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Electronically Posted Course Materials and Classroom Attendance

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Electronically Posted Course Materials and
Classroom Attendance

A Research Project Presented to the Graduate Faculty of the
Department of Occupational and Technical Studies
Old Dominion University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Masters of Science in Occupational and Technical Studies

By

Shawnda Bentley

August 2005

Signature Page

Shawnda Bentley prepared this research project under the direction of Dr. John Ritz in OTED 636, Problems in Occupational and Technical Studies, at Old Dominion University. It was submitted to the Graduate Program Director as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Occupational and Technical Studies.

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Chapter I

Introduction

There is no doubt that technology has made a significant impact in classrooms around the world. All this new technology has allowed educators to provide more resources than ever before to their students. It is these resources that today's students have come to rely on, and in some cases, outright expect. Instructors will agree, one of the first questions a class will ask is, "Are you going to give us the notes?"

Providing course materials via the Internet is a way for teachers to take advantage of technology and benefit themselves and their students. Teachers benefit by not having to be concerned with duplication because students can print the materials themselves. This also alleviates redistribution of students' lost materials. Students benefit from posted course materials by having access to them at their discretion and can print out the materials to supplement and organize class lectures and assignments.

Having electronically posted materials available to students is beneficial but does not negate the importance of classroom attendance. Being in the classroom gives students auditory reinforcement of the lecture. Also, classroom discussion allows students to explain the material and ask questions and it allows teachers to share information that they deem important (Sleigh & Ritzer, 2001).

For many students, electronically posted course materials offer an opportunity to print everything on to a hard copy, organize it in a meaningful way, and take it to class where they can add their own notes to what has been already

provided by the teacher. However, other students view the electronically posted course materials as an alternative to attending the class. Many of those students feel that if the instructor posts lecture notes, that is what must be important, that is what will be on the test, and therefore, that is what they can study on their own.

It is important for teachers who do electronically post course materials to understand how students perceive the use of these course materials and attendance. By understanding these perceptions, teachers can continue to provide materials that help facilitate classroom learning and create new strategies to encourage attendance and participation.

Problem Statement

The problem of this study was to determine the attitudes of Old Dominion University undergraduates enrolled in OTS 102, Advertising and Promotion, who receive instructor's electronically posted course material and their attendance in class.

Research Goals

The goals of this study were to explore the following questions:

- How is the electronic posting of course materials by instructors perceived by undergraduate students?
- How is classroom attendance perceived by undergraduate students?
- Does having access to electronically posted course materials affect students' attendance in the classroom?

Background and Significance

The researcher became interested in conducting this study after participating in a conversation with a group of students discussing their perceptions of electronically posted course materials and attendance. The students believed that because they had access to all course materials posted by the instructor on Blackboard, skipping a class from time to time was inconsequential.

The researcher sought to explore this perception to determine if this was a random occurrence or a general perception held by many students also taking courses with electronically posted course materials. Because mandatory attendance by a teacher can affect this perception, the study was limited to classrooms where attendance was not mandatory and students had freedom to choose.

There have been many studies devoted to showing the benefit of providing lecture notes and outlines to students. There have also been numerous studies showing the importance of attendance. What the researcher finds lacking is information linking the students' perceptions of the necessity of attendance, even after having access to course materials, to actual attendance. This study seeks to determine if there was a relationship between electronically posted course materials and the students' attendance. According to Sleight and Ritzer (2001), teachers have much to gain by implementing strategies that motivate their students to attend class. This knowledge can help teachers

determine how to most effectively provide materials to their students while keeping them engaged and motivated.

Limitations

The following limitations were observed during this study:

- The study was limited to the students enrolled in two OTS 102, Advertising and Promotion, courses during the Spring 2005 semester at Old Dominion University.
- Both OTS 102, Advertising and Promotion, courses used for the study had electronically posted course materials that were provided by the instructor.
- Both OTS 102, Advertising and Promotion, courses used for the study did not have mandatory attendance requirements.
- The researcher is the instructor of both the courses of OTS 102, Advertising and Promotion.

