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This is a two-part article series with Puteri Sofia Amirnuddin. In this article, we will explore the methods Puteri uses in teaching her undergraduate modules as well as how the Covid-19 crisis has affected her ways of teaching.

When I was doing my law degree, there were days where I felt that the study of law was really boring, rigid and mundane. If you are not in the library doing your readings, you'll likely be burning the midnight oil trying to finish your essay or question that is due the next day.

This still happens when I am doing my CLP. Image by Tumblr.

There were some lecturers who were really passionate about the subject matter – and they do constantly engage in a two-way dialogue with the students to increase student interaction in class. However, there wasn't really any lecturer who utilized any interesting and new methods to teach law.

That is until I saw one of Puteri Sofia Amirnuddin's posts on Facebook where she had **students use newspaper clippings or draw pictures** to explain topics relating to Tribunals and Alternative Dispute Resolution. The students had to explain what these pictures represent and relate it back to the topic.



Students in the English Legal System tutorial using pictures to learn about tribunals and Alternative Dispute Resolution.

For the uninitiated, Puteri Sofia Amirnuddin (commonly known among her peers as Puteri) is a Senior Law Lecturer and a Programme Director for the Master of Law Programmes at Taylor's University.



Aside from teaching, she has also given talks to practitioners on how to better embrace technology in the 'new normal' era.

Considering that more Malaysian Higher Educational Institutions (MHEI) are like looking into the possibility of exploring new ways to learn and teach, I had the privilege to interview Puteri on the unique techniques she uses to teach her undergraduate modules as well as how she has adapted her techniques in light of the recent Covid-19 outbreak.

For your information, MHEI consists of institutions that are able to provide tertiary level education. This includes all public and private universities and colleges.

Gamification in Learning

Puteri describes her unique methods of teaching law as the art of '**gamification**'. She introduces the concept of learning as a game where the students are the players and teachers are the game master. As the term suggests, Puteri uses a variety of methods to tie her lessons and syllabus into a coherent storyline.

Hmmm, interesting.

Running with this concept, Puteri explains that gamification can be implemented in both physical and online classes. Since the teacher is in control of the game, the creativity of the lecturers will determine the quality of their lessons. One way Puteri creatively does this is by **role-playing a character to create a common theme or story.**

An example of how students are on an excavation mission to learn how to perform proper OSCOLA referencing.

Initially, I was surprised to hear about this concept as I was of the view that our educational system tends to discourage the use of our creative mind. After all, students tend to focus on the exams and results.

However, you might be surprised to know that the concept of 'gamification in learning' was actually an initiative introduced by the Game Development Council of Malaysia. It is an institution established by the Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education.

Once the Recovery Movement Control Order (RMCO) ends, One of Puteri's plans is to **continue to collaborate with the Council in helping them with their gamification initiative.** She also plans to further spread this initiative with the rest of the MHEI.

Puteri also explains that The Chairperson of the Council is rigorous in promoting various webinars on 'Gaming', 'Game-Based Learning' or 'Gamification' to advance gaming concepts to educators and industry players in Malaysia.

How Puteri Implements Gamification in Her Classes

Prior to the outbreak, she has **introduced some form of blended-learning and gamification in her teaching process**. This includes concepts such as 'speed-dating', 'augmented reality learning', 'learning using toothpaste', 'learning using pictures' to get students to be immersed in the learning process.

Augmented Reality Learning

An augmented reality is a simple combination of the real and virtual world. In the example above, students will capture a real subject using their phone cameras and the technology 'augments' (adds) extra layers of digital information on top of the real-world image.

Here, the lecturer can decide what kind of information he or she wishes to add on top of the real-world image. As such, Puteri has also developed an application that **incorporates augmented reality into legal education (https://www.linkedin.com/posts/pu3sofia_in-times-of-pandemic-many-are-skeptical-activity-6684744962548080640-f8Ey)**. She hopes that her new innovation would encourage and motivate students to embrace virtual learning.

