

Hybrid Course Development - ACCTG 211

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Development: Fall 2010

Implementation: Spring 2011 & Summer 2011

Final Report: December 2011

Introduction

The pedagogic motivation behind this project relates to reducing the decrease in attention that occurs from a five contact hour course. Students' ability to absorb material decreases with seat time, particularly after the first 50 minutes. Given the extended session length of this course, the replacement of seat time by adding variety to the delivery of content and providing alternative means of developing mastery of the content was expected to enhance learning. In addition, we hoped that the online content would result in an increased amount of time students would spend on content, not merely replacing seat time.

In terms of class schedule, the objective was to allow this course to be scheduled as a 3 credit course by incorporating the equivalent of two hours of supplemental online content as part of the course delivery and learning assessment. This would have the additional benefit of easing some of the space constraints that existed at the time this project was proposed.

Project Design Timeline

Summer 2010: Alternative multimedia, interactive components and other electronic resources were investigated and considered for possible inclusion in the revised course design.

Fall 2010:

1. Two, interactive, multimedia modules (Supplies and Unearned Revenue) were written, videotaped, audio recorded, with interactive practice modules were created.
2. Utilizing the textbook test bank, quiz question pools were created. The final quiz design allowed for students to take the quizzes before the lectures (achieving first exposure to content prior to our meetings in the classroom) as well as allowing students to achieve greater mastery by retaking the quizzes a final time before each examination.

Learning Outcomes & Discussion

Students were surveyed about a variety of topics and the midpoint and end of the semester. Focusing attention on the hybrid-format questions, Tables 1, 2 and 3 summarize the responses obtained (n=27; end of term enrollment = 35).

Table 1. Student satisfaction with online and technology-based content.

Response	Virtual Office Hours are valuable.	Interactive Tutorials are valuable.	ANGEL quizzes are valuable.
Strongly Agree	18.50%	33.30%	33.30%
Somewhat Agree	37.00%	40.70%	29.60%
Neutral	33.30%	22.20%	22.20%
Somewhat Disagree	7.40%	0.00%	11.10%
Strongly Disagree	0.00%	0.00%	3.70%
Not Applicable	3.70%	3.70%	0.00%

As indicated in Table 1, a majority of students rated the online resources, assessments and instruction favorably. Or put another way, only 11% of the students indicated these resources and methods were not valuable.

Table 2. Student perceptions of active learning in the blended format.

Response	This course requires students to be active participants in the teaching and learning process.
Always	44.40%
Very Often	37.00%
Often	14.80%
Occasionally	3.70%
Rarely or Never	0.00%

Perhaps more informative than students ratings of specific delivery and assessment methods, Table 2 provides insight regarding active learning in the course overall. Approximately 96% of the students indicated at Always, Very Often or Often as their measure of active learning in the course.

Table 3. Student-faculty interactions outside of class.

Response	How frequently do you interact with the instructor outside of class.
More than once per week	14.80%
Once a week	51.90%
Never	33.30%

With respect to faculty-student interactions outside of class, Table 3 reveals approximately 2/3 of the class interacted with the instructor outside of class at least once per week.

These positive results are consistent with Kinzie's (2005) observations on student engagement: "Students learn more when they are intensely involved in their education..." and "multiple styles of learning are accommodated by adopting varying teaching approaches" (p.2). Similarly, Tinto (1999) notes the following with respect to retention: "The frequency and quality of contact with faculty, staff and other students have repeatedly been shown to be independent predictors of student persistence" (p.5) and "Students who are actively involved in learning activities and spend more time on task, especially with others, are more likely to learn and, in turn, more likely to stay" (p.6).

Scholarly Outcomes

To date, no scholarly presentations or publications have resulted from this research.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the investigator makes the following recommendations:

1. Consider incorporating hybrid/online elements into a course incrementally. Choose the technology or approach that is most appealing first and build from there.
2. Start early! The development process usually takes longer than anticipated.
3. Be flexible. Some approaches work better than others for the faculty member or for a particular group of students. Remember that the focus is on learning, not just incorporating technology for its own sake.

Conclusion

The hybrid format for this course, which is a 5-contact hour, 4 credit course accomplishes several important objectives. First and foremost, it increases the level of active learning/participation from students. And second, it allows greater scheduling flexibility for both the College and the students.

Acknowledgements

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Works Cited

Kinzie, J. (2005). *Promoting student success: What faculty members can do*. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research.

Tinto, V. (1999). *Taking Retention Seriously: Rethinking the First Year of College*. National Academic Advising Journal, 19(2): 5-9.