Championing Blended Learning in Higher Education: Reflections on Lessons Learnt

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What are lessons learnt in championing blended learning?

• Blended learning (BL) championing context
• Reflective practice and interpretive paradigms
• Lessons learnt
Blended Learning (BL) Context 2012

UWI, BL Policy (2013)
SOE, BL Policy (2013)
Blended Learning Context 2012

• BL Definition:
  “An integrated and planned approach to teaching and learning that appropriately combines face-to-face and online strategies and technologies to advance student-centered learning” (Thurab-Nkhosi, 2013).

Continuum of Learning Modes

F2F Blended Online

Mandatory BL Programmes by 2015

(flexibility, convenience, learner-centered)
**Blended Learning Context 2012**

**Replacement Model**

**Web-Delivered**

- 100% online no teaching in class
- SOE first and last classes f2f

**Web-Enabled**

- Some f2f classes replaced by online sessions
- Mix determined by CC and approve by CETL

(SOE, BL Policy, 2013)
**Blended Learning Context 2012**

**BL Champion Support:**

- Participate in BLSG activities
- Ongoing training workshops
- One-on-one sessions
- Connect to BL resources
- Respond to BL queries
- Prepare and present BL progress reports at University meetings
Reflective & Interpretive Paradigms

Reflective Practice:
- Reflect before, during, and after practice
- Identify strengths and weaknesses
- Improve and grow as practitioner (Fejes, 2011)

Interpretive Paradigm:
- Make meaning of experiences
- Be aware of own interpretation
(Miles & Huberman, 2009)
Lessons Learnt

High availability beats high technology

• Phone
• Open Door
• E-mail
• Text
• Skype
• On-site
• Chat
Lessons Learnt

Begin with what is known

SOCIAL PRESENCE

How it can be created
Lessons Learnt

Tackle “sticky” issues like teamwork upfront

What characteristics would you like to see in your peer partner or group members?

- Responsible A
- Dedicated A
- Cooperative A
- Committed A
- Collaborative A

- Patient A
- Reliable A
- Creative S
- Willing A
- Trustworthy A

- Optimistic A
- Understanding A
- Enthusiastic A
- Friendly A
- Motivated A

A – Attitude  S- Skill
Lessons Learnt

Include self-regulation component in student BL orientation

- Deters lags in participation
- More student-centeredness
- Smoother online transition
- Potential for success
Lessons Learnt

Relate course material to students’ prior readings/experiences/local or global issue

- Helps students to connect to readings
- Makes reading more engaging

How does the issue of financial management as presented relate to your prior reading, experiences, or local/global issue?
Lessons Learnt

Use the popular discussion tool to the best advantage

- **Round 1**: Assign roles, clarify moot concepts, include sound arguments
- **Round 2**: Crossover and rebut arguments
- **Round 3**: Help group defend arguments
Lessons Learnt

Write clear instructions and proof before uploading to the online environment.

NB: Please remove all sample references, resource links, guiding notes, italics and change the text color back to black before final submission.
Lessons Learnt

Prepare work samples

• Saves time
• Easy to modify
• Share with others

“Thanks. This is great! I am suggesting that this procedure be conducted at a small workshop for those interested…”
Lessons Learnt

Modify course/instructor evaluation form to accommodate BL delivery.

• Allows for more balance in evaluation
• Avoids confusion in interpretation
• More course data for assessing BL
References


• School of Education (2013). Blended learning policy. Faculty of Humanities and Education: The University of the West-Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad.

Thank You!