Lecture 7

Blended Learning Models

A. Introduction

In the 21st century, teaching has experienced a substantial metamorphosis, primarily due to technological advancements and changing educational frameworks. Integrating digital technologies and online platforms has significantly contributed to increased flexibility in education. Due to the widespread availability of smartphones, tablets, and laptops, instructors now have abundant tools and may present content in various formats. This adaptability enables educators to accommodate diverse learning preferences and effectively captivate students. For instance, a science lecture could incorporate interactive graphs, videos, experimentations, or multimedia presentations, allowing students to investigate the topic in engaging and interactive ways.

Image 1: *UP adopts "blended learning" for AY 2022-2023* (Source: Dabu, 2022: Online)

Moreover, the modern labor of the 21st century requires versatile abilities, and education needs to acknowledge and adapt to this fact. Conventional memorization-based learning is being replaced by a comprehensive strategy that prioritizes analytical thinking, innovation, cooperation, and finding solutions to problems. Adaptable teaching approaches, including project-based learning, flipped classrooms, and individualized instruction, enable students to assume control over their learning process. Through the promotion of research and experimentation, educators foster the acquisition of essential skills required for achievement in a constantly changing global environment. In addition, adaptable instruction promotes a mindset of continuous development, where errors are seen as chances for acquiring knowledge and adjusting rather than as instances of failure.

Another element that enhances teaching adaptability in the 21st century is acknowledging varied learning requirements and preferences. Every student brings unique abilities, difficulties, and passions to the educational environment. To accommodate the wide range of student variety, teachers utilize differentiated instruction methodologies, adapting their approach to cater to the specific needs of each student. This may entail delivering alternate exams, providing enrichment activities, or implementing instructional scaffolding to assist struggling learners. Inclusive approaches guarantee equitable educational opportunities for all students, regardless of their background or abilities. By adopting adaptable teaching methods, educators establish an all-encompassing educational setting that fosters the growth and achievement of every student to the best of their capabilities.

Lecture 6 Conclusion

Utilizing a learning management system (LMS) improves teaching and learning by enabling individualized, easily accessible, and collaborative experiences, maximizing efficiency, and promoting ongoing improvement in educational results.

B. Lecture Objectives

After this lecture, you are expected to:

1. Discuss the pedagogical approaches and instructional models implemented in blended learning environments and,
2. Determine the technological tools for integrating blended learning into the curriculum

C. Lecture Content

1. Blended Pedagogical Approaches and Models

Blended learning approaches integrate conventional in-person teaching with online learning elements. Over the years, other models have surfaced, each with its distinct method of combining online technology with face-to-face instruction. Some of the most significant blended learning models include (a) the Rotation model, (b) the Flex Model, (c) the Self-directed Model, (d) the Hybrid Model, (e) the Enriched Virtual Model, and (f) the Flipped Model.

Rotation Model: This paradigm incorporates a variety of learning modes, including face-to-face instruction, online learning, and small group activities, in which students rotate between them. There are different variations of the rotational learning paradigm. One is the Station Rotation model, where students transition between different stations within a classroom. Another is the Lab Rotation model, where students alternate between a typical classroom and a computer lab.

Flex Model: The Flex style of instruction essentially utilizes online delivery, enabling students to exert greater autonomy over the timing, location, and speed of their learning. Teachers offer assistance and direction to students as they engage with online materials, evaluations, and tasks. Face-to-face instruction may be delivered according to the needs of the learners and as necessary based on the results of the online learning assessment.

Self-Directed Model: This model is also called the Individualized or Personalized model. This approach grants students greater autonomy in their learning path. Students autonomously establish their own objectives, select educational tasks, and advance through the curriculum at their preferred speed, while teachers assume the role of facilitators, mentors, and evaluators.

Enriched Virtual Model: Within this paradigm, most learning occurs through online platforms, supplemented by periodic in-person contact between students and teachers. These face-to-face sessions provide extra assistance, foster cooperation, and provide hands-on activities. This strategy seeks to achieve a harmonious equilibrium between the convenience of online flexibility and the personal interaction of in-person participation.

