

GOOD Flipped Classroom CASE



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SN3490

Nursing therapeutic I

Instructor
Dr Kitty Chan

Department
School of Nursing (SN)

Class size

240 students

Students

Year 2 Nursing students

Details of Flipped Classroom IMPLEMENTATION

Why did the instructor use the flipped classroom approach?

Kitty believes that the flipped approach is suitable for most tutorials in her discipline. According to her, students need to adequately prepare themselves with the necessary knowledge before participating in in-class clinical practice or activities. By engaging with authentic cases before class, students gain a good understanding of a real clinical setting. This enables them to anticipate and gather information in preparation for encountering similar scenarios during clinical experiences.

Additionally, pre-class self-learning materials serve as a means for students to revisit and reinforce essential knowledge and skills, such as clinical reasoning cycles, which they learned in their earlier years. These foundational concepts are challenging and require repetitive review for effective understanding. Through the flipped classroom approach, students can review these materials at their own pace, freeing up valuable class time for more active learning.

How was the flipped teaching approach implemented?

Preparation of materials

→ Kitty prepared authentic written cases for students to engage with before the tutorial sessions.

Pre-class activity

→ Students were tasked with reading the authentic written cases, completing a worksheet and sharing their findings within their groups. Additionally, they had the opportunity to refresh their understanding of essential pre-requisite knowledge, such as clinical reasoning cycles, by watching a series of concise instructional videos.

In-class activity

→ During the tutorial, students were instructed to summarise the findings from their completed worksheets and organise the information into a flip chart. They then had the opportunity to circulate and examine the flip charts created by other groups before reconvening for a group discussion. Each group was encouraged to challenge other groups' findings and also received challenges from the instructor. Throughout this process, Kitty actively promoted the use of online tools, such as Google and ChatGPT, to facilitate students' learning and enhance their overall experience.

Post-class activity

→ Each group was required to develop their own group project or report, drawing upon the insights gained through the in-class learning and discussion.

What are the good practices that can be learnt from this case?

Giving incentives to encourage student participation

- Kitty intentionally assigned marks to incentivise active engagement in both online self-learning and in-class discussions.

Fostering an enjoyable learning environment to enhance student engagement

- To enhance student engagement, Kitty made deliberate efforts to create an enjoyable learning environment in her class. She recognised that some students hesitated to speak publicly during tutorials due to their concerns about their English proficiency. In order to alleviate their anxiety, Kitty encouraged the use of online tools like Google and ChatGPT to assist with the pronunciation of scientific terms during discussions and presentations. This approach not only made the learning process more enjoyable but also allowed students to have fun imitating the correct pronunciation, creating a relaxed atmosphere where they felt more comfortable expressing themselves during the in-class activities.

Encouraging Participation of Shy and Quiet Students through Innovative Strategies

- Kitty employed various strategies to actively engage shy and quiet students during class activities. Students were encouraged to engage in group discussions and allocate key points among themselves before sharing their views in the Virtual Hospital. Positive reinforcement was offered whenever students expressed their opinions, creating a supportive environment. Peers were then prompted to provide justifications for their support or disagreement with these views. It was again emphasised that this is a valuable process of learning and consolidating their thoughts when expressing their opinions, whether accurate or inaccurate.

Additionally, Kitty introduced a group-based activity where each group was given a blank piece of paper and instructed to mark down a tally for each group member who actively contributed during the tutorial. At the end of the class, the number of marks each student received was recorded as their participation grade. This method incentivised students to overcome their reticence and actively engage in discussions.

Strategic Integration of Flipped Classroom Approach as Needed for Optimal Learning

- Kitty recognised the value of traditional lecture-based teaching in certain contexts. She acknowledged that lectures can effectively explain complex content and provide a solid foundation for students to engage in further learning activities. Consequently, she proposed a balanced approach, suggesting that teachers should employ the flipped classroom model selectively, focusing on flipping the class only when it is necessary or beneficial for student learning.

