Online Learning: Engaged Content Delivery & Innovative Assignments

Resources

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**Engaged Content Delivery**

*Weekly Overviews (master’s)*
At the start of each weekly module, a short 3-4 minute video was embedded to provide a short summary of the content and the professor’s general thoughts on the upcoming lesson. The video supplemented written bullet point lists of key highlights for the week and provided reminders of course tasks to complete. High-context communication (face/voice) in a short and concise manner provided a “welcome” message as students start their new lesson.

*Virtual Field Trips (masters & doctoral level)*
For these courses, visits to Texas college campuses were recorded using small, hand-held, point of view action cameras to provide immersive viewing experiences. POV action cameras allowed viewers wide-angled viewing perspectives using high-definition video. SHSU Multimedia Services were consulted video production for use in Blackboard courses.

**Hypothes.is Co-Annotation Assignment: Research in Higher Education (master’s).**
In this assignment, we utilized the online annotation tool Hypothes.is (https://web.hypothes.is/) to co-read an open access article. Students were asked to annotate, ask questions, and engage with the authors of the article. This assists in teaching skills in careful reading, critique, and understanding how to dialogue with scholars in the field.
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"Slack Discussion Forums (master’s)."
SLACK is a great tool to augment traditional discussion forums. It allows for a more real-time discussion, and for the free open sharing of videos, links to websites, and other materials by students and faculty.

*Discussion Board Summaries (master’s)*
When Blackboard discussion boards were used, a video response to discussions was used instead of providing individual commentary. The video summarized postings provided by students. The summary videos were posted on Thursdays or Fridays of the assigned week (students were required to have first posting by Wednesday). As a strategy to entice students to view the discussion summary video, the professor let students know that a few names received a “shout out” in the video. Students had to view the video to see if their name was recognized for that week’s shout outs. The professor also made sure to provide positive feedback in the form of thumbs up gestures, head nods, and praise.
Innovative Assignments

Google+ Community Board: History of Higher Education
For one weekly module discussion, students imagined themselves as college students attending college during the time period 1790-1900. On the Google+ board, they wrote a “Facebook status” on who they were and why they were attending college. Status posts included picture(s). This example is from current student who imagined herself as the first African-American law student at Howard University. Her post mentions female equality, family pride, & perseverance despite odds. Her classmates responded with comments of support, solidarity, and inspiration focused on women’s equality in higher education. The course textbook also noted the status of women.

Infographics (master’s): Eaton has used infographics for a variety of different assignment types. There are several free tools available including Infogram and Piktochart. Some assignments include: theoretical analysis of characters in the film Dear White People and Wellness Planning/Self-Care plans for emerging professionals in the field.

Additional Engaging Ideas

Video Feedback/Feedforward Insight: Instead of relying on purely textual insight to students on assignments, consider giving video insight/feedback. 3-4 minute videos where you go over student work really enhances their experience (in addition to traditional feedback, etc).

Rhizomatic Learning: If your course does not rely on linear and simultaneous progression, you might consider a rhizomatic approach. Create broad course topics/modules, and allow students to move through at their own pace, in any order. To enhance the experience, have students contribute materials
each week that other students can use later in the term as they complete the module. Utilize a variety of innovative assignment types, rather than the simple traditional reflections.

**Online Resources**

Digital Pedagogy Lab: [https://www.digitalpedagogylab.com/](https://www.digitalpedagogylab.com/)

Hybrid Pedagogy: [http://hybridpedagogy.org/](http://hybridpedagogy.org/)

Online Learning Consortium: [https://onlinelearningconsortium.org/](https://onlinelearningconsortium.org/)

**Student IDEA Comments (Summer 2018)**

The G+ was interesting, it was nice for visuals to be incorporated. I wish the same thing could be incorporated on Blackboard.

Well-organized course with great activities and assignments to apply sometimes "dry" subject matter in an engaging way. The Google Community was a unique and fun way of sharing ideas and information that I hadn't used before.

**Scholarly Resources**


