

PEER-LED TEAM LEARNING IMPLEMENTATION

FROM BOSTON UNIVERSITY: YES TO WORKSHOPS!

MORTON Z. HOFFMAN

The first semester with PLTL is over and the workshops have been evaluated by the students at Boston University. Of the 63 students in our honors-level general and analytical chemistry course, 58 replied to the question: Were the workshops helpful to you? Forty-nine answered yes, five stated that they were marginally useful, and four answered no.

Insight about how the peer leaders view the PLTL approach comes from the following comments, included as part of their reports about Workshop #10 (Maxwell-Boltzmann distribution):

"Well, the last workshop of the semester is over and I am really going to miss it. Now I can understand why people become teachers even though it must be a very difficult profession."

"I am going to miss that group, but I am also very excited to get a new group and experience its new personality."

"In the end, we ran over to about 7:15, we did spend the usual two hours actually on the workshop. They all hung around a bit at the end - didn't quite want to leave. Does seem a bit strange that the next one isn't for nearly two months..."

"This workshop was a lovely end to the semester. I was very pleased with the progress my group has made with Excel over the past month."

"Things seemed to be clicking left and right throughout the whole workshop and it was so good to watch them discovering so much. I was also discovering quite a few things in the process. It was such an atmosphere of learning that it was scary. It made me really happy though."

"They were particularly interested in the workshop and seemed to find the results pretty impressive. The phrase, 'that blows my mind' was actually used."

"Overall, the workshop and the semester went well. I enjoyed myself and I hope the students did too."

We do know that we have an increase in the number of majors in the sophomore class that we would like to attribute to the success of our course in general. Almost all the workshop leaders are now chemistry majors even though they were not so at the start of the semester.

Morton Z. Hoffman
Boston University

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