

A PILOT USE OF TEAM-BASED LEARNING IN GRADUATE PUBLIC HEALTH EDUCATION

Marc Van der Putten and Nuntavarn Vichit-Vadakan

Faculty of Public Health, Thammasat University, Pathum Thani Thailand

Abstract. This pilot study was undertaken to determine the impact of team-based learning (TBL) on graduate students of public health in a Thai context. The pilot project adopted Michaelsen's approach with the aim of improving learning among Thai graduate students enrolled in public health ethics. This TBL approach attempted to motivate students to do pre-class reading and be active "in-class" learners. Pre-class preparation allowed teachers to address and concentrate on learning gaps, while team work promoted peer interaction and active learning. TBL was found to be useful in fostering student preparedness and to transform "passive" into "active" learning, which especially benefited students "academically at risk" through peer teaching opportunities. With TBL, students valued the relevance of the course content and learning materials. They had positive opinions regarding the effect of TBL on individual and group learning. TBL was perceived to be instrumental in translating conceptual into applicable knowledge, and stimulated individual efforts as well as accountability. This study should be useful to those considering using TBL for public health education.

Key words: team-based learning, public health, graduate students, Thailand

Correspondence: Marc Van der Putten, Faculty of Public Health, Thammasat University, Rangsit Campus, Klong Luang, Paholyothin Road, Patum Thani 12121, Thailand.

Tel: +66 (0) 2986 9213~9 ext 7449; Fax: +66 (0) 2516 2708; Mobile: +66 (0) 81830 3864

E-mail: mvd@tu.ac.th