Remember the Braindance Editor we saw in the latest Cyberpunk 2077 preview? It looks the future is closer than we think. Image by GameSkinny.

Speed Dating

For her 'speed-dating' concepts, students will be asked to form two lines where they will face each other. They are given 30 seconds to speak on a selected topic. It could be on a particular judgment or an area of law.

When Puteri gives the signal, students will change partners by taking a step to the right. They are given the same limit to start a new conversation. The purpose of this exercise is for Puteri to observe how her students **introduce themselves, maintain eye contact as well as their overall hand and body gestures and level of voice intonation.**

Learning using toothpaste

This method indirectly relates back to the legal learning process. This exercise is to teach students the **consequences of plagiarizing their assignments.**

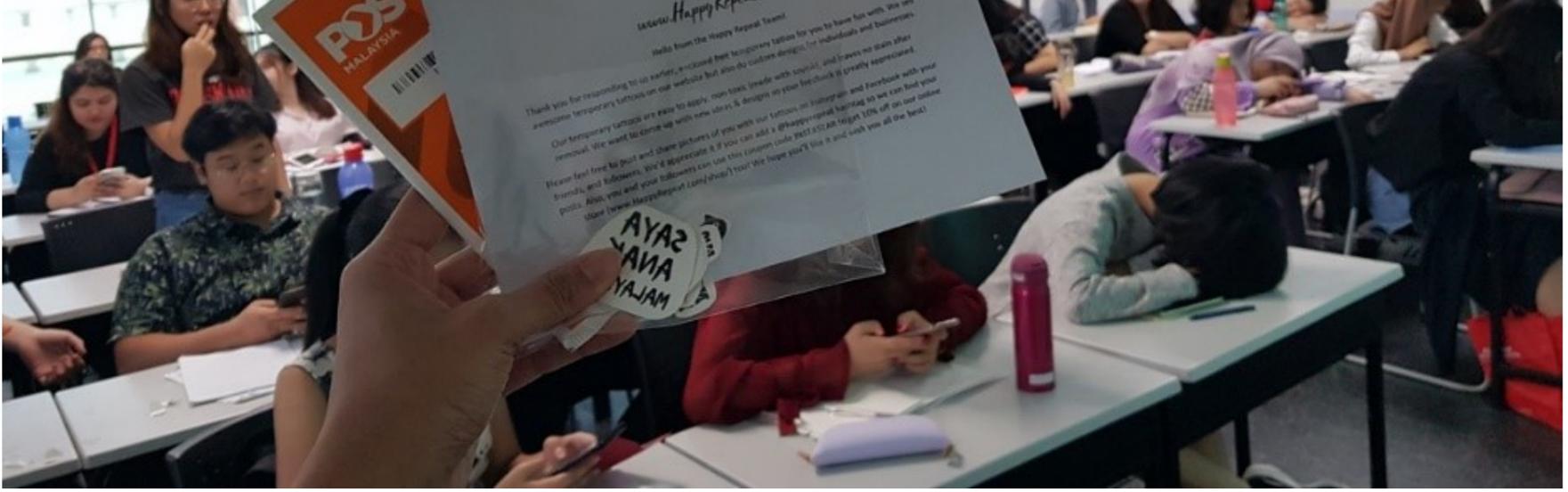
Here, students will be asked to write a word related to their fears with a toothpaste. Once they have written the word and explain it, they will be asked to put back the toothpaste into the tube. Naturally, they will struggle to do so and some students will be surprised at such instruction.

Eventually, when they complete the task students will be asked to show the 'stain' that they have made on their paper. This activity will show that regardless of how hard a student tries to rectify a plagiarization in their assignment, it will always leave a 'stain' in their student record as their file will contain a disciplinary report if a student plagiarizes their assignments.

Learning Law using Pictures

We have already seen an example of this at the beginning of this article.

Throughout her teaching career, Puteri has also been very fortunate to have various generous sponsors providing merchandise to supplement her rewards to her students when they perform well in class. This forms part of the reward system in her 'game'.



