How to induct students into the flipped-classroom model

Jonathan Sim explains how he has designed learning activities to ensure students are better prepared when they return to the class setting after the flipped class, and how this model improves learning effects quite limited. Quizzes alone improve their understanding, but they lack the facility of an instructor.

The flipped-classroom format is a type of blended learning where students are expected to be prepared, such as watching videos or completing assignments before coming to a class that then becomes more of an active learning environment. However, one challenge of teaching flipped-classroom models is that unpreparedness of students occurs more often than expected. Either they do not watch the video or they do not understand what they watch, leading to increased frustration for a lecturer when students don’t remember the basic concepts that students are trying to learn in the flipped class.

When I have asked my students why this happens, the most common reason is that they are not sure whether they can complete the tutorials. This has helped them learn to become more independent in understanding the content. If they have the experience of being on the road, so to speak.

The benefits of pre-tutorial assignments

Over the semesters, I’ve found that a particularly effective way to induct students into the flipped-classroom model is through the facilitation of an instructor. When all students are new to the flipped classroom, they enrol with the expectation that they will learn more in the classroom. However, since they will have done pre-tutorial activities, they should focus on the content and course materials the day before. This way, they are ensured that they are on the right track when they return to the class setting after the flipped class.

The scenario is designed such that it requires students to creatively apply what they learn in the flipped classroom model. This has helped them learn to become more independent in understanding the content. If they have the experience of being on the road, so to speak.

The flipped-classroom model improves learning because it forces students to learn online. Students are given a scenario and a problem to solve. The discussion invites students to elaborate on what role do emotions play in how and why they’ve been introduced to these materials as they revise the lectures and quizzes after class. They need to have this completed by the evening before the next lesson and submit it through the learning management system. When I have asked my students why this happens, the most common reason is that they do not watch the video or they do not understand what they watch, leading to increased frustration for a lecturer when students don’t remember the basic concepts that students are trying to learn in the flipped class.

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