

## Tutor Forum, 12/1/23

### JP/SB group.

Course description - a priority has always been to limit words.

Regardless of limit, can we make it more socially appealing?

Most said that it would be possible to alter the format to attract a wider audience – but that it had not occurred to them to think that it was necessary.

A course which is purely lecture format – members feel less committed - whereas, if involvement, more likely to feel a part.

Integration leads to learning from each other.

Presentations at end – an excellent way to encourage social interaction.

Some/a few examples of course description that emphasise social aspect of learning:-

Language conversation – “informal discussions...”.

.....invite eg, Swedes along “to chat informally to members towards end of the course”.

“.....in a friendly setting”.

Bridge - “.....challenging but fun”.

Poetry - “..... in a friendly and supportive manner”.

Some titles- “..... for fun”.

“.....discussion, usually involving laughter”.

“Maths can be fun”.

Lunchtime concert group – sandwich and coffee – social as well as cultural event.

“....pleasure of singing”.

Current affairs - “... an opportunity to spent a pleasant hour or so listening to the experience and insights of others...”

AND SO ON.....

Some courses have size and Zoom issues which do not encourage social interaction, eg. Polar Studies – 150 members. It would be good if sessions opened up 15 mins earlier to allow chat between hosts/members and speakers.

Good to encourage messages between members.

Social activity grows over time - but we must not forget that some don't want it!

Before the course -

Difficult to do more than email and welcome to the group as list comes too late to say anything else.

Some groups ( eg, discussion) carry on over summer.

Social aspect, as well as learning, supported by:-

Having lunch together afterwards – 2 or 3 times per term – but not with large groups because of noise level.

Coffee lounge here at Bridge St. - very good and very valued.

Often, members socialise with each other anyway as they have the common interest of the course.

Wildwood restaurant – with its reduction – good for groups.

There are some social situations that are difficult to deal with -

eg. tutors must beware of being targeted by individual members of their class – usually a member who wants company and consistently seeks them out. The situation can become very awkward for the tutor.

In such cases, it is important to inform the Courses' Committee and Courses' Director of Studies who will deal with the problem for the tutor.

Also -

In a group, one person can dominate the room and spoil sociability. Be firm and positive, or can turn into a joke. Otherwise, Courses' Comm. again.