Incorporating Research into Teaching: How & Why

Dr Marwa Gad Mohsen & Dr Richard Nicholls
Worcester Business School

UW L&T Conference 2016

Worcester Business School

Context

- Many teaching resources exist:
  - textbooks [with instructor packages]
  - ready-made case studies
  - video resources

- Is there time to teach our own research?

- Is there a need to teach our own research?

- Do we want to teach it? Are there benefits/obstacles?

- How should we teach it?

Research & Teaching
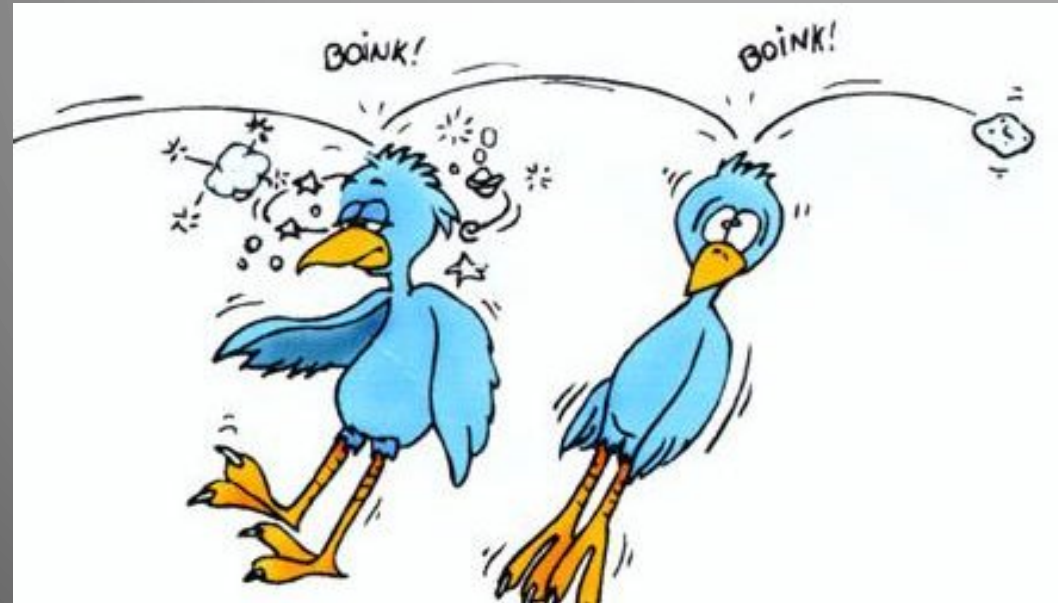
Good Days & *Bad Days*

▸ Research supports teaching and teaching supports research.

▸ Good days..
  ◦ 'Student presentations today inspired my research… a mini-case study can actually support this session based on my latest paper… this student-led session generated a good review of literature on the topic ..'

