

Fostering Peer Learning & Assessment Skills

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Background & Objectives

Peer assessment -- the assessment of student work by other students -- has been recognized as:

- fostering engagement in the learning process,
- giving students a sense of ownership of the assessment process,
- encouraging students to take more responsibility for their learning,
- enhancing students' ability to evaluate their interpretation of assessment criteria,
- and developing the broad range of skills involved in the critical analysis and evaluation of the work of others.

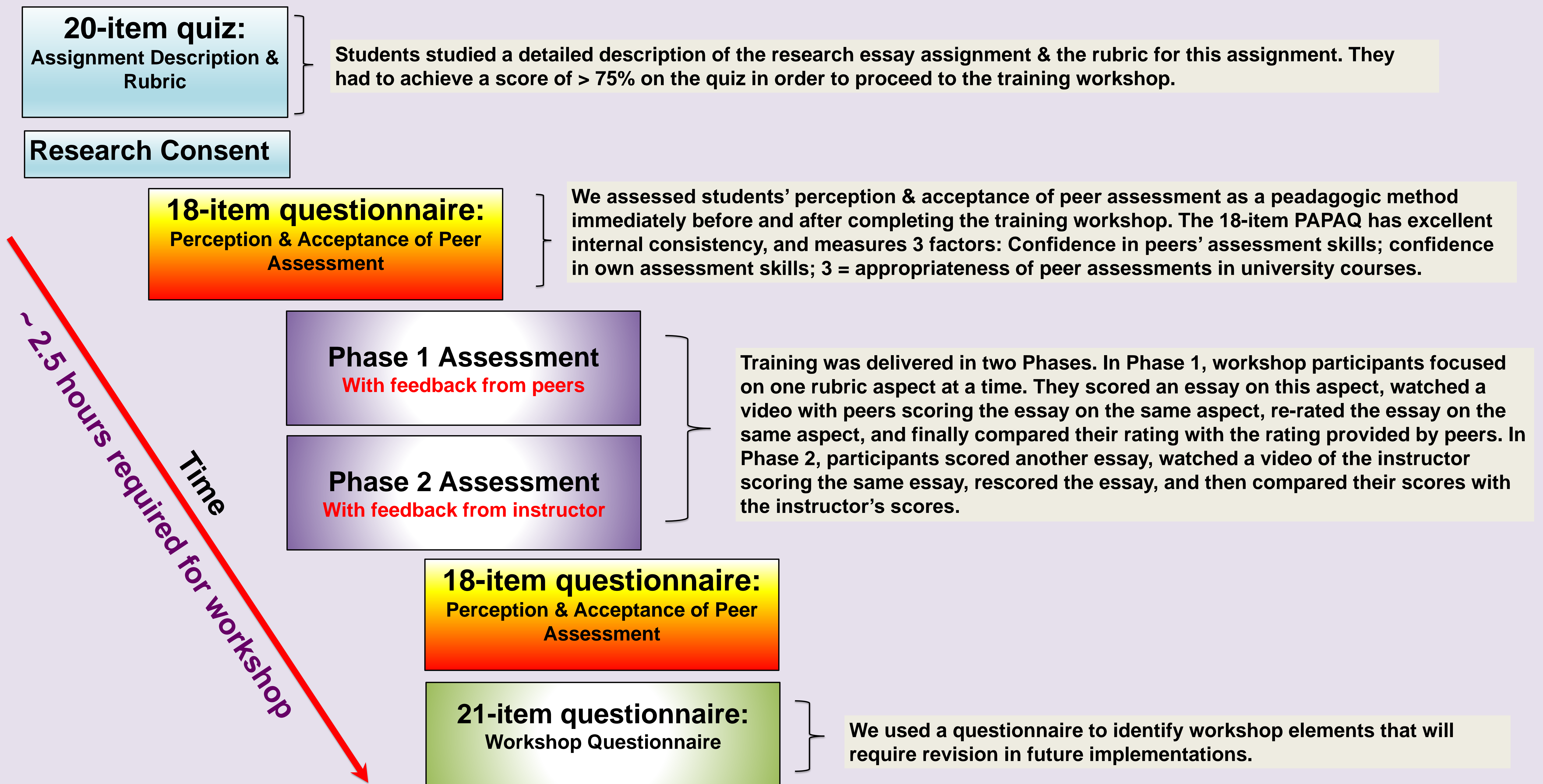
Motivated by these outcomes, we:

- created an online work-shop for training peer-assessment skills;
- investigated the effectiveness of this workshop (by tracking changes in the peer assessments provided by students who have versus have-not completed the workshop),
- and examined (by means of a survey) how training in peer assessment affects students' perception and acceptance of the peer evaluation process and of the critical evaluative feedback provided by peers.

Implementation & Progress

- The online workshop has been delivered to ~900 students in Psych 101 & ~300 in Psych 102.
- These courses require students to write either one 1200-word research essay, or a series of 250-word concept papers. Each essay is assigned randomly to 6 anonymous peer reviewers.
- To investigate potential benefits arising from the online workshop, students in Psych 101 (003 & 004) were required to complete it either BEFORE, BETWEEN or AFTER writing their essay and/or completing any peer assessments.
- About 78% of all students consented to the research participation in this project.
- The research arm of this project was approved by the UBC Behavioral Ethics Review Board.

Workshop Elements & Arrangements



Research Design

Assignment Component	Workshop Condition
	← BEFORE
Write & Submit Essay	← BETWEEN
Review Peer Essays	← AFTER

Acknowledgements

We gratefully acknowledge the financial support for this project provided by UBC Vancouver students via the Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund.

We appreciate the hundreds of PSYC 101 & 102 students who consented to participate in the research arm of this project.

Discussion

This project is ongoing. Analysis of the data from the 2015-16 implementation has just commenced. Preliminary data analysis showed that students in the BEFORE condition scored ~5% higher on the research essay than students in the BETWEEN & AFTER conditions. Insight from the current implementation will be used to refine the workshop for delivery in 2016-17, as well as for implementing it in connection with other assignment types.