

Reflection to Support Evidence – Is Learning Different Online?

OLTD 502

Course Learning Outcomes Satisfied:

- Become familiar with common terms, definitions and elements related to blended and online learning environments.
- Plan learning opportunities most suitable to the strengths and challenges of blended and online learning environments.

For this piece of evidence, I chose our group's presentation about whether learning takes place differently online than in the classroom. We used a PowerPoint slideshow to anchor our presentation, which was done in Zoom.

Our task for the presentation was to research and present about whether we thought learning takes place differently online than it does in the face-to-face classroom. We looked into our readings and external resources to try and identify any known differences. Our findings were that the Constructivist, Connectivist, Cognitivist, and Behaviourist theories outlined in our readings could be applied in either the face-to-face or online and blended environments. To present our findings, we needed to come up with a way that would encourage dialogue and make use of the presentation tools to create learning artefacts. To do this, we created a slideshow to guide the class through our presentation in Zoom. During the presentation, we had a question each for face-to-face, blended, and online learning. To encourage active participation, we created a "Chat Blast" where classmates would use the chat function to add as much as they could in response to the question within the span of 2 minutes. Once this was done, we looked for commonalities amongst the responses and discussed as a class. At the end of our presentation, we saved and sent out the chat record for the session so that everyone had a copy. This activity took advantage of an online learning feature that would not have been easily available in the face-to-face classroom.

Being familiar with the terms, definitions, and elements of online and blended learning is likely one of the most important parts of developing and facilitating a course. Understanding these helps guide the course direction with regard to planning and design. There are definite benefits to the online and blended learning environments that are possible but not often seen in the traditional face-to-face classroom. The ability to personalize the instruction, give students flexibility of time, place, pace, and path of their learning allows for students to choose their most appropriate learning features. As I learn to add online components to my teaching practice, I will continue to strive to find new and exciting ways to harness the strengths online and blended environments provide.