in fact, it does not even have a mic or a performance platform. The organizers will keep their contributions brief to set the tone and move to a more unstructured discussion.

Given the unstructured format of the “open mic,” this session features three seasoned educators who stand ready to respond, support and/or assist in whatever manner is needed in order to facilitate engaged conversations about teaching. Agreeing to serve as coordinators, facilitators, and “open mic” participants, are Tara Ceranic Salinas of the University of San Diego, Judith

Schrempf-Stirling of the University of Geneva, and Craig Dunn of Western Washington University.

Goal of the session

As with previous sessions, the overriding goal is: To provide an opportunity for those attending the annual IABS meeting in Hong Kong to discuss with their colleagues the ways in which our teaching can not only enhance student learning but also help make the invisible visible in our classrooms and beyond.

We would be pleased if this session leads to a continuation of the conversation, perhaps online, after the session and conference have concluded, even possibly resulting in collaborative work that may lead to publication, new course development, or innovative classroom delivery. We just want to get the conversation started and see where it takes us.

Note to the Conference Program Chair: Given the flexibility of the session and the potential that the conversation may not naturally end at any set time, we simply ask for a block of time to be allocated to this session that best serves the conference attendees and works within the conference schedule.