

Adapting Hybrid Models for Better Learning – Professors develop and test new models for teaching and learning at Lambton College

Opportunity

Lambton College in Sarnia introduced a hybrid learning strategic plan three years ago and now offers about 100 courses using this format. The motivation for the change to hybrid learning was multifaceted: offering more access and choices for students who are increasingly technologically adept; providing faculty with new ways of teaching with a focus on active learning; and allowing the institution greater flexibility in academic and space planning.

Innovation

Massage Therapy Program: In the Massage Therapy Program, the first-year course in *Anatomy and Physiology* is divided into two separate courses and developed as hybrid offerings. Greg Shortt, the Program Coordinator, developed the hybrid models and has been teaching the *Anatomy* course for two semesters. His experience has resulted in a number of adaptations to the original design:

- Using the learning management system (LMS) can be a real challenge for some of the first-year students and so a substantial amount of time is dedicated in the face-to-face classes to learning how to navigate the LMS, such as moving through the lessons, completing tests, finding grades – all of the essential transactions.
- In the first year of the hybrid course, two of the class hours were online and one was in the face-to-face classroom. This split did not provide enough hands-on experience for the students and so has been modified in its second offering to two hours face-to-face and one hour online, providing a more successful learning environment.
- One of the greatest challenges with the two-hour online session was that students were struggling with medical terminology, especially that related to muscles as they only saw the names in books. To respond to this, Professor Shortt created short videos with voice-over images and visuals on a Smart Board.



- The hybrid design is used to support the flipped classroom model in which the students prepare by completing the readings and assignments in the online module before coming to the face-to-face class which emphasizes active learning. Each course module includes readings, references to other resources, and voice-over visuals and videos of the muscles in the group being studied that week. The textbook includes an online package that is integrated in the course with links to audio and visual tools along with quizzes and tests.
- As quizzes in the face-to-face setting took away from the active learning, they have now been moved online where each one is available for a restricted period of time. Each quiz is worth only a small portion of the grade to encourage students to respond from what they have learned rather than copying from the textbook.

Sports & Recreation Management: As a Professor in Sports and Recreation Management, Angela Barclay has been adapting a number of her courses for hybrid delivery:

- *Teaching and Learning* –Sports Management students learn about their own and other learning styles and how to reach them all. They use online tools to prepare for team presentations, gathering resources, determining roles, and developing materials. A new resource, Coach's Eye, is being introduced as a way of providing feedback on physical moves, highlighting key movements and recording commentary and suggestions.
- *Physical Education* – The health portion of the course is offered online, with materials available at noon on Monday and assignments or discussion contributions due by Friday at 4:30. The course uses assignments rather than tests as this provides more practical skills to students for their careers. For example, for their nutrition assignments, students used tools on the Live Strong web site to record what they ate every day for seven days in term of fat, protein, etc. They then analyzed what these numbers meant in terms of nutrition and wrote about what they learned. Students would also read articles about specific issues, such as labels on cigarette packages, and then respond to online questions.

- *Stress Management* – This course is offered as an elective for all students at the college, looking at the theory as well as the practice of stress relief. Discussion boards are a key component of the online portion. For example, the assignment on the topic of laughter involved posting something that made them laugh and comment on the posts of three other students. Students are also divided into groups with assigned readings to be read and analyzed individually. Each group then assembles all their answers into a folder and the professor selects the best analysis from each group to be shared with the class.

Outcomes and Benefits

Massage Therapy Program: The students responded very positively to the introduction of the videos, with the audio presentation of information and the capacity to review. The style of the flipped classroom enhanced the time spent face-to-face as the students are more engaged and eager to turn what they have learned online into practical applications. The hybrid structure supported more active and participatory learning. It is too early to assess the impact on grades, but the students responded positively to the learning experience.

Sports & Recreation Management: Access to facilities improved through the use of hybrid learning throughout the college. For example, gym time can be more accessible so that one large group is separated into two smaller classes for better learning. Using the flipped classroom model provides the student with the opportunity to learn more effectively at their own pace before taking on the more active parts of the learning.

Challenges and Enhancements

Massage Therapy Program: The flipped classroom approach very quickly reveals the students who have not done the online preparatory work. Professor Shortt found that these students are most often the ones not doing well in other courses as well. Over the length of the courses, he would like to see the active learning and knowledge of their classmates encourage the more reluctant students so that “they get picked up with the learning snowball”.

Sports & Recreation Management: The biggest ongoing challenge is motivating the students to participate in the online portion of the learning, without constant testing and grading. Students also expect the online portion should replace a 50 minute class and so

complain when it exceeds that limit – the concept of extra time for learning and assignments can be difficult to convey.

Potential

Massage Therapy Program: Greg Shortt always welcomes new initiatives and has been, in addition to his teaching and program coordination responsibilities, seconded to the Learning Innovation Centre for the last two years helping other professors develop learning objectives and course outcomes. As he resumes his role as full-time Program Coordinator, he would like to explore the potential for mobile learning, especially for students during their practice sessions in the community.

Sports & Recreation Management: Angela Barclay is developing courses such as *Dynamics of Health* for hybrid delivery, while others, such as the course in coaching are being considered for possible hybrid, online, and/or mobile delivery.

For Further Information

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