

OLTD 511 ePortfolio Reflection #2

OLTD Program Learning Outcome(s):

- Demonstrate understanding of common terms, definitions and models related to blended learning.
- Critically assess and evaluate resources for best practice in blended learning
- Engage in reflection of your readings, practice and learnings throughout the course
- Develop blended environments/programs that maximize the positives of both online and face to face environments.
- Create blended structures that fit in your potential or existing teaching environment.
- Demonstrate basic competency with design and implementation within a variety of online learning environments and tools

Evidence:


Blenderizing your own Learning Environment

OLTD 511 Assignment #3 - Blenderizing your own Learning Environment

Jeff Brisbois

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

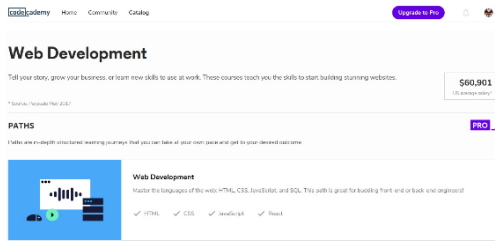
What would you like students to control (Time, place, path, pace)?

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.



Reflection:

The piece of evidence I have chosen to support these learning outcomes is an assignment completed from November 16th to 18th 2018 during week 3 of OLTD 511. In this assignment I took an existing HTML and CSS web design unit that I teach in Info. Tech. and “blenderized” it to conform to Horn and Staker’s definition of blended learning. In the assignment we were asked to describe our original learning environment, what problems we would be addressing by making the change, what we would like students to control, the role of the teacher, changes to the physical environment we would make,

software and hardware we would use, how we would mix/balance online and face-to-face modalities, and how these different modalities would provide an integrated learning experience.

In completing this assignment, I gained an understanding of Horn and Staker's definition of blended learning and what differentiates blended learning from a technology rich learning environment. A blended learning environment gives students some element of control over the time, place, path, and/or pace of their learning. A technology rich learning environment can have students complete work online without giving them any more control over those four aspects than a traditional face-to-face learning environment. A blended learning environment provides an integrated learning experience where the online and face-to-face components of a unit or course complement each other but do not overlap or have redundancies. I was able to apply this knowledge to create a unit where students in my class could control the pace at which they moved through the unit and have integrated online and face-to-face components by having them learn all the content online and receive face-to-face support when they require it. I believe the strength of this piece of evidence is that I was able to apply what had learned about blended learning to make realistic modifications to a unit that I can actually use in my classroom.

Having an understanding of how to create well integrated, effective blended learning environments that allow students some control over time, place, path, and pace is a very important skill for online educators. Online education environments are designed to provide solutions to non-consumption problems in the education system for students who require a learning environment that gives them more control over these things. As a teacher in a face-to-face learning environment, the ability to creatively implement aspects of blended learning into my classroom's learning environment without requiring any additional funding or devices will help me to individualize learning experiences for my students and more effectively utilize the time that they have in my class.