

SBE Active Blended Learning Newsletter

What is the student perspective?

Activate



It was new, and it motivated us to interact"
(Lal Ece Yükseltürk, 2nd Year EBE)

"We needed input from others"
(Justine Tange, 2nd Year EBE)

This week, I spoke with bachelor students about their experiences with an activating role-play activity devised by SBE lecturers Yaser Al-Dhabyani and Michail Kokkoris to structure the Marketing 2 tutorials.

In each tutorial, teams of students present academic articles to the class while adopting particular personas—acting as analysts, diplomats, or explorers. Each week, the group takes on a different persona, approaching the article with varied priorities and presenting it in different styles. For example, the explorer persona requires students to apply a key insight from the course material to a real-life creation.

Students told me that this format was both challenging and fun. The creative element meant that teams had to truly work together. "The instructions were really clear, but we didn't know exactly how to tackle the exercise, so we had to discuss what we were going to do," explained a student, who requested anonymity.

Dear SBE Educators,

What do SBE students think of activating exercises in tutorials? How do they experience connection with others? What simple structures empower students at this stressful time of year? In this SBE Active Blended Learning newsletter we asked students for their perspective on our three pillars of ABL - Activate, Connect, and Empower. Read their insights below.

Newsletter
online:



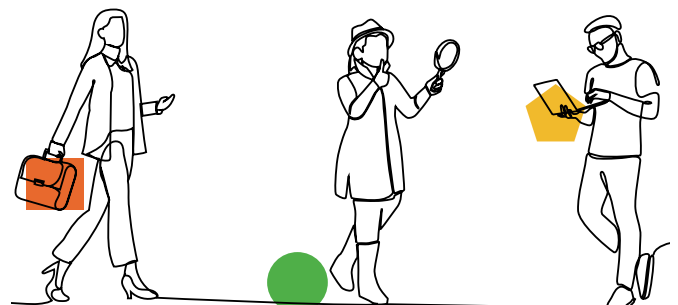
Ella Hafermalz
SBE Education
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This creative element also encouraged engagement and attendance: "I wanted to come to class to see how others played their roles."

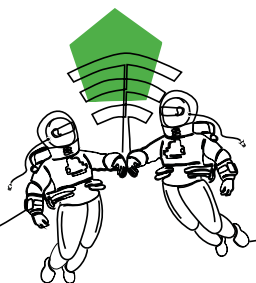
Instructions clearly explained how to present differently for each persona, as well as how this persona connects to a job profile in marketing. Students found that having such specific directions on how to present helped them improve their presentation skills.

Adopting different personas also meant adopting different perspectives, which was recognized as a key soft skill. "It means you have to get out of your box and think differently. That helps you in life. For example, if you're debating with someone and you can understand their perspective, that's a really useful skill."

To read more about this and learn about other activating activities, see our SBE CTL page [here](#) (you may need to request Canvas access first).



Connect



Our SBE board includes a Student Assessor who represents the student perspective in strategic decisions. I spoke with outgoing Student Assessor, Oumaima Abd El Rahman, about her role and how students at SBE experience connection. Studying can be lonely. In large lectures, students might be surrounded by peers but not find opportunities to chat. "Students can feel awkward talking in lectures," says Oumaima. "And group assignments often lead to students working individually and putting pieces together online, so they might not see each other."

Oumaima Abd El Rahma,
Student Assessor
from the SBE board



What helps students connect? "Teachers can set low-stakes group tasks in class with clear objectives. This gives students a reason to interact without pressure." Joining student associations also helps build connections. "Different groups suit different students. I belong to FAM, which organizes social and study activities. Doing social activities together then gives a reason to say hello in class."

While isolation is an issue, SBE students are well-connected via WhatsApp groups. "Yes, all your students will be in at least one student WhatsApp group!" confirms Oumaima. "You could address this at the start of a course by asking for volunteers to act as communication reps. This can reduce misinformation and prevent 'inbox explosion.'"

Oumaima's term is ending. Do you know an exceptional student interested in joining the SBE board as Student Assessor? Contact e.w.hafermalz@vu.nl for more information - applications close Monday!

Structuring communication with students:

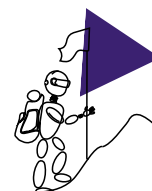
- Clearly communicate your availability and preferred methods of contact at the beginning of the course, and around assessments
- Encourage students to ask questions via these methods and reassure them that their inquiries are welcome.
- Creating a Canvas forum for general questions allows students to see previously asked and answered queries. You can refer students to this page when they come to you with general, non-sensitive questions.

You can direct students seeking study support to our academic advisors. They hold regular office hours on Zoom or in person for drop-in chats and appointments.

Academic advisors link



Empower



I asked our SBE academic advisors what simple things educators can do to support students at this stressful time of year. Here's what they said:

We sometimes hear from students that they are unsure if and how they should approach a teacher. This is particularly true for students from diverse backgrounds, who may not realize they can speak directly to a teacher. Additionally, they are not always aware of the proper communication channels. It is incredibly helpful for them to know how to approach a teacher and to feel that a teacher is approachable.

Some lecturers opt for FAQs, Q&A sessions, office hours, or take extra time after a lecture—all fantastic ideas that students greatly appreciate. These methods help alleviate student concerns about a course and the questions they may have.