

How do I use concept mapping?

Module focus

- using concept maps to support learning

Module outcomes

- you will recognise ways that concept maps can assist student learning

You have explained the topic thoroughly. You have asked 'Are there any questions?'. You read the students' assignments and you see that a lot of the students haven't made the connection between the significant concepts that you have been covering in class. And they don't seem to have made the wider connection between concepts in your Unit.

Take a moment to reflect on this issue.

What challenges does this pose for *your* teaching?

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Possible solutions

1. Each tutorial or lecture, explain how the topic fits into the overall Unit structure.
2. Using visuals to help this explanation can assist many students to see the connections, as often topics can be regarded as separate and stand alone.
3. Have students prepare concept maps as a tool for revising and preparing for exams.
4. Make preparing a concept map a learning activity in class to help students see the connection between several concepts.
5. When using small group work in tutorial, groups can be asked to construct a concept map so as to encourage them to pool and share ideas, and deepen their understanding.
6. Ask students to complete a concept map to link the major points you are making in your lecture.

More help

Here are some resources from which you may seek some advice. They are all annotated so as to assist you in making judgements about what might be useful advice for your particular teaching context. By exploring some or all of these resources, you may well be able to generate strategies to suit your particular circumstances.

1. http://users.edte.utwente.nl/lanzing/cm_home.htm - includes a basis discussion of the purposes of concept maps, an example, references to concept mapping software and some further reading.
2. <http://istudy.tlt.psu.edu/FirstYearModules/ConceptMap/References.html> - a list of references on concept mapping.
3. <http://www.udel.edu/chem/white/teaching/ConceptMap.html> - a brief but practical discussion of how to prepare a concept map.
4. http://hsc.unm.edu/consg/critical/concept_map.shtml - discussion and example of using concept maps in Nursing education.
5. <http://www.utc.edu/Administration/WalkerTeachingResourceCenter/FacultyDevelopment/ConceptMapping/> - from the University of Tennessee, this site offers a broader focus, looking at the link between concept mapping, constructivist learning theory and curriculum design.
6. <http://academic.wsc.edu/frc/innovations.htm> - some practical ideas for using concept maps in your teaching.