OLTD 511 Assignment #3 - Blenderizing your own Learning Environment

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What is your original/starting learning environment?

My original learning environment is a computer lab running Windows 10 at Enver Creek Secondary School in Surrey. This is a traditional face-to-face school with a timetable and attendance rules that require students to attend four 1 hour and 20 minute classes per day. The unit and course I am going to blenderize in this assignment is the HTML and CSS web design unit that I teach in Info. Tech. 9/10.

What problems you are trying to address by making this change?

One of the biggest problems that I have encountered when teaching coding is that there is such a wide variance in the digital literacy skills and knowledge that students enter the course with. This greatly affects the pace at which they move through lessons and the level of challenge that is required to keep them optimally motivated when designing their own websites. Some students enter the course with zero coding background, move through lessons very slowly, require a lot of teacher assistance, and create very rudimentary websites in their final projects. Other students enter the course already knowing a lot about HTML and CSS, move through the lessons very quickly, require almost no help from the teacher, and produce very professional looking websites. To solve this problem I would like to make this unit asynchronous so that students can move through the lessons at their own pace, ask for help when they need it, and have more time to create a more in depth final project if they finish the lessons fast.

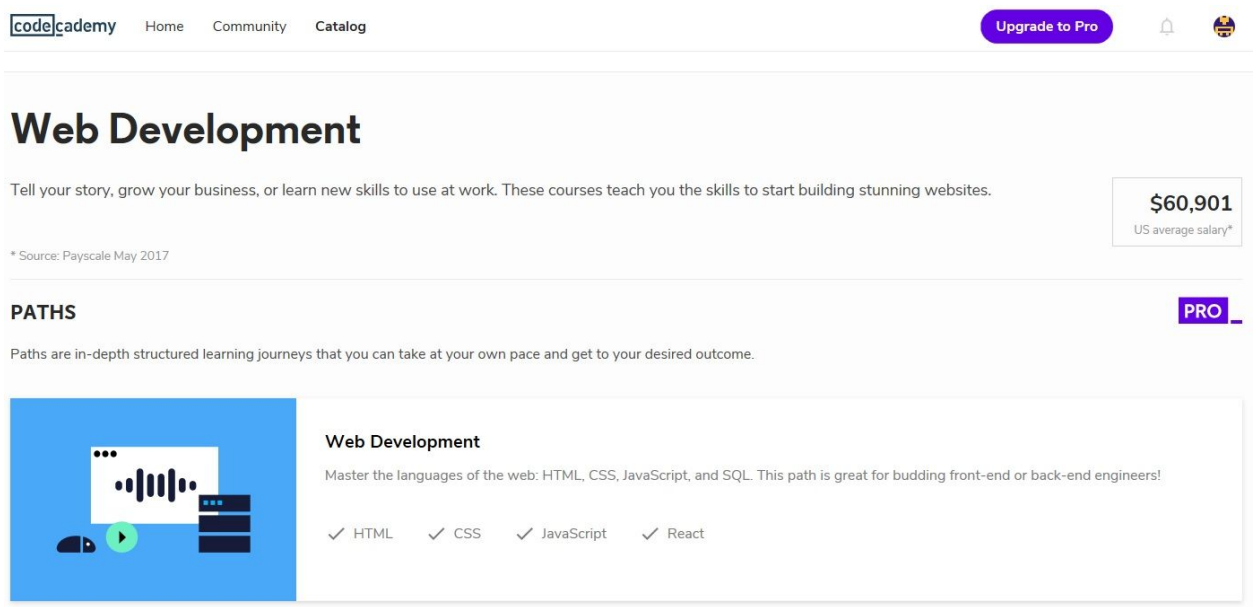
What would you like students to control (Time, place, path, pace)?

Place: Due to the restrictions of our school timetable and attendance rules I am unable to make drastic changes to the place that students learn as they are required to attend class every day.

Time: I am able to change time a bit more than place as students can work on lessons from home, but they would still be allotted the same amount of class time to complete the unit.

Path: I am able to allow students to alter the path they use to move through the unit by offering them the option to complete extra coding tutorials in JavaScript if they move through the HTML and CSS tutorials very quickly or enter the course already having a strong foundation in those coding languages. Students who are more advanced would then be able to incorporate JavaScript elements into their final projects.

Pace: The element that students would have the most control over in my blenderized version of this unit is pace. At the start of the unit I would show students how to access online tutorials for HTML, CSS, and JavaScript on www.codecademy.com and allow them to move through the unit at their own pace.



What is the role of the teacher?

I would start the unit by providing an overview of web design using HTML, CSS, and JavaScript. I would provide instructions on how to access and complete the tutorials online through a link on our course learning management software. I would make the expectations for their final project clear and direct them where they could view the project description on our course lms. After the initial scaffolding my role would be as a facilitator who is available during class time to provide any assistance the students may need.

What changes to the physical environment will you make?

As you can see in the photo of my classroom earlier in this document I am unable to make any physical changes to my classroom as the computer desks are fixed in position. Also, the classroom is already a computer lab so there would be no need to bring in laptops or tablets for the students to use. The main change to this unit is students working at their own pace and having the ability to alter their learning path.

What software or hardware might you use?

From a hardware perspective students would complete their work during our allotted class time on PC desktop computers running Windows 10. Students would also be able to access all the course material and online tutorials outside of class time on their personal devices or in the school library.

From a software perspective students would use an internet browser such as Google Chrome to access course materials and submit work on www.schoology.com LMS. Students would access the online web design coding tutorials on www.codecademy.com. They would use https://notepad-plus-plus.org/ software to complete their final website project once they complete the tutorials.

How will you mix/balance online and F2F modalities?

Students would attend a face-to-face class every day for 1 hour and 20 minutes but would be working at their own pace during this time. There would be no lessons from the teacher, instead they would use their time to work through online tutorials. The teacher would be available for assistance as needed. Students would also be able to work on their online tutorials and project from home.

How will the different modalities provide an integrated learning experience?

Students will be learning how to write HTML and CSS code through online tutorials. The teacher will not be teaching lessons on this during class time or repeating this content to all the students in a synchronous manner. Instead, the teacher will be available to assist students as they need it and circulate the room to gauge the pace at which students are moving through the tutorials. This will allow the teacher to help students individualize their learning path by challenging students who are more advanced to complete the extra JavaScript tutorials and providing extra help and one on one instruction to students who are struggling. The face-to-face component provides scaffolding and support for students, while students are able to learn the course content at their own pace through online tutorials. The online and face-to-face aspects of the course complement each other and allow students to control the pace and path of their learning without having them repeat lessons or content.