Assumptions

This study was based upon the following assumptions:

- The study population had access to the electronically posted course materials.
- The study population possessed the skills needed to access the Internet.
- The study population was a mixture of freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior classmen.
- Students were enrolled in the course to take as an elective or to fulfill a requirement for their major.

Procedures

For this study, the researcher chose to survey students enrolled in two OTS 102, Advertising and Promotion, courses being taught in the Spring 2005 semester at Old Dominion University. The students were asked to voluntarily fill out and submit the survey on the last day of instruction.

The OTS 102, Advertising and Promotion, courses from where the study population arose, did have electronically posted course materials and attendance was not mandatory. Although attendance was not mandatory for the students, the instructor did carefully keep record of attendance for both classes. In keeping attendance records, the instructor was careful to note days of examinations, student athlete absences, and in-class activity days in order to accurately account for random absenteeism. The students were asked to answer questions, on an in-class survey, regarding their perceptions of classroom attendance and electronically posted course materials.

Definition of Terms

The following terms were defined for the purpose of clarification:

Electronically posted course materials - refers to any posted classroom lecture notes, assignments, study guides, practice quizzes, schedules, or syllabi that students can retrieve by logging onto the Internet. Students generally access these materials through instructor web pages or course-management systems like Blackboard.

PowerPoint - PowerPoint is a presentation graphics software program. With it you can quickly create presentations suitable for overheads, paper, 35mm slides, or onscreen presentations. You can augment your presentations with speaker's notes, outline pages, and audience handouts.

Blackboard - Blackboard is a Web-based course-management system designed to allow students and faculty to participate in classes delivered online or use online materials and activities to complement face-to-face teaching.

Chapter Overview

This study will determine the attitudes of students toward electronically posted course materials that are provided by instructors and the students' classroom attendance. This first chapter examined the researcher's views on the posting of course materials and classroom attendance and the importance of being aware of the students' perceptions of these variables. The chapter also included the background of the study and its significance, the methods and procedures for collecting the data, what limitations and assumptions should be considered, and pertinent terminology.

The next chapter, Chapter II, will include a Review of Literature where the researcher further explains the content of this study. Chapter III will explain the methodology and procedures for collecting the data. In Chapter IV the findings from the methodology and procedures will be discussed. Lastly, Chapter V will include a summary of the research and the conclusion. It will also give

recommendations for further study and possible strategies to improve students' attendance while still being able to provide electronically posted course materials.

Chapter II

Review of Literature

The problem of this study was to determine the attitudes of undergraduate students who receive instructors' electronically posted course materials and attendance in class. This review of literature will attempt to provide the reader with an understanding of the purpose of the study by focusing on two areas. The first area of focus is on the posting and use of electronically posted course materials by instructors and the undergraduates' perceptions of having and using them. The second area of focus is on the importance of attendance and the undergraduates' perception of attending class.

Electronically Posted Course Materials

The Internet has become a widely accepted and accessible source of information. Every day, new technologies are enabling users to access massive amounts of information in the blink of an eye. Educational institutions are making use of technology to enhance the learning environment by offering on-demand availability to both traditional and non-traditional students. According to Owens (2001), "Traditional students maintain the structure and control of traditional instructional methodologies while having increased access to support information" (p. 1). Electronic posting of course materials attempts to make the best use of these new technologies, which benefit both the instructors and the students.

Many faculty members are looking for ways to use new technology to enhance learning in their classrooms. Many have chosen to use the Internet as a tool, both in and outside of the classroom setting. Faculty members may use web-based course management systems, like Blackboard. They may receive Internet space through their colleges and universities to build their own class websites. Some simply provide the materials by sending students emails with attached information.

