None of Us Is as Smart as All of Us: Using a Team Approach to Teaching Multiple Sections of a Blended/Flipped Course

Prepared by:
Christie L. Cathey, Assistant Professor, Psychology
Danae L. Hudson, Professor, Psychology
Brooke L. Whisenhunt, Professor, Psychology
Abstract

With flipped instruction, students work outside of class to gain knowledge about course concepts. This instruction model frees class time for students to actively apply and clarify those concepts. There are numerous purported benefits for students of flipped instruction, including enhanced engagement, deeper learning, and increased opportunities for feedback. Despite the potential benefits of flipped instruction, faculty may be hesitant to redesign an existing course due to the time and effort involved in such an endeavor. Moreover, faculty may lack the skills and resources needed to successfully incorporate the myriad technological components that are required. This panel discussion presents a team approach used in the blended Introductory Psychology course at Missouri State. We describe the process of both forming a team and implementing the team approach to teaching. We also discuss the challenges and advantages of the approach for both faculty and students.

Purpose

The purpose of this faculty scholar session is to present a successful model for developing, implementing, assessing, and continually revising a blended/flipped course using a team approach.

Learning Objectives

1) Attendees will become familiar with a blended/flipped course design and how it can be enhanced using a team approach to teaching.
2) Attendees will understand the concept of course drift and recognize how a team approach to teaching a blended/flipped class can reduce problems related to course drift.
3) Attendees will learn about implementing a team approach to teaching a blended/flipped course. Specifically, attendees will learn about team recruitment, course development (e.g., syllabus creation, technology implementation, assessment of learning outcomes), and course refinement.

Synopsis

A team of faculty worked together to redesign Introductory Psychology at Missouri State University from a traditional lecture course to a blended course with a flipped classroom design. Faculty who teach the course continue to work closely together on the development, implementation, and assessment of the course. Our research has demonstrated that using a flipped classroom design improves learning and course completion. Moreover, the course redesign has served to reduce problems related to course drift (i.e., when multiple sections of a course are taught by different instructors with different expectations for students).

During the panel discussion, we will first briefly present the general structure of the redesigned course as well as the outcome data comparing the redesigned, blended course to the traditional, seated course. We will then describe the “nuts and bolts” of forming a team of faculty and then implementing a team approach to teaching multiple, large sections of a blended/flipped class. We will specifically focus on the process of developing shared learning objectives, creating a common syllabus, implementing common assignments/grading schemas, and developing a common exam item pool.
Finally, we will discuss the advantages (e.g., using shared resources, pooling talent and effort in developing active learning strategies both in and out of the classroom, and reducing problems associated with course drift, such as grade inflation.) and challenges (e.g., managing interpersonal conflict and issues associated with academic freedom) of implementing a team approach.

**Suggested Practices**

- Assemble a group of energetic, committed faculty.
- Appoint a course coordinator.
- Enlist support of the department head and dean and request needed resources.
- Construct a realistic timeline.
- Meet weekly as a team throughout the semester, and divide the work.
- Explore options for incorporating both graduate and undergraduate learning assistants.
- Fully investigate and compare available texts and online learning platforms.
- Attend teaching workshops and conferences, especially those focused on pedagogical uses of technology.
- Collect data each semester on all aspects of the course, including student perceptions of the course.
- Examine course data as a team at the end of each semester.
- Make data-driven alterations to the course when needed.

**References**


**Additional Resources**
