Developing Blended Learning in Library Instruction to Cultivate Research and Critical Thinking Skills in the Undergraduate Student Population

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DEVELOPING BLENDED LEARNING IN LIBRARY INSTRUCTION TO CULTIVATE RESEARCH AND CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS IN THE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT POPULATION

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WHAT WILL BE DISCUSSED TODAY?

- What is Blended Learning? Why?
- What is the goal of Blended Learning?
- What are the other names for Blended Learning? Related Terms?
- Why is Blended Learning the “hot topic” at all levels of education today?
- What are the advantages of Blended Learning? Disadvantages?
- What is needed for successful blended learning?
- What does Blended Learning mean for Instruction Librarians?
- How can Instruction-Librarians implement blended learning?
- What are the Learning Styles in Information Literacy?
- What is the Learning Cycle in Information Literacy?
- Blended Learning + Information Literacy – What this looks like?
- **How to keep the momentum increasing and expanding?**
WHY BLENDED LEARNING?

- Student-centered approach
- Student’s individual learning styles are addressed
- Student takes ownership of his/her own learning
- Student interacts with peers and the instructor
- Student learns using a variety of print, digital, and media learning tools
- Student engages in activities that are self-directed
- Student controls the pace of learning activities
- Student is held to standards and provide teachers with data (data-driven instruction)
- Student participates in different classroom activities such as whole class share, small group work, pair-share, turn-and-talk, gallery walks, etc.
- Students participates in peer evaluations
- Students from academically & linguistically diverse backgrounds benefit from blended learning
- Students are developing multiple literacies by using multiple intelligences.
-- GOAL --
BLENDED LEARNING

- Supports each student’s maximum academic and personal success
- Each student will be able to acknowledge his/her own learning
- Each student will develop confidence that he/she is able to learn
- Each student will be motivated to learn more and more
# BLENDED LEARNING: NAMES & RELATED TERMS

## Other Names

- Personalized Learning
- Differentiated Instruction
- Data-driven Instruction
- Networked Learning

## Related Terms

- Tiered Learning, products, materials, homework, & lessons
- Learning Contracts
- Scaffolding
- Interest groups
- Differentiated Materials
- Graphic Organizers
- Varied Questioning Strategies
- Collaborative & Individual learning
WHY IS BLENDED LEARNING NECESSARY TODAY?

- **21st-century learner**
  - Efficiency seeker
  - Grab-and-go culture
  - Multitasker
  - Technology-centered & driven
  - Varied educational backgrounds
  - Varied literacy skills
  - Varied cultural & linguistic backgrounds
  - Speed is a priority!
ADVANTAGES OF BLENDED LEARNING

- **Differentiated teaching and learning tools** are used
- **Teacher can provide individualized instruction** to those who are not as advanced
- Students benefit from **collaborative and individual learning experiences**
- **Students’ attitudes toward learning improve** as they take ownership of their own learning with confidence that they can learn
- Students enjoy using evolving information & communication technologies as learning tools –> **builds confidence in learning as well**
- **Data-driven** teaching and learning due to evolving technologies
- **Personalized learning** benefits students with special talents, particular interests, or specific skills
- **24/7 access** due to variety of learning tools: online, in-person, synchronous, asynchronous
- Students **work at their own pace** because it affords **flexibility**.
- **Increased communication** among students and with teacher.
- Administrators find blended learning to be **cost-effective**.
DISADVANTAGES TO BLENDED LEARNING

- **Not all students will be self-directed** and engaged in group, pair, or individualized activities
- Some students **may fall behind** & not be able to catch up: **Drop-outs!**
- **Evolving technologies** must be up-to-date and compatible – potential issues with increasing bandwidth, compatibility, access codes, communication among different types of software, increasing IT costs, etc.
- Certain students may **contribute more** to group assignments than others
- **Extroverted students may dominate** group work & not share the tasks – teacher must provide parameters to avoid this
- Students’ **reflections without synthesis** to the lesson are not useful learning tools.
- **Online discussion boards must have parameters**, guidelines, and structure to be effective learning tools.
- Not all students will be **self-disciplined** to complete online assignments or shared tasks.
WHAT IS NEEDED FOR SUCCESSFUL BLENDED LEARNING?

- **Clarify key concepts and generalizations** ensure that all learners gain powerful understandings.

- Use **assessment** as a teaching tool to extend versus merely measure instruction (e.g., pre-test, formative, summative)

- Emphasize **critical and creative thinking** as a goal in lesson design.

- **Engaging all learners is essential.**

- Provide a **balance** between teacher-assigned and student-selected tasks. A **balanced working structure** is optimal in a differentiated/blended classroom. (Hall, 2002)
WHAT DOES BLENDED LEARNING MEAN FOR INSTRUCTION-LIBRARIANS?

- Anticipatory Slips
- Graphic Organizers
- Poster Paper
- Post-its to move ideas around
- Exit Slips
- Prompts or Guided Questions

- Small-group work
- Think pair-share
- Turn-and-talk
- Individual work
- Whole Class Share
- Hands-on activities
- Customized lessons
- Follow-up after the lesson
- Communication with students and teaching faculty!
HOW CAN INSTRUCTION-LIBRARIANS IMPLEMENT BLENDED LEARNING?

- **Ice breakers**: Get to know students!
- **Brainstorming**: Put ideas on paper!
- **Exploring keywords**: Thinking of different terms
- **Keyword Exercise**: Moving words around--eliminating function words
- **Knowledge Checking**: Evaluations, polls, exit slips, etc.
LEARNING STYLES CONTINUED…

- **Theorist**
  - goes through activities step-by-step;
  - prefers structure

- **Pragmatist**
  - likes to try out ideas to see how they actually work in practice
  - enjoys practical activities they can use outside of the classroom.
LEARNING STYLES: INFO LIT SESSIONS

- **Activist**
  - enjoys hands-on activities
  - wants to being involved as much as possible
  - moves quickly from one activity to another

- **Reflector**
  - observes other people’s actions before engaging;
  - may need further guidance.
LEARNING CYCLE – INFO LIT

- **Experience:** initial step

- **Reflect:** where students have an opportunity to review the experience

- **Conclude:** where they can summarize key points from the experience

- **APPLY:** *Student can plan for the next steps and think about how they will relate what they have learned to their future studies.*
BLENDED LEARNING + INFO LIT LEARNING CYCLE

**Students**
- Hands-on Database
- Practice work on their research topic
- Use worksheet & handouts as guides

**Instructor-Librarian**
- Walk around the room
  - Ask students what they think
  - Is it too easy? Too difficult?
- Distribute handouts with prompts, graphic organizers, open-ended questions, etc.
  - Summarize steps.
DESIGNING MATERIALS/LESSONS

- **Communicating** with teaching faculty ongoing
- **Perusing** the research assignments & syllabi
- **Following up** with students who need more help
- **Referring** students for other academic support
The POWER of Asking Great QUESTIONS
CONTACT

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THANK YOU