Temporary tattoos Temporary tattoos sponsored by Happy Repeat.

How the Covid-19 Pandemic Affected Puteri's Way of Teaching Law

The Covid-19 crisis started when the number of positive cases started to escalate in Malaysia. When the virus worsened, the Malaysian Government implemented the Movement Control Order to curb the spread of the virus.

As a result, Puteri had to make changes to her lesson plans and teaching techniques. The pandemic has forced lecturers at Taylor's University to embrace and adapt to online learning. Hence, she needs to be sure that **her students are receptive to online learning and that they will have a positive outlook on it.**

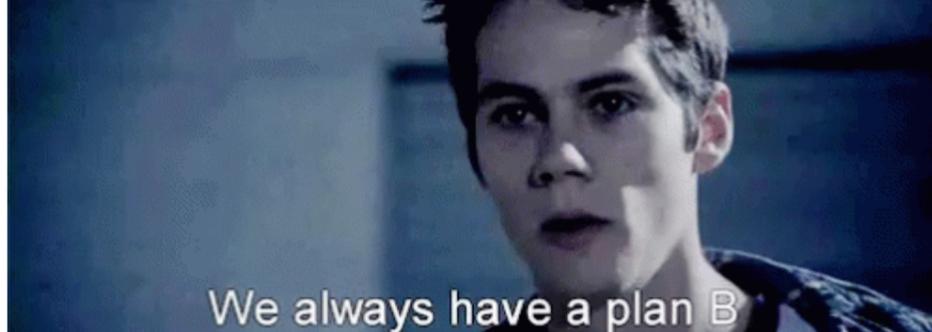


Image by Tenor.

Given the lack of physical interaction, it can be difficult for Puteri to implement her gamification methods in her classes. With that said, she still awards students with 'points' for their participation in tutorials and the highest points will receive prizes sponsored by the Malaysia Competition Commission (MyCC).

The Malaysian Competition Commission (MyCC) provided 30 goodie bags to the top 5 performers in each tutorial group for Puteri's English Legal System and Land Law I classes.

We will explore the impact of online learning on Puteri's undergraduate and postgraduate teaching in a follow up.

Reaction from Students On Her Teaching Methods

Most of her undergraduate students note that Puteri is a **caring and dedicated lecturer** that goes the extra mile in ensuring that her sessions are interactive. While some students are not receptive to the kind of technology she employs, they do appreciate her efforts.

Here is a message from one her student regarding her Land Law class:

One of her students also noted that the interactive activities conducted during Puteri's tutorial classes really helped her to **understand the module 'easily and effectively'**. Furthermore, Puteri also has lawyers in her class to tell students about how the law is being applied. This helps the student to solidify the practical application of the law.

Alliff Benjamin, a Partner from Messrs Thomas Phillip joined Puteri's Land Law class to share his insights on the land registration system in Malaysia (Torren System). He shared its efficiencies, weakness, the protection conferred to bona fide purchaser through illustrating real-life land cases.

Conclusion

A student will always remember a teacher by the way he or she teaches. As an educator, Puteri relentlessly innovates her teaching process and adapts in order to give what's best for her students.

Image by Tenor.

Coupled with online learning and her concept of 'gamification' in teaching, she manages to get her students to be engaged in the learning process.

In the following article, we will also explore the measures taken by Taylor's Law School to adapt to the ongoing Covid-19 Pandemic.

One thought on “New Ways To Learn Law? Taylor's Law Lecturer Puteri Sofia Explains How.”

1. Pingback: [Here's How Taylor's University Is Upgrading Its Law School Post MCO.](#)

Published by Nathan Hew

A former legal tech journalist and a full-time geek, Nathan seeks to empower young law students through his passion for writing. He is a graduate from Queen's University Belfast and is currently reading his Certificate of Legal Practice at Brickfield Asia College, to which he spend most of his undergraduate years in. [View all posts by Nathan Hew](#)