

12.7.2025

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Title

Approaches to studying and academic performance in short-essay exams / Amirali Minbashian ; Gail F. Huon ; Kevin D. Bird

Publication year

2004

Source/Footnote

In: Higher education. - 47 (2004) 2, S. 161 - 176

Inventory number

17528

Keywords

Ausland : Australien : Studenten, Studium, Lehre ; Studentenschaft : Studienverhalten ;
Prüfungswesen

Abstract

Previous research has generally failed to find a relation between the way students approach the task of studying and their exam grades. The present study investigated why it is that a deep approach to studying, which has been shown to result in a higher quality of learning, does not consistently result in higher exam grades. The participants in the study were 49 third-year psychology students. They completed questionnaires that assessed approaches to studying, motivation, and intelligence. Their final exam marks, along with indicators of the quality of their final exam responses and the quantity of information reproduced in the final exam were used as indicators of academic performance. The results showed that the deep study approach was linearly related to the quality of exam responses, but quadratically related to the quantity of information reproduced. The use of the deep approach was no more effective in facilitating high exam marks for questions that emphasised understanding of the study material than for questions that emphasised reproduction of it. Taken together, these findings

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suggest that students who use high levels of the deep approach fail to consistently achieve higher exam grades because of deficiencies in the quantity of their responses, rather than because of the insensitivity of exams to students' understanding of the study material. (HRK / Abstract übernommen), Minbashian, Amirali, E-Mail: aminbashian@osyunsw.edu.au