



Contribution ID: 79

Type: Poster Presentation

An overview of the mainstream mechanics first year module at the University of the Western Cape and students experiences of the module

Wednesday, 1 July 2015 16:10 (1h 50m)

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The paper reports on a study in the Physics Department at University of the Western Cape(UWC) to promote positive attitude towards learning physics in a mixed ability physics mainstream mechanics first year class. The mainstream physics module centers its focus on improving students' attitude towards learning physics by giving them epistemological access to the study of physics. Central to the modules teaching philosophy and pedagogy is the socio-cultural perspectives on learning in the sciences. This has guided the development of our intervention strategies to direct students' learning toward gaining access to the ways of knowing of the discipline. Such perspectives suggest that an exclusively individual or cognitive approach may need to be complemented by those that recognize the social contexts in which science learning takes place, and which place a greater emphasis on learning as participation and identity development. An overview of the mainstream mechanics module curriculum, pedagogical practice and learning environment as well as the preliminary results of a survey of students' experiences of the module will be presented and discussed.

Apply to be considered for a student award (Yes / No)?

Yes

Level for award (Hons, MSc, PhD, N/A)?

MSc

Main supervisor (name and email) and his / her institution

Dr Mark Herbert, mherbert@uwc.ac.za at University of the Western Cape

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Primary author: Ms TANCI, Sinovuyo (Student)

Co-author: Dr HERBERT, Mark (University of the Western Cape)

Presenter: Ms TANCI, Sinovuyo (Student)

Session Classification: Poster2

Track Classification: Track E - Physics Education