SoTL Snapshot

A synopsis of a scholarship of teaching and learning journal article

Using Technology-Nested Instructional Strategies to Enhance Student Learning

What is this Research About?

Maintaining a high level of focus in the classroom can be difficult, especially during less-than-engaging lectures. Further, large class sizes can create anonymity and inactivity, resulting in minimal class engagement unless encouraged by teachers. In this study, the researchers explored technology-nested strategies as a promising way to encourage student motivation and participation. The researchers surveyed students about their learning experience in terms of enjoyment after a semester of technology-nested courses. The researchers introduced online blogs, review games, real-time polls, and video-based learning solutions through an online learning management system to determine the impact on student engagement and activity.

What did the Researchers Do?

The researchers studied 180 students enrolled in various undergraduate and graduate level sports management courses. All students used online-based learning management systems, PowerPoint slides, classroom response systems (real-time polls), video clips, interactive review games (e.g., Jeopardy-style) and blogging activities. The researchers used quantitative surveys to measure the effectiveness of the technology-nested courses and qualitative survey results to provide more detail into the findings.

What did the Researchers Find?

Survey data revealed that over 80% of undergraduate students and 88% of graduate students reported that the technology-nested instructional strategies positively impacted their learning. Most importantly, it was found that using these technologies made classes more enjoyable, and therefore, students were more eager to prepare, participate and interact with their content. A review of the open-ended qualitative comments by undergraduate students demonstrated that their perceptions of the technology-nested instructional strategies were overwhelmingly positive. One reoccurring theme was that college students enjoy and value technologies in their classes. The use of technology in the classroom motivated students to be more engaged in the class and reduced the risk of participation.

How to Implement this Research in Your Classroom

Instructors can implement this research in their classrooms by adapting some of their pre-existing lesson plans to incorporate technology where appropriate. Educational videos can be used to explain complex scenarios instead of readings, promoting reflections of class content such as by implementing weekly graded blog activities or self-reflections, and interacting with students anonymously during class to promote activities such as real time polls or live quizzes. Fostering an environment of judgement-free engagement through technology-nested course materials reduces the effort required on a student's part and makes courses more enjoyable. Reflective blogs from the student's perception are especially effective in holding students accountable for relating the course material to their studies.

Citation

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