Chapter 72
Preparing University Students for Flipped Learning

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ABSTRACT

Flipped learning is a pedagogy that emphasizes higher levels of learning by inverting the traditional in-class faculty lecture and information-discovery phase with the typical out-of-class student practice phase through homework activities. In this chapter, the author shares experiences in creating and implementing flipped learning using traditional textbook reading out of class and active learning strategies in class. The initial experience of flipped learning led the author to determine that university students require preparation for flipped learning, especially when students are required to read the textbook as out-of-class preparation and to engage in collaborative activities in class. The purpose of this chapter is to provide strategies for preparing university students for flipped learning. A brief review of the literature related to flipped learning and a look at the author's initial flipped learning experience are reviewed to provide support for the need for student preparation.

INTRODUCTION

The literature about flipped learning and its effectiveness in engaging students in active learning continues to grow. The Flipped Learning Network (FLN), with the support of Pearson and George Mason University, studied the relevant research on flipped learning in 2013 and updated the study again in 2014. Since the initial study in 2013, "…a staggering number of educators have sought out information on Flipped Learning through the FLN's online community of practice, attending webinars, trainings or other events, and requesting information" (Yarbro, Arfstrom, K. McKnight, & P. McKnight, 2014, p. 3). The FLN has also been contacted by media for information and stories from teachers and students.

Flipped learning requires faculty and students to change their perception of learning in and outside of the classroom. For student learning to occur in flipped learning, students must come to class prepared. As noted by Bristol (2014), one of the main barriers to flipped learning is students arriving to class unprepared. Prepared means students have completed the initial information-discovery phase and

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-0783-3.ch072

are ready to tackle more difficult, relevant activities that challenge them to collaborate, problem solve, think critically, and synthesize learning. However, many university students are challenged when asked to read the textbook in preparation for class. Further, when students enter the classroom, they do not necessarily have the skills and tools to engage in collaborative activities.

University students have been conditioned to an in-class lecture model where important points from the assigned reading are regurgitated by the faculty. "Although it conflicts with decades of research into effective practices, this model of instruction [faculty lecture] remains all too common in American K-12 and postsecondary classrooms" (Hamdan, P. E. McKnight, K. McKnight, & Arfstrom, 2013, p. 1). Moreover, students have become accustomed to the quick, instant response of social media. Reading and studying a textbook or watching a video of any substantial length challenges students' attention span. In the classroom, students who were expecting lectures are often confused with the requirement, and subsequent process, of participating in group work. M. K. Kim, S. M. Kim, Khera, and Getman (2014) list "Providing Facilitation for Building a Learning Community" (p. 45) as one of their principals for designing flipped classrooms. These authors maintain that group work, or student collaboration, continues to be a universal challenge.

This chapter begins with an introduction to flipped learning based on the current literature. Next, the author shares personal experiences in designing flipped learning using traditional textbook reading as the primary out-of-class activity, and active, collaborative learning strategies as the primary in-class activity. The author implemented flipped learning in an undergraduate Management Information Systems (MIS) course spring 2013 and discovered that university students faced two challenges when participating in flipped learning: the propensity and ability to read the assigned material prior to class and the ability to effectively work in collaborative teams. Reflecting on the apparent need for student preparation and the 2013 experience with flipped learning, the author sought additional resources and redesigned the same course for 2013-14 delivery. Student learning appeared to improve in the 2013-14 courses, based on exam scores. The chapter provides suggestions for preparing students to engage in the flipped learning experience. The objectives of this chapter are to provide university faculty 1) background to support a need to prepare their students for flipped learning and 2) instructional techniques and activities for faculty to implement in order to prepare their students for flipped learning.

BACKGROUND

The literature on flipped learning is rapidly expanding as higher education professionals, as well as those at the K-12 level, experiment with this student-focused instructional pedagogy. The following literature review provides a brief discussion of the growth of flipped learning. The definition, benefits, and challenges of flipped learning are also discussed; and reports of research studies regarding student response and student learning improvement to flipped learning are reviewed. Finally, the process of flipped learning, including the design and implementation, are included.

Growth of Flipped Learning

The idea of flipped learning is not a new concept (Brame, 2013; Kachka, 2012a). In fact, several disciplines have employed this pedagogy as their normal instructional technique for decades (Berrett, 2012). Literature classes, for example, have traditionally involved students reading novels outside of class and