

Praxis Learning Journal

Student Notes

Communicating your academic, professional and personal development and empowerment

First Submission: Module ONE journal entry – 14th March 2021, 11.59pm (qualitative feedback only – indicative grade band)

Final Submission: ALL entries Sunday 11th June 2021, 11.59pm (40 marks to be awarded)

Total marks: 40

- **2 marks:** pre-assessment quiz
 - **7 marks:** 7 action engagement tasks x 1 mark each (1 each synchronous/asynchronous action task)
 - **28 marks:** 7 module entries x 4 marks each (2 entries required for module 4)
 - **3 marks:** final praxis statement
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Overview

Investigating and Communicating Social Problems (I&CSP) is taught utilising an ‘active learning’ approach. Active learning is learning by discovery, integrating both theoretical knowledge and activities and discussions. You, the student, are central to the learning journey. The learning modules (including online AND face-to-face content) are not about providing you with lots of facts and figures to memorise. They are designed to assist you to discover the key concepts and applications of the unit, in order to develop a critical consciousness of your role as an academic, a professional, and as a citizen in your social world(s).

Your Praxis Learning Journal is a representation of your active engagement in this unit. ***It’s core purpose is to communicate your academic, professional and personal development and empowerment throughout the semester (your audience being the unit markers).*** There is no right/wrong content (though we prefer some connection to the module), and these entries are not a simple description (summary) of the content covered. Rather a praxis journal is a discussion that highlights your critical self-reflections on your learning in each module, within the unit, and more broadly (i.e. the academic, professional and personal pathways that you are travelling).

Before writing each module, you need to ensure you have engaged with the Theory, Action and Reflection tasks. You need to be able to show evidence of this:

- Discuss the theoretical ideas, readings and/or videos that have influenced your understanding of the module’s content (we would expect to see at least one scholarly reference cited/mentioned somewhere in this part)
- Explain the action tasks that you engaged with (either synchronous or asynchronous).
- Engage self-reflection and demonstrate insight when thinking about your development and empowerment from the module. The impact of the learning does not need to be profound for each module, and there may be times when you feel like you are stagnating, or just not getting it. Honesty is appreciated

- Pull these three elements (coherently) together, so that you can highlight your praxis: your critical consciousness of the value of your learning from your development and empowerment: as a scholar (an academic!), as a developing scholar in your discipline, or as a citizen in your social world(s)
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TARP Framework

You should be guided by the **TARP framework** (T + A + R = P) for each learning module. It is a requirement that you demonstrate how you have engaged with each of these elements within a module.

The TAP Learning Framework is inspired by the work of Paulo Freire, who worked recognised the power and elitism of traditional educational structures. His argument is that knowledge is not just something to be passed down through books and lectures, rather it is also something that lies in the practicalities of 'doing'. He framed his work around the idea of developing Praxis: the merging of theory and action. The learning formula **T + A = P** results from attitude that: "[transformation and discovery] cannot be purely intellectual, but must involve action; nor can it be limited to mere activism [in the sense of the act of deliberately doing some], but must include serious reflection: only then will it be a praxis" (Freire 2018:65)

Theory (T): Individual Learning Tasks to complete online (vUWS). These include short videos, reading, and activities to get you thinking about the concepts within each module. These are designed to be undertaken EITHER before and/or after the tutorial. Some theory is best engaged with after the tutorial, when you have personal experiences to develop your understanding.

Action (A): Each module involves a set of activities to be undertaken either in class (physical or virtual group-learning) or asynchronously (independent-learning). These will be delivered through the HyFlex learning model. In line with the university's policy, you need to actively participate within the classroom in order to be successful in this unit. This is a strong correlation between active participation in tutorials and grades: if you don't participate, you will struggle to complete assessment tasks (particularly the praxis journal). NO tutorial slides or recordings will be made available, as these are not adequate for independent learning. Please note the 'participation' component within the Praxis Journal submission that is worth 15% of your mark for that assessment task (this can be achieved through any of the modes of participation, as long as you engage with the tasks at home).

Reflection (R): Once engaged with the theory and action, you can begin to reflect on your learning: where you were when you started the module (or the unit), and how you have developed your understanding and created knowledge. Reflections are always personal and individual. No other student (or tutor, for that matter) will have the same journey through the unit. A series of questions will be provided in each module to prompt your thinking about your engagement and development (but do not only answer these questions in your Praxis Journal). You should try and complete your initial reflections within the weeks of study for a module, when experiences and ideas are 'fresh' in your memory.

Praxis (P): Praxis is about development and empowerment beyond the traditional structures of elite education. It is a concept developed by Paulo Freire in his work "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" (see Module 1). Praxis is concerned with how we put learning into practice. You are looking at the joining of theory and action, as well as your reflections on your learning and development, and how this will help you be an empowered academic, professional and/or citizen. It is about putting your learning into 'informed practice'. Your Praxis should consider the value of module content BEYOND the unit: i.e. for your greater academic, personal and/or professional pathways.

