

Reflection to Support Evidence – Seminar Facilitation Benefits and Challenges to Online Learning Communities

Course Learning Outcome Satisfied:

- Moderation and Mediation

For this piece of evidence, I chose the PowerPoint presentation that was used during our synchronous seminar on the Benefits and Challenges of Learning Communities. The presentation included the activities for the day as well as the rest of the week along with an introduction to the topic and a list of resources.

As part of this course, we were to learn about facilitating a seminar in an online environment. Our assignment was to run a weeklong seminar on our chosen topic. I have had numerous experiences preparing and delivering presentations to crowds face-to-face, but little to none in an online environment, so this was completely new to me. Being new to the program, I didn't know any of my cohorts well and was new to Collaborate. As we had a couple of incorrect email addresses, our primary source of communication became a Google Doc that acted like a whiteboard.

An important part of our seminar preparation was the designation of roles and dividing of the workload. This way we were all able to work on our own part and be accountable for it as well. I think this is a good mirroring of what we would like to expect from our students as well, whether they decide the roles or the teacher does. We also considered the difficulties our students might have collaborating for activities due to varying schedules. For this, our activities needed to be laid out well in advance and given generous timelines.

Through the completion of this activity and the other seminars in this course, I have realized that moderation and mediation in an online environment is much different and arguably much more difficult than in a face-to-face situation due to the number of variables such as synchronous timing, self-paced learning, and technological considerations. For online moderation and mediation, the content and activities need to be much more adaptable and accessible as you do not have a captive audience and instant feedback all the time.