▸ Bad days..
  ◦ 'I have 6 hours of interviews to transcribe & code, and I promised my research partner it would be done by last Friday..
  ◦ 200 student grades need entering by midday tomorrow..
  ◦ I haven't started my presentation for next week's conference yet..
  ◦ Next week is teaching planning week, I have module meetings most days..
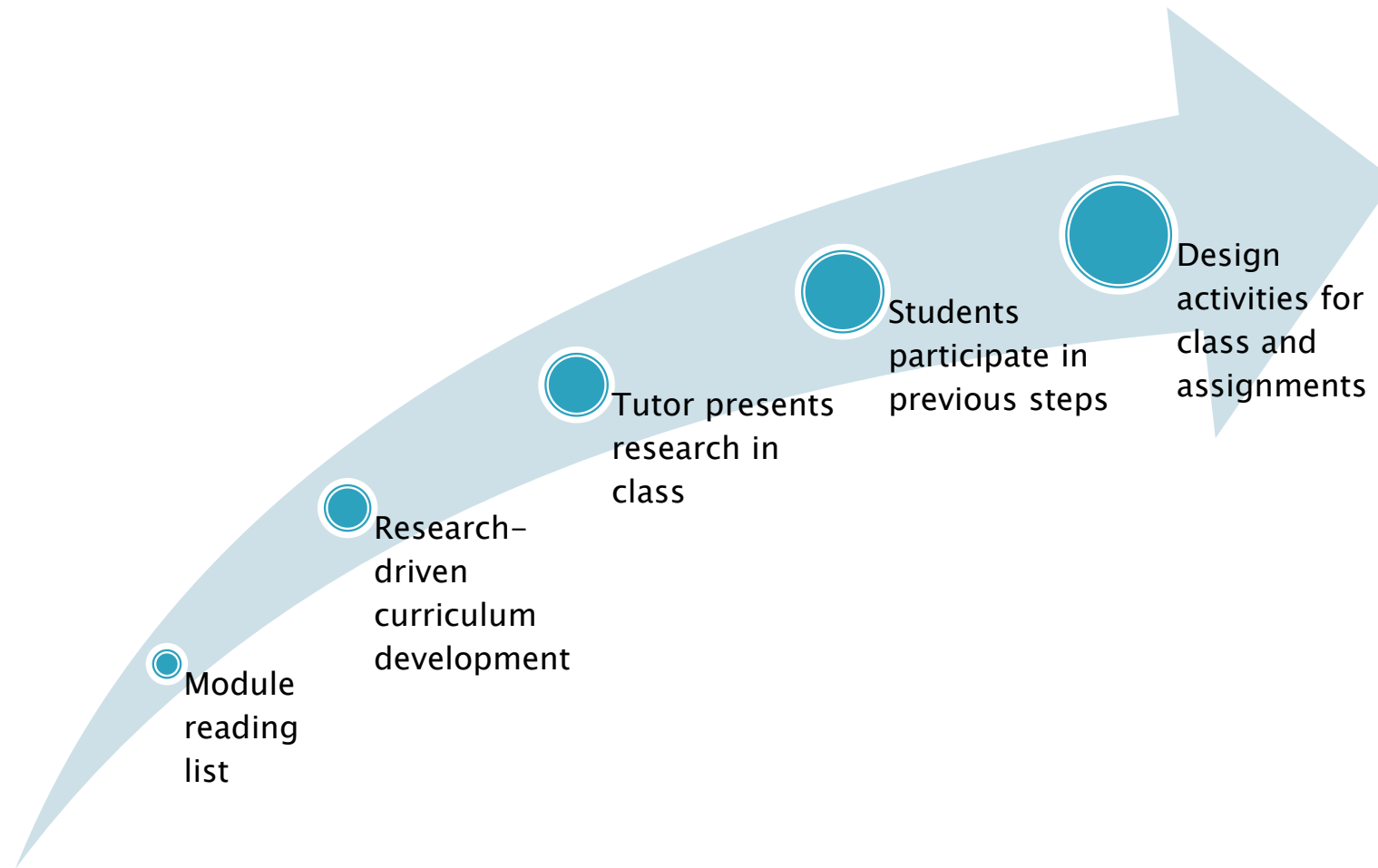 ◦ When was the annual appraisal deadline..?!'

Curriculum design and the research-teaching nexus (based on Healey, 2005: 70)

Using Own Research as a Resource in Teaching

Module reading list

Research-driven curriculum development

Tutor presents research in class

Students participate in previous steps

Design activities for class and assignments

Using Own Research as a Resource in Teaching

More active end of spectrum:

▶ Designing in-class activities which convey to students what it might feel like to actually conduct such research ☞

▶ Setting assignments in which students research issues which tutor has researched

Class Activities to Generate Research Closeness

- Replicating research:
  - Sorting critical incidents
  - Showing pictures used in a scenario–type experiment
  - Completing an authentic survey

- Give research instrument construction tasks and then debrief with authentic materials
  - TASK: draft 5 question for rail consumers about their satisfaction
  - DEBRIEF: compare to an actual survey

Contribution to Own & Student Development

- Opportunity for improving one's capacity to verbally explain the research area
- Opportunity to test the depth and usefulness of research findings
- Student class input:
  ◦ new insights / ideas / illustrations
- Student assignments can provide data for research

Organisational Viewpoint

- Development of new modules – research capacity should be systematically considered

- Allocation of teaching – who should do what? how aware are managers? What systems are in place for support?
  - Should a module run with a smaller number of students than the minimum specified if it is a core research topic?

- Teaching modules linked to research capacity & interests:
  - UG & PG students to engage in dissertations in areas where staff can most add value
  - How can robust procedures be put in place to achieve this?

- Implications for long run retention of staff
  - If staff are not teaching their research topic, they may move on where they can get better synergy
  - Teaching World $\neq$ Research World …
    - lack of synergy … workload implications … motivation dilemmas
  - Motivation improves the teaching environment for students

Issues for Discussion

▸ Is 'incorporating research into teaching' about *your* research or *your* research *area*?

▸ How can we frame our research to show a wider picture?

▸ What if you cannot have a module on your pet topic? How else can you bring the topic into your teaching?

▸ Do we sometimes need to 'convince' management that it is a win-win situation?