Unique and Shared Characteristics of Blended and Online Learning
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Abstract

Shared Characteristics of Blended and Online Learning
1. Course content is stored, updated and delivered through a University-wide share Web-based course shell.
2. The course shells are updated regularly with input from faculty. The shells include tabs with suggestions and resources for faculty. See attached screen shot of course shell.
3. Onsite meetings are dedicated to reinforcement of course content through active learning exercises. Students interact with the subject matter in a collaborative way rather than independently.
4. Lectures, discussions, and reading material are available "on demand" through the course management system. Keller uses eCollege.
5. The curriculum and textbooks are uniform between and among faculty who teach the same course, no matter the site or online experience. This increases rigor throughout the graduate school.
6. Percentages for grading for various parts of the course assignments (discussion, essays, exams, quizzes) are uniform.
7. Students and faculty participate in the online discussions.
8. Some courses have live lectures for students to attend taught by one professor for all sections. These sessions are available for viewing/listening if students cannot attend live.
9. The course shell (see attached) is flexible and thorough including a tutor source for students.

Blended Learning
1. Blended learning combines the best of onsite and online instructional methodologies.
2. Blended learning focuses on higher-level learning and application of knowledge and skills to real-world situations and optimizes the interaction between students and faculty.
3. The traditional college classroom is comprised of more than 75% lecture and 25% practice while the blended classroom reverses these two.
4. The faculty has the responsibility for developing the face-to-face instruction and activities.
5. Students are prepared for the classroom by reading the information for that week and beginning their online discussions before coming to the face to face class.
6. The week's objectives are reinforced through the active learning exercises in the classroom.
7. Staff may vary 20% of the course content and items graded within the given categories.
8. Students can take their midterms and finals in the course shell on site in a computer-based classroom or online.

Online Learning
1. Students from all over the United States and the world can take advantage of online learning regardless of place as long as they have access to the internet.
2. Some courses have live lectures for students to attend taught by one professor for all sections. These sessions are available for viewing/listening if students cannot attend live.
3. Discussions are generally 25-33% of the grade.

4. Rigor is enforced through rigid policies such as missing assignments for two weeks generally results in dismissal from the class and a coordinated curriculum for every class.
5. Students are encouraged to call faculty as well as communicate through the course on the internet and email.
6. Online course usually require more time from faculty through daily participation and increased class size even though they do not meet the students face-to-face.
7. Student's work, outside life, and family schedules can be accommodated online although setting aside a regular time to complete class work generally helps with student success.
8. Regular participation is expected from the students with a minimum of three responses to discussion questions per week as well as essay, quizzes, and exams.

Lessons Learned

1. Can use the features of the common shell assist students such as making comments when issuing grades for discussions papers and exams.
2. Interactive classroom activities underscore learning, so make them exciting, work-related and collaborative.
3. Faculty can guide the online discussion by posing additional questions, redirecting students who are going off topic, and extend the rigor.
4. Faculty can constantly stay current with student achievement and attendance to provide feedback and encouragement.
5. Orientation to the requirements and the use of course shell for the students in both the blended and online is a critical aspect for the success of students.

See attached Screen Shot of the eCollege screen

1. Note the assistance for students including "Tutor Source" and "Software Store."
2. Information for the students about the course and assignments are found along the left hand margin such as weekly objectives, assignments, lecture, discussions, and other information for faculty.
3. Across the top, one can see information such as the course Administration (including a way to make group assignments), Gradebook, Email, Live, DocSharing, Dropbox, Journal, Webliography, Tech Support and Help.