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Panel I. Instructional Technologies

The Role of Technology on Student Learning

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I would like to share my experiences with using the flipped classroom model and with blended learning. I have worked to “flip” two undergraduate courses in Information Systems and have incorporated blended learning into the Master of Internet Technology Program, as Director. What follows are some major areas and observations on the role of technology on student learning.

- Blended Learning - this refers to the combination of learning delivery modes. Most often it refers to some combination of face-to-face instruction with online delivery of content. For example, in a 50/50 Blended Learning model, about half of each course is delivered online and half in-class.
- Flipped Classroom - this is the idea that we invert what we do in a course. In a flipped classroom, material that might be traditionally delivered as a classroom lecture is posted as video or reading material for the student to complete outside of class. Then, the class time is used for homework exercises, group discussion, and other more interactive modes of instruction.
- An often used concept associated with both of these trends is that the instructor moves from “being the sage on the stage to the guide on the side.”
- Blended learning and flipped classroom are similar in that much content is redesigned and pushed online. This frees up the face-time for more interactive pursuits.
- Most of us are generally doing some of this as we post content to LMS like the ELC platform. It’s generally just a matter of degree.
- Benefits from my experience with Blended Learning and Flipped Classrooms:
 - More one-on-one instruction time with students. Time is freed up during class time to interact with students.
 - Allows more use of the learning management systems analytics data to monitor students “outside of class” course activities.
 - Content becomes more modular which makes it easier to maintain and adapt.

- Difficulties include:
 - Adjusting the mindset (typically the instructors') to the new format.
 - Managing student expectations and use of their time. Requires frequent, small-reward assignments to keep students on track.
 - Requires large amount of setup cost (mostly time). Preparation time is much more front loaded as most material needs to be prepared and posted before the course begins.

- From my experience, students from both formats have enjoyed the experience. The students appreciate increased flexibility in terms of organizing their busy schedules around studying the course material. Student outcomes have generally improved. While some, less self-motivated students have initially struggled under these formats, these can be identified earlier and steps can be taken to help them improve.