

In Blended Courses, What Should Students Do Online?

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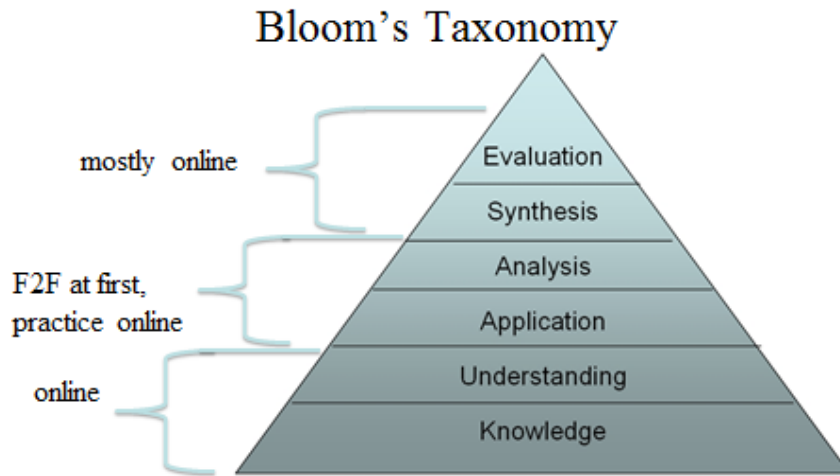
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Ike Shibley and Tim Wilson



- **Lowest levels: Understanding, Knowledge**
 - Students can often complete activities about vocabulary, lower-level problems, and outlining
 - Online quizzes or homework (drop boxes) can be used to ensure completion of assignments
- **Mid-levels: Application, Analysis**
 - In-class time can be used for interactive activities aimed at helping students to apply what they should have learned online
 - Think student engagement: small group tasks, whole group discussions, clicker questions, individual worksheets
 - Remember that students learn best when they can visualize information in number of different ways (tactile, audio, visual, etc.)
- **Highest levels: Evaluation, Synthesis**
 - When students leave class, you have to conceive of effective activities for them to complete that will help them rehearse the information that they applied and analyzed. It should also help them start to synthesize that information
 - Online activities can be individual or collaborative, but they should involve enriching activities, such as a paper (submitted via dropbox), multi-media project (iMovie or Garage Band), wikis, chat rooms, blogs, etc.

Worksheet

A valuable list of important pedagogical practices is provided by Tom Angelo. Read through the 14 items below and then answer the questions below the list.

Angelo's Teacher's Dozen: Fourteen Principles for Improving Learning (Angelo, 1993, AAHE Bulletin)

1. Active learning is more effective than passive learning.
2. Learning requires focused attention and awareness of the importance of what is to be learned.
3. Learning is more effective and efficient when learners have explicit, reasonable, positive goals, and when their goals fit well with the teacher's goals.
4. To be remembered, new information must be meaningfully connected to prior knowledge, and it must first be remembered in order to be learned.
5. Unlearning what is already known is often more difficult than learning new information.
6. Information organized in personally meaningful ways is more likely to be retained, learned, and used.
7. Learners need feedback on their learning, early and often, to learn well; to become independent, they need to learn how to give themselves feedback.
8. The ways in which learners are assessed and evaluated powerfully affect the ways they study and learn.
9. Mastering a skill or body of knowledge takes great amounts of time and effort.
10. Learning to transfer, to apply previous knowledge and skills to new contexts, requires a great deal of practice.
11. High expectations encourage high achievement.
12. To be most effective, teachers need to balance levels of intellectual challenge and instructional support.
13. Motivation to learn is alterable; it can be positively or negatively affected by the task, the environment, the teacher, and the learner.
14. Interaction between teachers and learners is one of the most powerful factors in promoting learning; interaction among learners is another.

- Which numbers can the blended course design help you achieve?
- What specific technologies will you need?
- Try to sort the numbers into the three parts of learning: before class, during class, and after class. When you have one like #9, try to decide where the most time will be spent in your course for learners to develop mastery.

Case Studies

One specific pedagogical issue is described in each of these case studies. Think about which of Angelo's 14 Principles seems most applicable to each case study. Then ask yourself: what content should be online?

Case Study I: History

You are teaching in a small first-year seminar with twenty students. You want students to read newspaper accounts from each era that you discuss and then compare those results to the textbook information. Students have been hesitant to participate in class discussions, and you are disappointed with the quality of the work being turned in.

Case Study II: Psychology

You are teaching a developmental psychology course to sixty students. You have found that you continue to lecture even though you'd rather not. When you give students activities, they often seem to half-heartedly complete the activity and patiently wait until you tell them what they should be learning.

Case Study III: Neurobiology

The senior students who take this course seem to have forgotten most of the physics and chemistry that you had hoped they would remember. Learning about sound and optics without physics makes teaching the subject much more dry because so much class time is spent reviewing. You want to spend class time having students look at optical illusions, listening to sounds, smelling different aromas, and doing other sensory-stimulating activities. Right now, you spend class time reteaching physics and chemistry.

Case Study IV: Marketing

You use case studies a lot in your marketing class. Students seem to enjoy the case studies, but they often remember the specifics of the study without connecting the case study to the broader course content. You are growing weary of constantly telling students how the case study relates.

Resources

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