

Bringing web based instruction and traditional classroom teaching methods together in a blended learning/hybrid format to enhance sport management education

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Abstract 271**

Online courses are currently on the rise globally. Many students, however, are hesitant to go completely online for numerous reasons. One method to encourage students to try online coursework is to design and offer courses in a blended learning or hybrid format. Pennsylvania State University president, Graham Spanier, has been quoted saying hybrid courses are "the single greatest unrecognized trend in higher education today (Mansour & Mupinga, 243)." Research in this area has largely focused on web-based instruction vs. traditional classroom instruction and the effectiveness of web-based learning in relationship to traditional classrooms, but there has been limited research to date on the blending of these two delivery methods to maximize the highlighted benefits of both. The most recent of these studies have found hybrid designed courses to have the potential to "better engage students by creating self-directed, lifelong learners and it allows instructors to adapt the course format to the students' needs (Teeley, 417)."

This presentation will encourage instructors to assess whether hybrid courses might enhance their current delivery methods in sport management courses. While the traditional classroom environment provides critical face-to-face interaction and networking opportunities among students and professors, online learning offers the potential to transfer learning ownership to students while addressing institutional and student needs of flexibility and convenience. Blended learning may prove more effective than either of the aforementioned teaching methods by incorporating the best aspects of each-the face-to-face interaction of the traditional classroom and the flexibility of online learning.

Hybrid courses may increase technological proficiency, give students the opportunity to reflect on critical issues/key topics on their own and with their peers, maintain face-to-face meetings, and encourage accountability and eliminate lack of social interaction. These types of courses more closely resemble the sport management work environment, thus providing professional skills preparation. Additionally, these courses may help students overcome intimidation of speaking out in class, gain confidence in thought processes when shared online, assume greater responsibility of learning, and transition to an active learning environment with a greater role in their own learning outcomes. Hybrid courses also offer the critical element of flexibility and convenience as competing demands of employment and school drive student scheduling.

Attendees of this presentation will gain knowledge on how to utilize hybrid course models with emphasis on content recommendations. Concerns with blended/hybrid courses will also be addressed. Common concerns to be addressed include professors' experience in online instruction, professors' time commitment, students' ability/desire to fully participate in online learning, and reduction in available lecture hours.

References:

Teeley, Karen Harvey. (2007). Designing Hybrid Web-Based Courses for Accelerated Nursing Students. *Journal of Nursing Education*, 46, 417-422.

Mansour, Bassou El & Mupinga, Davison M. (2007). Students' Positive and Negative Experiences in Hybrid and Online Courses. *College Student Journal*, 41, 242-248.