

The Promise of Project Based Learning for Surveying Educators

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SUMMARY

Surveying is a niche, practical profession. Surveying courses are few and surveying educators must somehow navigate a competitive world of universities chasing rankings and the practical demands of the profession they feed with graduates. Coupled with this, surveying technology is advancing at a rapid rate challenging educators to stay current.

Project Based Learning courses offer an opportunity to provide rich student learning and enable educators to keep up with advancing technology.

Project based courses are generally structured as group work with no lectures and no exams. A large, complex project should be designed with many elements such as research, planning, field work/ data collection, processing, analysis and reporting.

The structure of a project-based course can be applied to many different sorts of surveying/ geospatial projects. Used strategically, this provides real-world education for students, an invigorating experience for educators and potentially valuable outreach for the university into the local industry and beyond.

This paper presents an example of a final year capstone course offered in the Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) (Surveying) program at the University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia. A recent project based on laser scanning Bare Island will be presented.