The journal itself is a personal account. This means that it should reflect your learning experiences, and your developing understanding of how we investigate and communicate the key social problems in our worlds. Whilst you will interact and collaborate with other members of the learning community during tutorials and online, those notes must be re-packaged individually, and the 'reflection on learning', as a personal account, must be individual. Copying (or closely mirroring) another students' praxis journal will indicate a lack of insight. While there is a structure to this assessment, there are many ways to represent the TAP learning framework, within each learning module.

Praxis Journal

This assessment is designed to be completed within the fortnight of each module, and refined/developed as you progress through the unit. Each student has a "Praxis Journal" within vUWS (found at the top of praxis journal page). These are currently set as private conversations between you and the tutors/markers.

Presenting your work in this form, allows you to be more creative: you are encouraged to be incorporate pictures, sounds, spoken notes, videos, etc. as a way of capturing your learning and involvement with each module. We have provided some "how to" links on the Praxis Journal assessment page. The expectation is that you write at approximately 150-200 words a week (you would struggle to cover all the key elements in less). If you choose to make a video instead, you are looking at 3-5 minutes as an equivalent length of time (and depth of discussion).

In the spirit of Paulo Friere's, democratisation of education and critical consciousness, the form that your journal takes should reflect 'your voice'. There is no need to adopt a formal academic writing style (because very few of us actually use that to communicate the ideas that evolve deep in our consciousness). You have free creative control over the form your discussion takes (and exercising that creativity generally leads to better marks,). The only 'formality' that is required is that you correctly integrate one scholarly reference into each module entry (i.e. cited and referenced correctly). The point of this is to make sure that everyone reads at least one thing each module (you only become better at reading if you do it frequently!)

A journal is a collection of entries made on a regular basis; it should be self-reflective in style. Your Praxis Journal should be completed fortnightly as a series of blogposts. It is easiest to communicate your experiences when they are fresh in your mind. You do have the ability to

come back and edit your initial posts (though all posts that are edited after the due date (11th June) will receive a late penalty of 10% a day).

Required Entries and breakdown of marks

1. Before commencing your praxis journal, you should complete the pre-assessment quiz. This is worth 2 marks, and ensures that you have read and understood the instructions for the assessment task.
2. You should briefly introduce yourself in an initial post: this is a way of contextualising who you are as you begin the unit (see the Who am I? task at the top of the Learning Modules page). This should only be brief (50-100 words) as it is not worth marks, but will contextualise the discussion and reflections that follow.
3. **You need 1 entry for each of modules 1,2,3,5,6,7, and 2 entries for module 4 (as there are two action tasks/tutorials).** This makes 7 entries that your development and empowerment throughout the module. These should be 150-200 words each. Each of these entries is worth 4 marks. This equates to a total of 28 marks. Each of these entries needs to have a minimum of 1 scholarly reference correctly cited within the text/discussion and referenced at the end of the post.
4. You will also be able to earn 1 mark each tutorial (or associated independent action task) for completing an action engagement task. For example: in module one, you will receive your 1 mark for completing the exploration and associated video, and then engaging with a peer's video (on your tutorial group discussion group). ***The point of the engagement marks is not to assess how smart you are, nor how well you complete the task: rather they will be about demonstrating your active engagement (i.e. you either did actively participate or you didn't).*** Engagement marks can be earned for both Group-Synchronous learning (physical and virtual classroom) and Independent-Asynchronous learning. Please check the action task for each module to see what you are required to do to earn these marks. This equates to a total of 7 marks.
5. Final Praxis Statement: at the end of the unit, you are required to take a big step back from your fortnightly activities and consider the development of your critical consciousness across the entire unit/semester. This statement is not just a summary of everything, rather it is about emphasising your academic, personal and professional growth and empowerment. You should highlight key contributors (i.e. key learning moments) that have helped to develop your critical consciousness of what it means to investigate, and communicate with a diverse audience, about the challenges our social world(s) face. This final entry is worth 3 marks.

A Note on Reading and Referencing

Referencing is an assessable component. Think about the in-class discussion (in module TWO) on trustworthy and non-trustworthy sources of information. ***You want to ensure that the reader can trust your writing.*** Demonstrating good referencing here, will also demonstrate

that you have integrated your active learning to change and develop your praxis as a developing academic.

A reference list should be included at the end of your module entry. You must include a minimum of 1 scholarly reading (i.e. one of: a peer review journal article, or a scholarly book, or articles from The Conversation). In this unit videos are not scholarly references, nor are government websites, news or social media, or Wikipedia (though these can all be used as additional references). A student wishing to receive higher than a credit would include more than the required references. Feel free to find and include additional resources that you have used to develop your understanding. References should be formatted using either Harvard (Author, Date) or APA style. You should be individually consistent with your formatting.

You should get in the habit of referencing everything. All published works (academic and lay readings, texts, youtube videos) need to be referenced and included in the reference list. Unpublished works (slides, online modules) do not need to be included in the reference list, but it should be clear within the text, as to where the content came from (i.e. "*In learning task 1.1, the topic video by Butland discussed....*").