She Didn't Teach. We Had to Learn it Ourselves: Flipping the Apparel Classroom With and Without Technology

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Keywords: pedagogy, flipping, technology

Innovative Approach or Practice that Merits Sharing with Others

About 27% of faculty taught a "flipped course" in the past year and nearly 75% of faculty incorporated a new technology into their course (Bart, 2014.) "Keep in mind that educational tools include but are not limited to technology. While videos and other technological tools can be effective in a flipped classroom, they are not required. The true essence of the flip is really to focus on the student" (Honeycutt, 2014.) Despite common belief, flipping the classroom is not synonymous with recorded lectures and increased use of technology. There are, however, some benefits to this method.

Purpose for Identified Audience

The purpose of this presentation is to introduce the basics of flipping the classroom with examples of how to flip various apparel classes. Technology reliant and technology ambivalent methods are both discussed, addressing the benefits and challenges of each method and ways to avoid the common student response that "we had to learn it ourselves, she didn't teach us."

Implementation of Practice Clearly Delineated

This presentation will highlight two case studies: a visual merchandising course that was flipped using technology and a brand management course that was flipped without the use of technology. The first key to flipping a class is to have the first exposure to course material occur outside of the classroom. This material may be delivered through the use of technology (such as recorded lecturers) or without the use of technology (such as assigning reading from a textbook or journal article.) The second key is holding students accountable for learning from this initial exposure to course material; perhaps you create an online quiz. Perhaps you have them complete a worksheet. The final key is to immediately apply that new information in the classroom. Again, this may require technology (such as the use of clickers or group projects that require a laptop), or it may not require technology (such as small group discussions.)

Classroom activity is often where those who are new to flipping the classroom get stuck. "In the flipped classroom, the instructor's challenge is to design learning experiences that engage students in higher level thinking and problem solving *during* the class time. It's about creating, evaluating, synthesizing, and analyzing together" (Honeycutt, 2014.) However, it is important to ensure all students are contributing equally. It is easy for the more soft-spoken student to get lost in this kind of classroom. I've found three strategies to avoid this problem: structured conversation, think pair share, and pre-class worksheets. Structured conversations allow a very specific amount of time for each person in a small group to contribute to the conversation while all other group members are required to be silent. The Think, pair, share method allows students a set amount of time to think about the answer on their own, and then pair up with a partner in a low-risk setting to "try-out" their ideas before ultimately sharing their thoughts with the class as

a whole. Finally, pre-class worksheets work similarly in that each student has time to develop their thoughts prior to class before sharing their work in small groups or in front of the class.
Description of Success of Practice in Fostering Desired Learning Outcomes

    Students responded favorably to the class that used recorded lecturers - I received less criticism for "not teaching the students" which I attribute to my voice actually delivering the information. Students consistently respond favorably to the ability to watch and rewatch the recorded lectures on their own time. One student wrote, "It helped us to really learn the content from the video lectures and remember it." However, I received more pushback from the class that did not use technology. In this case, students were asked to read their textbook and complete a worksheet. In response to this, one student wrote, "I did not like the fact that there were very few lectures, because I personally learn best that way."
Indication of Plans for Continuation, Revisions or Follow-Up

    One explanation for this student pushback is that "... the criticism is one of those backhanded compliments. The teacher is making students figure out things for themselves. They are doing the hard, messy work of learning" (Weimer, 2014.) However, this author goes on to say that we can reduce this pushback by being more transparent about our teaching methods. My plan is to continue flipping the brand management course without technology, but to inform the students of why I've chosen to design the course in this way. "If teachers are going to refuse to do something students expect, especially if students think it's something they believe makes the learning easier, how teachers refuse to help is important" (Weimer, 2014.) In the case of this brand management course, I'm deliberately refusing to give them a neatly packaged lecture with all the answers. Instead, I'm asking them to sift through their textbook to find the relevant information. By informing my students of this strategy and explaining why this teaching method is better than lecturing, students will be more invested in the technology-free flipped classroom.

Works Cited

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