E-Commerce Teaching Via Project-Based Learning at Open Access College Advances USG STEM Goals

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E-Commerce Teaching Via Project-Based Learning at Open Access College Advances USG STEM Goals

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March 6, 2015
5:00a - Room 2904B
Georgia Gwinnett College

- 4-year USG public institution established in 2005
- Offers an “open access” undergraduate program
- Geographic Distribution Fall 2014
  - Students: 10,828
  - Almost 70% of students are from Gwinnett County.
  - Average age: 22.7 years
  - Represented states: 42
  - Represented foreign countries: 91
- A need to help GGC students learn academic content and develop critical skills that include:
  - Thinking and reasoning
  - Information analysis, and
  - Proficient collaboration.
Understand e-commerce key concepts
Recognize various e-commerce business models
Apprehend current business issues in e-commerce
Gain solid knowledge in technology infrastructure for e-commerce
Comprehend e-commerce security issues
Understand the diverse types of payment systems used in e-commerce
Cogitate e-commerce online marketing communications
Demonstrate proficiency in developing a business report on the Web
Analyze and evaluate an e-commerce business
Plan, develop, and implement an e-commerce business
Students Majors Distribution

Student Distribution by Major

IT Majors
- Enterprise Systems
- Software Developments
- System Security
- Digital Media

School of Business Majors
- MIS
- Marketing
- Management
- Human Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>IT Majors</th>
<th>School of Business Majors</th>
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<tbody>
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Challenge of teaching E-Commerce

- **Cause:** Diverse academic backgrounds
  - **Effect:** Challenge balancing course contents flanked by “technical” and “business”.

- **Cause:** IT students majoring in Software Development and Systems and Security can readily complete the lab activities
  - **Effect:** Business major students require more time and extra assistance.

- **Cause:** Business major students can readily finish the Business Plan and Financial Analysis
  - **Effect:** Most IT students lack basics in business background
Solution: Project-Based Learning

**Benefits**

* Experience Real-life Scenarios and Challenges
* Offers exposure to major considerations involved in e-commerce systems
* Facilitates understanding of e-commerce implementation strategies from both business and technology perspectives
Comprehensive Group Project
Business And Technology Under One Roof

Business Plan

* Business Profile
  * Targeted market and customers
  * Growth trends in this business
  * Pricing Power

* Business Organization
  * Licenses, permits and business name

* Accounting and Cash Flow
  * Accounting - Projected income statement
  * Cash flow planning
  * Analysis of Costs

  • Financing
    • Financing Strategy
  • E-Commerce
    • E-Commerce Plans
    • E-Commerce Budgeting
    • E-Commerce Competition
  • Marketing
    • Marketing plan
    • Advertising and Promotion plans

Software

* FTP Software: FileZilla FTP client software
* Database: MySQL, PHPMyAdmin
* Text Editor: Notepad++
* E-Commerce Software: PrestaShop
* Server: Linux OS
* Image editing software: GIMP and Inkscape for logo creation
Students feedback

Comments

* “Learned that e-commerce is very dominant type of business on the internet. I learned to how to attract customers and build a website. Instructor gave us many examples of the topics covered in text book and helped us to see how they relate. I learned a lot about all the various e-commerce sites available”.

* “E-Commerce ethical issues were a huge part of the course that seemed appealing. It taught me some new things about the business I've never known before. The business aspects that are lacking in other ITEC classes got covered in this course. This is good at rounding out students in their degrees”.

* “Learning how to run a successful e-commerce business. The projects (Preparing business plans & building e-commerce website) were fantastic and we really got to make them our own. The activities using PrestaShop. At first I thought it was a horrible system but in the end it functioned very well and the frustration it caused was worthwhile. This class introduced the aspects of ecommerce which fit well within both my BSIT and BBA degrees”.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements about the expected benefits from using technology?

- I have learned to create a database (MySQL) for e-Commerce website
- I have learned to use ftp software to download/upload files for e-commerce website development
- I have learned to choose appropriate web hosting and domain name for e-Commerce site
- I have learned to choose appropriate software package for e-Commerce website
- I have learned to configure and customize the font-end and back-end of e-Commerce site
- I have learned to administer users to support team work and collaboration
- I have learned to use appropriate technology tools and resources for completing a task
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements about the expected benefits from collaboration?
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements about the expected benefits from communication?

- I have been able to deliver an oral presentation to the instructor and classmates
- I have been able to answer questions in front of audiences
- I have been able to convey my ideas using media other than a written paper
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements about the expected benefits from creativity?

Survey Results
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements about the expected benefits from self-direction?
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements about the project-based e-Commerce?

- I like the options of proposing my own e-Commerce business idea
- Skills learned from project-based e-Commerce enhance my future employment opportunities
- Skills learned from project-based e-Commerce are useful in fulfilling my career objectives
- Project-based e-Commerce can help me to combine content knowledge with critical thinking and reasoning skills.
- I like the experience of planning for the project and having to give regular updates in class
- I like to learn e-Commerce by implementing a hands-on project instead of concepts and theories
- I like to implement an entire (comprehensive) project instead of isolated activities
- I like to develop and implement a full-functional e-Commerce system without the need to learn how to write code or