Problem-based learning of an intensive design studio block unit in collaboration with a local community centre

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Problem-based learning offers a motivating context for students through learning by doing (Steinemann, 2003). There is a broad range of problem-based approaches which are presented by Savin-Baden (2020) as a series of constellations. Based on Savin-Baden's framework, the problem-based learning of an intensive design studio block unit in 2023 is examined.

In this design studio unit, the extension of the existing Serbian Cultural and Information Centre in Cairns was selected as a real project for students to tackle. Both building design and architectural engineering students were required to work in teams to propose creative solutions for expanding the current building to cater for the needs of diverse ethnic groups and First Nations people in Cairns.

Subsequently, three student groups were invited to fly to Cairns. They visited the Serbian Cultural and Information Centre and engaged with a local architect for having a better understanding of the needs of the centre.

Through the engagement with a local community, students are equipped with industry-ready skills to offer solutions to address real-world challenges. Problem-based learning pedagogy "offers opportunities to enable students…to engage with their passions and motivations and to see learning as an opportunity to challenge, change and transform the world" (Savin-Baden 2020, p. 9).

References

Savin-Baden, M. (2020) "What are problem-based pedagogies?" *Journal of Problem-Based Learning 7*(1), 3-10. https://doi.org/10.24313/jpbl.2020.00199

Steinemann, A. (2003). "Implementing sustainable development through problem-based learning pedagogy and practice", *Journal of Professional Issues in Engineering Education and Practice 129*(4), 216-224. https://doi.org/10.1061/(ASCE)1052-3928(2003)129:4(216)