Using the Internet, faculty can provide a large array of information to their students. Frequently students can find daily announcements, lecture notes, supplemental reading, assignments, syllabi, schedules, links to relevant websites, instructor information, and test study guides posted online. To take it one step further, course management systems even allow for online discussions between students, online tests and quizzes, electronic mailboxes to send and receive assignments, email of classmates, streaming video, and individual grade posting. All of this essentially enables an instructor to run a class without ever actual face-to-face meetings.

There are many advantages for instructors to provide electronically posted course materials. Course materials can be carried over semester after semester, and can be updated immediately if changes need to be made. Also, many departments are under tight budget constraints and electronically posting materials saves paper and the expenses of duplication. Other benefits include not having to carry paperwork around, students who miss class can get handouts

and notes on their own, instructors can access websites through links saved on their homepages and they can review their lecture notes before teaching.

As previously stated, electronically posted notes are beneficial to instructors. However, the true benefit is and should be focused on the student. Today's students are technologically savvy and have come to expect educational institutions to keep up with technology and integrate it into the classroom. Students want the on-demand availability that providing electronically posted notes can provide.

There are many benefits to students that have access to electronically posted notes. One important benefit is the twenty-four hour access students have to the material. Many students do not study during standard times of the day. Being able to retrieve information in the middle of the night, if needed, is important. Another benefit is that it allows students the chance to download course materials and organize them in a meaningful way. Many students have notebooks, containing all the course materials, divided by category, put together at the beginning of a course. Lost information is a notorious problem for many students. In today's society, Internet access is prolific and allows students the ability to retrieve lost information in seconds. This is important so that a student is not forced to wait until the next class meeting to ask for more copies.

Probably the most important and highly used benefit of electronically posted course material by students is the ability to access course lecture notes. One of the most commonly known programs for creating presentations and handouts is Microsoft PowerPoint. PowerPoint was once thought to be just a

business presentation tool but is now being used on a regular basis for the purpose of teaching and lecturing (Szabo & Hastings, 2000). Many instructors will post the PowerPoint lecture notes online and students can download and print them out before or after class. This allows students to pay more attention to the verbal lecture and to supplement the key points on the PowerPoint note slides with their own handwritten notes. Also, students can review the PowerPoint note slides before class to preview what the lecture will cover.

A study by Frey and Birnbaum (2002) attempted to assess students' perception on the value of PowerPoint presentations in lectures. In this study, one hundred and sixty undergraduate students were given a Likert Scale survey regarding their perception of PowerPoint lectures. Eighty percent of the learners strongly agreed or agreed that the printed notes helped them to take notes in class. Ninety-one percent strongly agreed or agreed that the printed notes helped them to study.

In another study conducted by Murphy and Cross (2002), the question as to whether students should get the instructor's lecture notes was examined. The study examined over four hundred biology students who were asked, after each examination, questions regarding their use of electronically posted lecture notes. Half of the class reported at the end of the semester that they had downloaded the lecture notes from the web and brought them to the lecture. Thirty-one percent downloaded the notes or perused them right before the test.

Attendance

There is no doubt that classroom attendance is an important part of the learning process. Distance learning courses are designed to accommodate for the loss of face-to-face learning. Traditional courses are designed for students to attend the classroom setting and interact with the instructor and classmates. This interaction facilitates learning beyond what a student may be able to download off the computer.

Students can benefit from attending class in many ways. First, attending the classroom allows for more learning styles to be covered, such as the auditory and visual components of a lecture, beyond just reading. Also, some concepts that a student may read will be expanded upon, updated, and discussed in the classroom. Non-attendance by a student will limit the extent of the knowledge they will get out of the material. Another benefit that many students do not take into account is the interaction and discussion between themselves and their classmates. Students can benefit by asking questions, listening to other students' questions, discussing topics and relating the topics to their own lives.

Students' perceptions about attendance in general are somewhat dissonant. While it is apparent that students understand that attendance is important and correlates to the grades they receive on assignments and tests (Sleigh & Ritzer, 2001), many feel that their attendance alone should be rewarded. A survey of 257 psychology students found that seventy percent thought that instructors should give credit for attendance. The remaining thirty percent said that the instructor should not give credit for the class because they

paid for the course and had the right to make the choice for themselves.

However, eighty-four percent said that attendance points increased the likelihood of their attendance (Launius, 1997).

In regards to students perception of attendance and availability of course notes, a survey given to over two hundred psychology students at George Mason University revealed that even though the majority of the students stated that they believed attending class was important, two-thirds indicated that they would miss more of their classes if they could get missed notes from their professors (Sleigh & Ritzer, 2001). Another study done on students attending the University of Kansas, as to why students do and do not attend class, found that the second and third highest correlations with absenteeism is due to a student feeling their attendance is unnecessary and that the material could be retrieved from other sources, such as on the Internet (Friedman, McComb, & Rodriguez, 1999).

It is important to note that there are many factors that may contribute to a student's absence such as illness, concentration on other coursework, leisure pursuits or other school related events. For the purpose of this study, the researcher is focusing on the students' perceptions of attendance after having access to all course material via the Internet.

Summary

The review of literature focused on the two main variables of this study. The first variable was the electronic posting of course materials. It was apparent that providing these materials was beneficial to instructors as a tool to enhance

the learning environment. For students, electronically posted materials allowed them greater access and extra resources beyond just the traditional textbook and chalkboard. The second variable focused on classroom attendance. It does seem apparent that lack of attendance does hinder, to different extents for different people, the learning process. As a result, course grades also tended to be lower. There seemed to be a general agreement and understanding among students of the importance of attendance. Unfortunately, it also seemed that the positive consequences of attendance were not enough of a motivating factor for actual classroom attendance.

From the review of literature, the researcher found that there was much research covering both of the variables. There was no lack of research on the benefits of electronically posted course materials and on the importance and benefits of class attendance. What the researcher did find lacking was information regarding students' perception of attending class when allowed access to the course materials outside of the classroom.

In Chapter III, the researcher will explain the methods and procedures used in this study. They will be used to determine the attitudes of undergraduates enrolled in OTS 102, Advertising and Promotion, who receive instructors' electronically posted course materials and the students' attendance in the class.

Chapter III

Methods and Procedures

Chapter III of this study sought to determine the attitudes of Old Dominion University undergraduate students enrolled in OTS 102, Advertising and Promotion, who receive instructors' electronically posted course material and their attendance in the class. This chapter describes the research methods and procedures used to collect and analyze the data. Also included in this chapter is the description of the population of the study, the instrument design, the methods used to collect the data, the statistical analysis, and summary.

Population

The population for this study was comprised of students enrolled in two courses of OTS 102, Advertising and Promotion, at Old Dominion University during the Spring 2005 semester. One class had an enrollment of 28 students and the other had 27 enrolled. A total of 55 students were included in the study.

The study population consisted of both male and female students. They were all undergraduate students made up of freshman, sophomore, juniors and seniors. Of the 55 students in the study, 31 were enrolled in curriculums that required the course. The remaining 24 students were enrolled in the course as an elective to their curriculums.

Instrument Design

The instrument used for this research consisted of an anonymous survey that contained both open and closed form questions. Questions 1 through 4 were in reference to the first goal of the research regarding the students' perceptions of electronically posted course materials. Questions 5 through 8 referenced the second goal of students' perceptions of classroom attendance. The last two survey questions referenced the third goal as to whether the students' feel having access to the online material affects their attendance.

The questions asked on the survey consisted of both open and closed form questions and also included Likert scale type questions. The instrument is included in Appendix A.

Methods of Data Collection

On the last day of instruction of the OTS 102, Advertising and Promotion, courses, the researcher, who was also the instructor, briefly described the purpose of the survey and answered any questions that students had before they began filling out the instrument. The survey was accompanied by a cover letter explaining the purpose of the research, the need for the students' contribution and the protection of the students' information. A student distributed and administered the surveys and placed them in a sealed envelope. The researcher was not present during the time the class was filling out the surveys. Because the students were left alone during this time, the students had the option to refuse filling out the survey.

Statistical Analysis

The answers from the survey questions were analyzed to determine the attitudes of Old Dominion University undergraduates enrolled in OTS 102, Advertising and Promotion, who received the instructor's electronically posted course material and their attendance in the class. Percentages of students' responses as well as mean scores were used to analyze the data.

Summary

Chapter III described the population that was studied which consisted of 55 students enrolled in the OTS 102, Advertising and Promotion, course. The instrument used to obtain the data was a survey that was comprised of questions regarding the students' perceptions of electronically posted course materials and attendance. The survey was anonymously administered to students on the last day on instruction. The researcher used basic descriptive statistics to analyze the data. Chapter IV of this study will further describe the findings of the statistical analysis.

Chapter IV

Findings

This study examined the attitudes of Old Dominion University undergraduates enrolled in OTS 102, Advertising and Promotion, who received instructor's electronically posted course material and their attendance in class. This chapter presents the data that were collected and provided statistical analysis of the questions purposed by the study.

Data

The data collected for this study came from an anonymous survey distributed to the 55 students enrolled in the course. Of the study population, 50 students returned the survey instrument giving a 91 percent response rate. Four students were absent the day the survey was distributed and one decided to refuse to complete the survey.

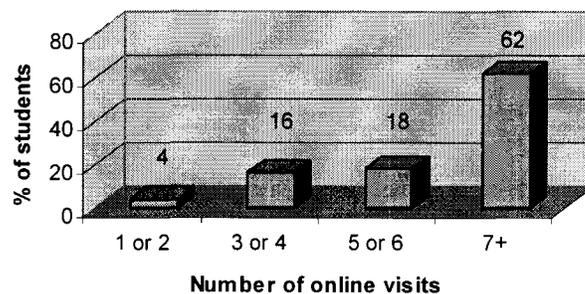
Results

Questions 1 through 4 of the instrument referenced Research Goal 1 on how the electronic posting of course materials by instructors was perceived by undergraduate students.

Question 1: Have you ever gone online to view the class materials for OTS 102?
If yes, how many times.

Of the 50 respondents to the survey, 100 percent responded that they had gone online to view the course materials. The majority of students, 62 percent, went online to view the course seven or more time. The remaining 38 percent went online between one and six times. Figure 1 shows the number of times the students reportedly went online to view those materials.

Figure 1. Number of times students went online to view course materials



Question 2: How helpful do you find online course materials?

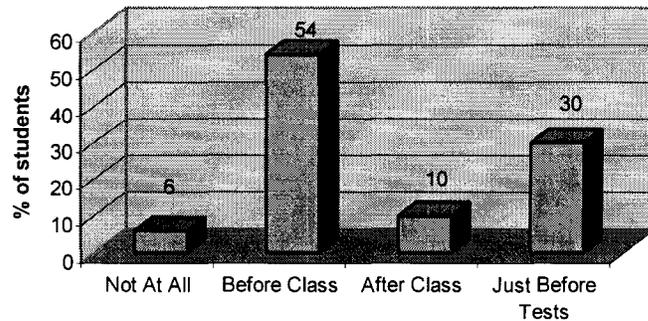
The students were asked to rate the helpfulness of having access to electronically posted course materials. The students were to make a selection using a Likert scale where 1 = not helpful and 5 = very helpful. A mean of 4.56 was compiled showing that students found the online material very helpful.

Question 3: When do you usually download the class lecture notes?

Fifty-four percent retrieved the lecture notes before class and 30 percent right before tests. A small percentage, six percent never retrieved the notes. Ten percent retrieved them after the class meeting.

Figure 2 showed when students were most likely to download the course materials.

Figure 2. When students reportedly download class lecture notes



Question 4: How do you feel about the instructor posting the course materials online?

Question 4 of the instrument was an open form question. The most common responses follow:

- Five students responded that it allowed them to pay more attention in class rather than trying to write everything down.
- Four students responded that it is much easier to study for tests with access to the materials.
- Nine students responded that it is helpful if they missed class.
- Five students responded that it is very helpful to have the materials ahead of time to be prepared for the lecture.
- Seventeen students reported that they find it very helpful to have them in general.

Questions 4 through 8 addressed Research Goal 2. The survey sought to determine how classroom attendance was perceived by undergraduate students.

Question 5: Are you aware of the attendance policy for this course?

Of the 50 respondents, 94 percent said they were aware of the class attendance policy. The class attendance policy was that attendance was not mandatory except for test days and during presentations.

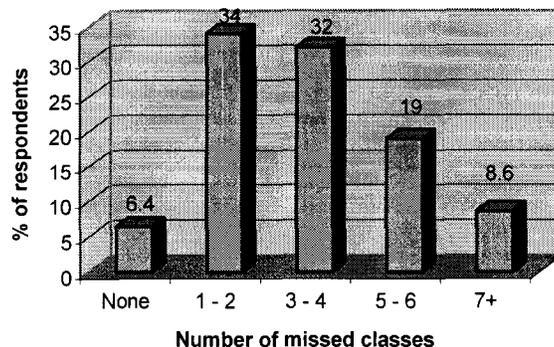
Questions 6: Attendance is mandatory in order to receive a passing grade in this course.

The students were to make a selection using a Likert scale where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree. The mean score for the question was a 3.4, which showed that students were undecided about the necessity of attendance to pass the course.

Questions 7: How many times have you missed class? If you missed class, did you go online to find the missed materials?

Very few students had perfect attendance, 6.4 percent. Of the remaining students, 34 percent missed 1–2 days, 32 percent missed 3–4 days, 19 percent missed 5–6 days, and 8.6 percent missed 7 or more days. Figure 3 showed the number of times students reported missing class. Of the students who reported having missed classes, 86 percent said they did go online to retrieve the missed material.

Figure 3. Number of reported missed classes



Questions 8: What are your feelings about class attendance in general?

Question 4 of the instrument was an open form question. The most common responses follow:

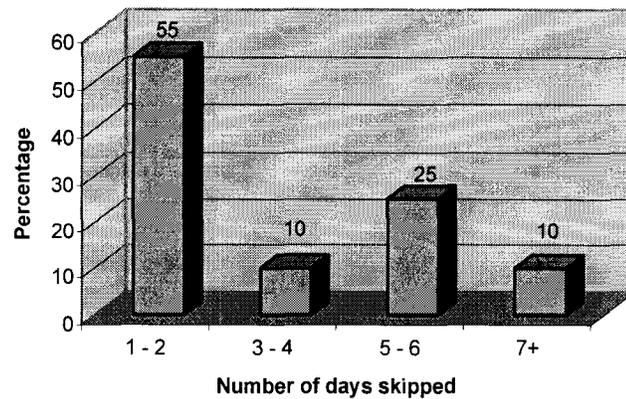
- Four students responded that it helps a lot to see the information and be able to ask questions.
- Seven students responded that they feel class attendance should not determine your final grade.
- Six students responded that attendance is necessary to receive a better grade but should not be mandatory.
- Five students responded that if they can keep up with the coursework, then attendance should not matter.
- Five students responded that sometimes missing a couple of classes is unavoidable and they should not be penalized for it.
- Seven students responded that some sort of attendance should be mandatory to ensure that students come to class and receive better grades.

The final two questions of the survey reference Research Goal 3. The questions attempted to determine if having access to electronically posted course materials affects students' attendance in the classroom.

Question 9: Have you ever skipped class because you know you could go online and get the class notes? If yes, how many times have you skipped class?

Of the 47 students who reported to have missed classes, 40 percent said they had skipped class because they knew they could go online and get the missed material. The majority of students, 55 percent, skipped class 1-2 times, 10 percent skipped 3-4 times, 25 percent skipped 5-6 times, and 10 percent skipped 7 or more times. Figure 4 showed the number of times the students skipped class.

Figure 4. Students who skipped class due to availability of online materials



Question 10: If you had not been given access to the course material online, do you think your attendance would have been better?

Thirty percent of the students said their attendance would have been better if they had not been given access to the materials online. For 70 percent, it would not have changed their class attendance.

Summary

This chapter presented the data collected during the study to determine the attitudes of undergraduate students, enrolled in OTS 102, toward electronic posting of course materials and classroom attendance. A survey was distributed to the students with questions pertaining to the three research goals of the study. The questions were individually presented, the data were analyzed and the findings were reported. In Chapter V, a summary of the data analysis will be provided and conclusions based on the data will be offered. Also included will be recommendations for future studies.

Chapter V

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The problem of this study was to determine the attitudes of Old Dominion University undergraduates enrolled in OTS 102, Advertising and Promotion, who received instructor's electronically posted course material and their attendance in class. Chapter V will summarize the findings of this study and offer conclusions and recommendations for further studies.

Summary

The problem of this study was to determine the attitudes of Old Dominion University undergraduates enrolled in OTS 102, Advertising and Promotion, who received instructor's electronically posted course material and their attendance in class. The goals of this study were to explore the following questions:

- How is the electronic posting of course materials by instructors perceived by undergraduate students?
- How is classroom attendance perceived by undergraduate students?
- Does having access to electronically posted course materials affect students' attendance in the classroom?

New technologies are allowing educators to provide more resources than ever before to their students. Electronic posting of course materials attempts to make the best use of these new technologies, which is beneficial to both instructor and student. Classroom attendance is also of great importance.

Traditional courses are designed for students to interact with the instructor and

their classmates within the classroom. There does not appear to be a lack of information about the benefits of both online course materials and attendance, however, there does seem to be a lack of information regarding whether having access to online course materials affects attendance. It is important for teachers who do electronically post course materials to understand how students perceive the use of these course materials and attendance in order to provide materials that help facilitate classroom learning and to encourage attendance and participation.

The study population consisted of a total of 55 undergraduate students who were enrolled in OTS 102, Advertising and Promotion, during the Spring 2005 semester at Old Dominion University. They were all undergraduate students composed of freshman, sophomore, juniors and seniors attending the class as an curriculum or elective requirement. The students were provided with online course materials and attendance was not made mandatory. It was also important to note that the researcher was also the instructor.

On the last day of instruction, an anonymous and optional survey was administered to the students that consisted of both open and closed form questions. The survey questions referenced the three research goals of this study. Of the 55 students enrolled in the course, 50 instruments were returned to the researcher. The researcher used percentages of students' responses and mean scores to analyze the data.

Conclusions

This study answered the following research goals:

- How is the electronic posting of course materials by instructors perceived by undergraduate students?

The students involved in this study found the posting of online materials by the instructor to be very helpful. Fifty respondents reported that they had gone online to view the course material at least once and 62 percent reported visiting the site seven or more times. Just over half the students downloaded the class lecture notes before class in order to aid in note taking during class or to get acquainted with the day's lecture beforehand. Also, 30 percent reported downloading the notes right before tests to aid in studying. Eighty-six percent of those who missed class reported that they went online to retrieve the missed materials. These responses to the survey showed that students perceived this use of technology by instructors as a useful resource.

- How is classroom attendance perceived by undergraduate students?

Ninety four-percent of students said that although they were aware of the class attendance policy, they did not feel it was necessary in order to receive a passing grade in the class. Students' perception of attendance was that while it was helpful to the learning process, it should not be a mandatory policy.

Undergraduate students wanted the ability to make their own decision as to the importance of their attending class.

- Does having access to electronically posted course materials affect students' attendance in the classroom?

Having access to electronically posted course materials does have a considerable affect on classroom attendance. Forty percent of the students reported they had skipped class because they knew they could go online and retrieve the course materials. Thirty percent stated that their attendance in class would have been better if they had not been given access to the electronically posted materials. It was apparent that some students feel having access to the online course materials can be used as a replacement to classroom attendance.

Recommendations

This study showed that students do value having access to electronically posted course materials and that they understood the importance of attendance even if they chose not to attend. A significant portion of the students involved in this study had shown that having access to the online materials does affect their attendance and that they would attend more classes if they could not rely on online course materials. Therefore, teachers should be mindful of the type of environment and student involvement they want when setting up their courses. One way to encourage class attendance is to give in class activities or quizzes that students must attend to get credit. Also, class lectures should not be a copy of textbook readings or the notes provided online. If the student feels that they will not be able get all the information on their own, their attendance will be improved.

An important note to remember is that students perceive that some courses are more conducive to “skipping” than others. Lecture style classes,

where the course material can be retrieved from textbooks or lecture handouts, are thought to be easier to miss than science courses where there may be laboratory work that cannot be done outside of the classroom. For this reason, further studies may want to investigate students' perceptions based on the types of classes they are enrolled.

Another recommendation for further study would involve a larger study population. This study's population included 55 students enrolled OTS 102, Advertising and Promotion, during the Spring 2005 semester. Future studies may want to include students from more courses over the period of several semesters for a more accurate conclusion.

Lastly, it was recommended that future studies be conducted with a control group that was not given access to online materials and an experimental group who were given access to all course materials online. Both the control groups' and experimental groups' classroom attendance could be tracked to determine if having access to electronically posted course material does have an impact on attendance.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Student Research Survey

This is an anonymous survey. Please do not put any identifying marks on this form.

Purpose: To determine the attitudes of students who receive electronically posted course materials and their class attendance

Directions: Please circle or complete blank spaces for all of the following questions.

1. Have you ever gone online to view the class materials for OTS 102? (circle one) Yes No

If yes, how many times? (circle one) 1-2 3-4 5-6 7+

2. How helpful do you find online course materials? (circle one) 1 2 3 4 5
(1 = not helpful, 3 = undecided, 5 = very helpful)

3. When do you usually download the class lecture notes? (circle one)
Not at all Before class After class Just before tests

4. How do you feel about the instructor posting the course materials online?

5. Are you aware of the attendance policy for this course? (circle one) Yes No

6. Attendance is mandatory in order to receive a passing grade in this course (circle one).
(1 = Strongly Disagree, 3 = Undecided, 5 = Strongly Agree) 1 2 3 4 5

7. How many times have you missed class? (circle one) None 1-2 3-4 5-6 7+

If you missed classes, did you go online to find the missed material? Yes No

8. What are your feelings about class attendance in general?

9. Have you ever skipped class BECAUSE you knew you could go online and get the class notes? (please be honest) Yes No

If yes, how many times have you skipped class? (circle one) 1-2 3-4 5-6 7+

10. If you had not been given access to the course materials online, do you think your attendance would have been better? (circle one) Yes No

Appendix B

Research Survey
OTS 102 – Spring 2005

Your instructor, in order to fulfill the research requirement for the masters program at Old Dominion University and the Department of Occupational and Technical Studies, is conducting this survey to collect information for research. The research being conducted seeks to determine the affects of having access to electronically posted course materials and classroom attendance of students in OTS 102, Advertising and Promotion.

Your help is needed to provide information regarding your perceptions of electronically posted course materials and classroom attendance. This information could be used in the future to better enhance the learning process for yourself and fellow students.

This is a completely anonymous survey. No personal information has, or will be, collected for the purpose of this research. It has no effect on this course or your personal outcome in the course. Your information will be anonymous and I will not know who responded and what you said. You have a choice of not participating in this study.

Your help and complete honesty are greatly appreciated. If you have any questions regarding any of the items on the survey, please feel free to ask for clarification.

Thank You,

Shawnda Bentley