

Information for Authors

1. Title: *Problem Based Learning: Skills to address diversity in academic discipline and classroom environment*

2. Name: Emily M. Sweitzer, Ed.D
Assistant Professor of Psychology

3. Affiliation: California University of Pennsylvania

4. Address: Hm: 369 Stone Church Rd. Wk: California University of PA
Grindstone, PA 15442 250 University Ave.
California, PA 15419

5. E-mail: sweitzer@cup.edu

6. Abstract: *(Workshop Presentation)*

This session will introduce the concept of problem based learning as an effective classroom strategy for both the initial introduction and application of knowledge as it applies to various course contents. Problem based learning is grounded in both cognitive and constructivistic theories of learning. The use of problem based learning activities aids in the activation of students' prior knowledge, as well as in the assimilation and accommodation of new knowledge. Participants are provided with exercises that evoke active participation, promote content and context specific encoding, diminish the effects of retrieval failure, and provide opportunities for intrinsic learning.

This session will explore through lecture, active participation, and various handouts the fundamental theoretical components of problem based learning. Guided direction will be given, by the presenter, to the participants as small groups are created to engage in active classroom simulations that incorporate problem based learning. The session will also provide participants with the "skeleton" construction of effective problem based learning instructional designs.

Target Audience

This session is designed with the intent to target an array of participants from various academic and professional disciplines. The constructivistic nature of Problem Based Learning transcends specific content boundaries, as its broad components are designed for the adaptation to specific content areas, as well as to areas of common direction, such as workplace planning projects. Therefore, diversity in discipline and profession is actually an invited component for this session.