Embracing New Technologies for Enhanced Classroom Learning

- Kitty advocates for the integration of new technologies, such as ChatGPT, as a valuable tool to engage students during class. Recognising that students naturally gravitate towards these technologies, she emphasised the importance of acknowledging their preferences and leveraging them for educational purposes. Kitty acknowledged that prohibiting the use of such technologies would be impractical, and instead, she emphasised the need for teachers to ensure that the use of technology does not hinder or negatively impact the students' overall learning outcomes. Striking a balance between integrating technology and maintaining a focus on effective pedagogy is crucial to ensure a positive and productive learning environment.

What was the impact on student learning?

The implementation of these strategies resulted in increased student engagement during learning activities. Students demonstrated a higher level of active participation and were better prepared with the necessary prerequisite knowledge before delving into the more advanced clinical materials.

1. Efficient Use of Time: In a traditional tutorial setting, a significant portion of time is often dedicated to deliver general instructions. This is time-consuming and may not cater to the specific needs of every student. In a flipped classroom, students have the opportunity to review the content according to their individual needs. This allows them to learn at their own pace, and come to class prepared with specific questions. As a result, class time can be utilized more efficiently, focusing on addressing individual queries.

2. Immediate Feedback: During the group project, students can ask questions directly to the teacher when they encounter difficulties or need clarification. This prompt feedback helps them correct any misunderstandings early on. And enables the teacher to address common misconceptions which students faced, ensuring that everyone stays on track. This real-time interaction promotes a more supportive learning environment.

3. Focus on Conceptual Understanding: By allowing students to ask questions related to their group project, they have the opportunity to delve deeper into the subject matter. And explore the underlying concepts to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the topic. It also promotes a deeper engagement with the material, as students actively seek clarification, a more thorough grasp of the subject is developed.

What were the challenges encountered during the implementation and what solutions were used?

Accessing Resources for Teaching Innovation

According to Kitty, developing new flipped teaching approaches can be challenging without sufficient resources, both in terms of time and funding. Initially, a significant amount of time needs to be allocated for development, but ongoing development can also be costly based on the initial investment. It would be beneficial if staff members with heavy teaching workloads could be allocated 10% of their time for teaching development, providing them with the necessary space and flexibility to explore innovative approaches.

In addition to time allocation, sufficient funding support is crucial to employ competent staff members who can contribute to the development of new and effective teaching innovations. Recognising the challenges associated with limited funding, Kitty suggested that collaboration with colleagues can be a valuable solution in such situations. Colleagues can provide support by pooling resources, including funding for research assistants, and jointly managing the workload associated with implementing innovative teaching methods like the flipped classroom approach.

Valuing Teaching Efforts and Recognizing Achievements

Within the current university culture, research often takes precedence over teaching, leading to teaching staff having to dedicate their personal time to further develop innovative flipped teaching approaches. It would be highly beneficial if the workload associated with teaching innovation could be officially recognized, and the efforts of teaching staff in this area could be acknowledged and rewarded. It would be also beneficial if teaching and clinical staff are allowed to take on leadership roles in initiatives related to teaching innovation. By giving them the opportunity to spearhead such initiatives, their expertise and dedication can be acknowledged and leveraged effectively.

In a positive development, Kitty and her team have recently received recognition for their teaching excellence. Such recognition serves as a source of encouragement and motivation for all colleagues who are interested in advancing teaching innovation. It highlights the importance of valuing and celebrating achievements in teaching, providing inspiration for others to pursue similar endeavors.

Increased Student Workload

Implementing a flipped classroom approach can increase the workload placed on students, particularly when they are already burdened with multiple subjects and assignments. This increased workload may cause some students to disengage with the pre-class materials, leading to a negative perception of the flipped approach, despite its potential benefits for their learning.

To mitigate this issue, Kitty thinks the instructor should be mindful of the amount of flipped activities assigned to students. By carefully determining the workload and aligning it with students' capacities, instructors can help maintain student engagement and motivation within the flipped classroom.

Additionally, Kitty suggested a strategy to avoid blaming students for not adequately preparing for pre-class activities. Instead, she encouraged the use of peer learning as a supportive mechanism. By promoting peer learning, students can assist and learn from one another, fostering a collaborative and inclusive learning environment. This approach not only eases the burden on individual students but also enhances their understanding of the material through shared knowledge and assistance.