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Effectiveness of Online discussion forums in In-person class

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Effectiveness of Online discussion forums in In-person class



Best Teaching Practices Expo 2020

Soumya Upadhyay, Ph.D.

The practice and the need it addresses

Online discussions in in-person class

A need to fully involve students who may be: reticent, shy, lacking in English language proficiency, or hesitant to participate in class for any other reason.

Instructor's frustration over students who are unwilling to participate in class

Inclusion of online discussion forums along with in-class case studies

Pedagogical research at the Association of University Programs in Healthcare Administration (AUPHA)

In person class modality students offered the opportunity to participate in class discussions online apart from in class

Evidence this practice benefits UNLV Students

Results from a class survey

Executed two online discussion forums in HCA 703 class in fall 2019

Surveyed students about the efficacy of the new intervention.

1) Online discussion forums facilitate participation?

2) Topics stimulate critical thinking and improve understanding of current issues and trends in the healthcare management industry.

Average responses:

Overall score:3+.

Online discussion improves critical thinking and analytical reasoning: 3.5,

Online discussion enriches student understanding of current issues and trends in healthcare management was 3.7.

Resources and where to find them

Additional resources

Findings from this pedagogical study show that students agree that online discussion forum benefits their learning in conjunction with in class discussions.

Even for in person class modality, online discussion forums can be an additional learning benefit.

More resources can be found in the following articles:

Suler, J. (2004). In class and online: Using discussion boards in teaching. *CyberPsychology & Behavior*, 7(4), 395-401.

Finn, A. N., & Schrod, P. (2016). Teacher discussion facilitation: a new measure and its associations with students' perceived understanding, interest, and engagement. *Communication Education*, 65(4), 445-462.

How other UNLV teachers might adopt this practice

Ideas for your classes

integrate online discussion forums along with in class discussions and activities such as case studies

Enhance students' critical thinking by asking questions that are related to timely issues in the healthcare industry

Involve students in reading assigned articles that may be case studies or applied practices in the industry

