Use of Protracted "think-pair-share" Activity on American Horse Council Welfare Code of Practice - Poster

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Introduction:
College students represent the next generation of leaders in the horse industry. Therefore, the adoption rates of best management practices and codes of ethics by these individuals are particularly important for the future of the horse industry. The American Horse Council Welfare Code of Practice has been adopted by 26 equine groups as of December 2014. Codes of practice adherence will depend on the commitment of those entering the horse industry.

“Think-pair-share” exercises are prevalent in college teaching and have been positively associated with improved critical thinking skills (Kaddoura, 2013) and student learning when used with other active learning techniques (Wilke, 2003). This activity was applied in the South Dakota State University Horse Production (AS 365) course, an upper level course required for the Equine Studies Minor using the American Horse Council’s Welfare Code of Practice.

Materials & Methods:

Preparation
- Approved by South Dakota State University IRB-1501001-EXM
- We changed the American Horse Council Codes of Practice from “I am committed” to “We are committed” (Figure 1)

Classroom activity
- Students read the Welfare Code of Practice individually and were asked to indicate their agreement or disagreement with each Code of Practice and to provide their reasoning (Figure 1)
- Students were paired with their peers as they completed the think phase (228 minutes)
- Students completed their paired discussion before moving onto a share session with the entire group, which occurred later that day when the class reconvened for laboratory
- The group was asked if they would adopt the Code of Practice as a whole at the completion of the share phase
- The entire exercise took ~2 hrs

Figure 1: Example code and marking sheet provided to the students

Analysis
- Demographic data is presented in percentages
- Chi-square tests were used to determine agreement within each Code of Practice between the think and the pair or share phases

Results:

Demographics of the students
- 34 students participated in the activity (15% male and 85% female)
- 70% of the students grew up in a rural area
- 70% of students owned horses (Figure 2)
- 70% care for or ride others’ horses
- 62% students were in-state (Figure 3)

Figure 2: Student years of equine ownership

Figure 3: Distribution of student hometowns

Table 1: Overall responses to the American Horse Council Welfare Code of Practice (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Think</th>
<th>Pair</th>
<th>Share</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4: Current student involvement in the equine industry

* Students were able to select more than one answer

Response to “think-pair-share”
- The predominant response to all Codes of Practice was “agree” (Table 1)
- The Code of Practice on injury prevention and reporting (Figure 1) received the highest rate of disagreement
  - 7 students at each phase (a sample of their rationale is provided in Figure 5)

Discussion:
This activity helped students explore their own ethics regarding the horse industry, as well as their peers. Potential changes to this activity would be to focus discussion on areas of disagreement or to have students complete the think phase before class.

References: