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I'm Engaged! Maximizing the Online Learning Experience

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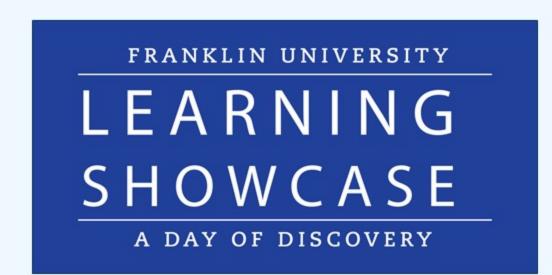
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I'm Engaged! Maximizing the Online Learning Experience

JoAnna Williamson, Matt Barclay, Jacinta Banks

Franklin University, 2016



Engaging Learners Online

How do we engage learners online? In this poster, we present design and teaching solutions to help engage students in online learning.

Format and Pedagogy

"The lack of engagement was attributed less to the online setting and more to students not experiencing active and collaborative pedagogies, interacting one-on-one with faculty, or experiencing social and academic support."

(Meyer, 2014)

"Fisher (2010) clarifies that the problem of engagement (or learning or retention) cannot be attributed solely or exclusively to the online setting, but to the lack of appropriate pedagogical choices that include the kind of learning activities that seem to encourage student engagement in online learning."

(Meyer, 2014, emphasis added)

"By applying the theories and techniques for student engagement in online learning instructors and designers of online courses can improve and increase student engagement and help higher education produce graduates who can contribute to their families, communities, and the economy."

(Meyer, 2014, emphasis added)

Maximizing Engagement Through Design

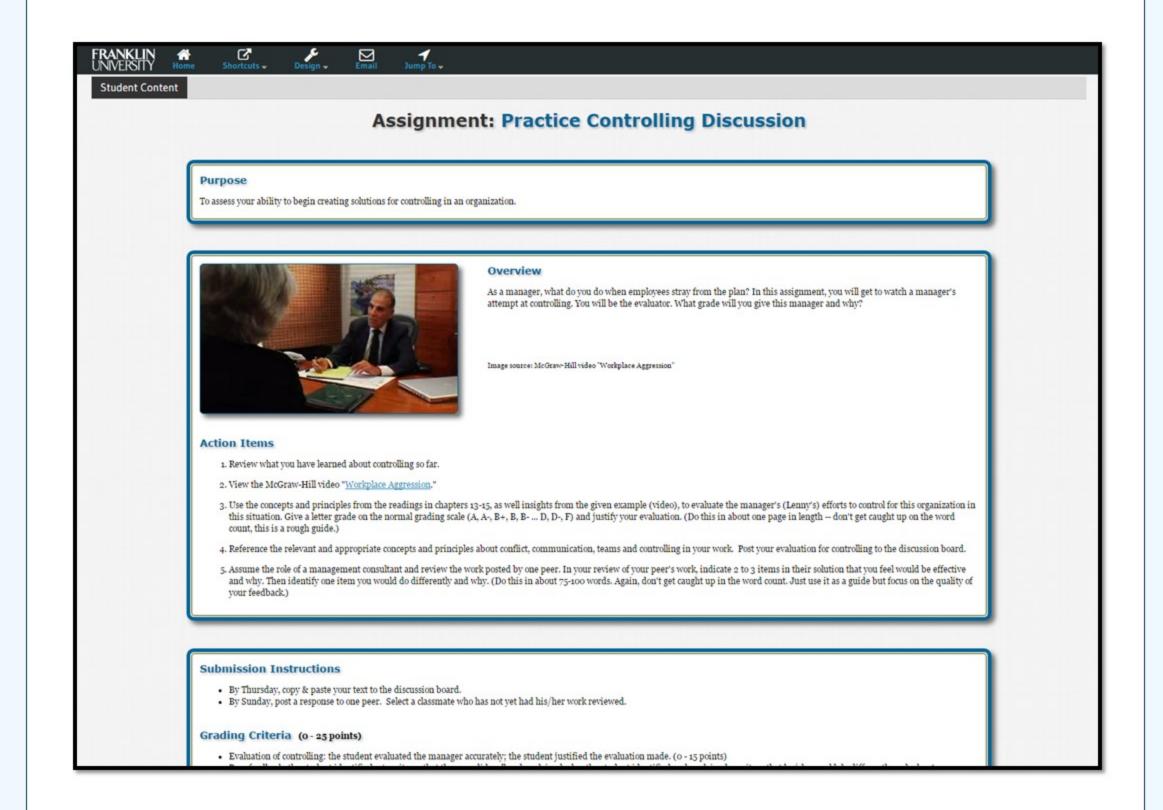
Issue #1

Discussion posts don't stimulate discussions.

Best Practices

- Use discussion boards in creative ways: focus on pedagogy and strategy, e.g., debates, cases, blogs-type discussions, go outside of discussion board and report back (Meyer, 2014)
- Much depends on the questions asked of students; instructor needs to be involved but not dominate (Meyer, 2014)

Example: MGMT 312 – Grade the Manager



Maximizing Engagement Through Design (cont'd)

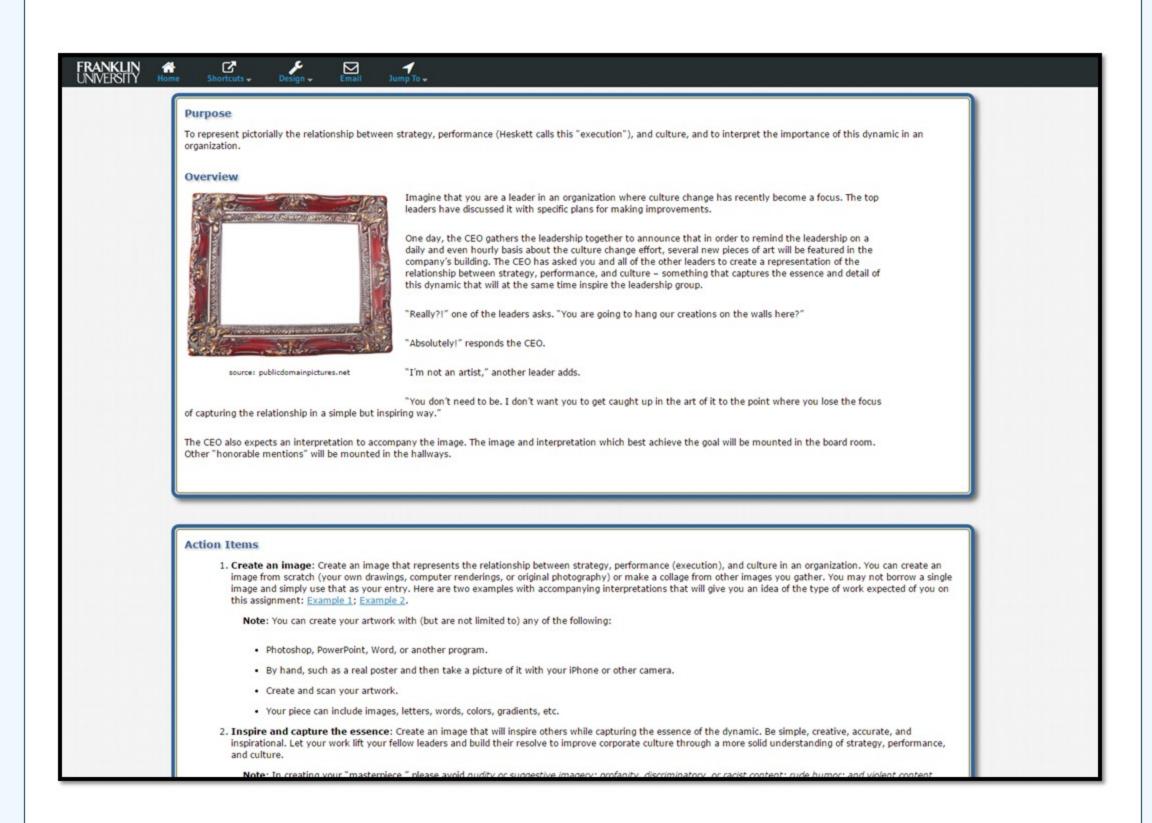
Issue #2

- Assignment clarity is essential, directions are sometimes unclear; disconnect between assignment and instructor expectations.
 - FF: Better able to get immediate clarification.
 - WW: Less time to ask questions; email response time.

Best Practices

· Teach before the assignment is due; use crystal clear learning outcomes in language of the student; show whole task; activate prior knowledge; give worked example (Merrill 2013)

Example MGMT 440 – Worked example





Issue #3

Group Projects- Groups don't meet! Email, phone, and text.

Best Practices

- Avoid big group projects & 2-3 pairings vs larger groups to assist with logistics
- Faculty "drop in" group meetings in addition to meet sessions
- Clear expectations & grade peer feedback (Michaelsen, Bauman-Knight, & Fink 2004)

Maximizing Engagement Through Course Delivery

Areas of Engagement

With Course Content With Other Students With the Instructor

In face-to-face classes, students are engaged through instructor-facilitated classroom discussions, group breakouts, Q&A, projects outside of class, and the same is true for the online classroom, but what does this look like in the online environment?

Microphones/Webcam

For Instructor Presentation of Course Content, Student-to-Student Interactions & Student-Instructor Interactions; Note: Not always used, due to concerns with bandwidth issues. An alternative is to post a photograph during synchronous sessions.

Chat

Ongoing free-flowing dialogue, comments and responses, fuels momentum in the discussion. Students are able to quickly respond to and build upon each other's comments.

Students can "talk" at the same time. (Faster than getting comments one-by-one on mics) Allows instructor to compare/contrast responses.

Ability to send private chats to check in with "quiet" students

Whiteboard

Equivalent to a "dry erase board" in the online classroom. Useful for collaboration (e.g. brainstorming sessions)

Ask questions about the content; Cast votes (e.g. on best day/time for meet sessions); Get real-time feedback; Open-ended questions or multiple choice; Publish responses or keep anonymous

Recording of Session

Recordings can be accessed by students (whether they attended or not) to play back and reinforce concepts they may have missed or need to hear again.

Breakout Rooms

Allow students to meet in smaller groups to work on discussion questions, project, etc. Breakout groups have access to whiteboard if needed. (Breakout rooms are not recorded).

Student Presentations

Students present their work to the instructor, guests/clients, classmates, etc. in real-time and receive feedback, answer questions, etc.

Instructor

Knowledge of subject manner; Ask questions and pause to encourage responses; Acknowledge responses and affirm/build/re-direct as needed; Enthusiasm, pacing and clarity of instructor also contribute to engagement!



- Interaction
- Customization
- Enthusiasm

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