Hybrid Model: The Hybrid model integrates conventional in-person teaching with online learning. However, the proportion of each might significantly differ based on the particular implementation. Certain hybrid models may prioritize online content with intermittent face-to-face gatherings, while others may allocate instructional time more evenly between online and in-person formats.

In some aspects, the hybrid model may be a synchronous online and onsite instruction that finds the instructor to be online and the students to be onsite together. It can also be that a small group of students attends a classroom course while being simulcast to a group of students online elsewhere.

Flipped Classroom Model: This methodology reverses the typical order of homework and classroom activities. Students connect with instructional information and learning modules outside of class, enabling more participatory and practical activities during class time. This strategy aims to optimize the amount of time spent on in-person training to facilitate more profound learning and cooperation.

These models provide flexibility and customization in education, allowing educators to tailor instruction to meet the diverse needs of students while leveraging the benefits of both online and face-to-face learning environments.

2. Integrating Blended Pedagogical Approaches into the Curriculum

Integrating blended learning approaches into the regular curriculum allows for optimizing the advantages of traditional and digital learning methods. Blended learning combines in-person teaching with online activities, caters to different learning preferences, increases student involvement, and fosters individualized learning opportunities (Bilbao et al., 2019). It offers versatility for students and teachers, enabling them to access educational resources and opportunities at any time and location. Furthermore, incorporating blended learning in education allows students to be well-prepared for the digital era by providing them with crucial technology competencies and promoting independent learning behaviors.

Blended learning approaches can seamlessly integrate into the regular curriculum by combining traditional classroom instruction with online activities and resources. Teachers design a balanced schedule of face-to-face interactions and digital learning experiences, fostering engagement, flexibility, and personalized learning opportunities for students within existing curriculum frameworks.

Integrating blended learning approaches into the curriculum and instruction involves several standard procedures:

Identifying Learning Objectives: The first step is determining the learning objectives and goals associated with the curriculum. Ascertain which subjects or ideas may be effectively taught using blended learning methods. It would be more practical when the learning objectives are stated in behavioral terms that show how learning can be observed and demonstrated.

Select Appropriate Content: Select or create instructional materials and resources suitable for online or digital distribution and aligned with the learning objectives. Interactive multimedia, educational software, online textbooks, and curated web resources are all examples of what may fall under this category.

Design Learning Activities: Create various learning activities that use both online and in-person education. With these activities, students should be encouraged to engage in active learning, cooperation should be encouraged, and varied learning styles should be accommodated. The activity modules may include clear-cut and easy-to-follow steps and rubrics for evaluation.

Create a Blended Learning Schedule: Create a timetable or rotation plan that defines when and how students will participate in activities that take place both online and offline within the classroom. Consider the amount of time spent in class, the available technology, and each student's specific requirements.

Provide Training and Support: Educators and students should be provided with training and support to become acquainted with the blended learning approach as well as any technological tools or platforms that may be available. Take measures to ensure everyone knows their respective jobs and duties.

Implement Instructional Strategies: Several teaching tactics, such as flipped classroom activities, online conversations, interactive simulations, and small-group collaborations, should be implemented to promote blended learning.

Monitor Student Progress: Monitoring student development and comprehension can be accomplished through using formative assessments, data analytics, and other indicators. To assist students in achieving success in their learning, providing timely feedback and support is crucial.

Reflect and Iterate: The blended learning strategy's success should be evaluated continuously, and any necessary improvements should be adopted. Students and teachers should be asked for feedback to discover areas that could be improved, and then the curriculum and instruction should be modified accordingly.

D. Conclusion

Integrating blended learning methods enhances the curriculum, accommodating learners' changing requirements and preferences in the 21st century, and promotes accessibility, flexibility, and inclusivity.

E. References

Bilbao, P.P., Dequilla, M.A.C.V., Rosano, D.A., & Boholano, H.B. (2019). *Technology for teaching and learning 1: OBE-, PPST-, and ICT competency-based.* Quezon City, Philippines: Lorimar Publishing Inc.

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