How do you design for active learning in an online, self-paced course?

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Agenda

1. Why the need for an online self-paced course
2. The learning design – theoretical underpinnings
3. How do teachers experience the course?
4. Potentials
5. Challenges
6. Concluding remarks
Why the need for an online, self-paced course?

A low attendance rate in the face-to-face course

- Aspects influencing the low attendance rate:
  - The fixed times and dates
  - Travel costs (time/money)
  - Wrong timing – individual needs

The aims of the self-paced online course:

- Providing teachers with basic LMS & VLE skills
- Testing the value of a self-paced course
- To provide teachers with better flexibility and timing options
- No travel costs (time/money)
- More learning, engaged and satisfied teachers
- An increased number of participants
### The learning design – theoretical underpinnings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hands-on approach</th>
<th>Freedom &amp; flexibility</th>
<th>Combining learning &amp; work tasks</th>
<th>Design tools &amp; principles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Building knowledge in practice</td>
<td>• Adult learning</td>
<td>• Work-based learning</td>
<td>• E-tivities</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Embedding learning in activity</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Staff development = work tasks</td>
<td>• Badges</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The actual course design – course modules

1 Introduction to the course (blog)
2 VLEs & the benefits of online learning (test and blog)
3 Communicating with students online (discussion board)
4 How to use the menu item Course Information (blog)
5 How to use the menu item Course Materials (blog)
6 Video and integration of external tools (blog)
7 Interactive tools (test)
8 How to use the menu item assignment (discussion board)
9 Live online teaching – elective (assignment)
10 Concluding assignment
The virtual learning environment

Assignments

3 Communicating with students online (discussion board)
In this module, you will study materials on how to communicate effectively with students online and get to know the tools available for doing so in Blackboard. Then you will be asked to formulate and submit a welcome announcement and a strategy for your future online communication with students in Blackboard.

- See this activity for detailed instructions and resources.
- When you are ready to post your submission, click the link above 3 Communicating with students online and then click Create Thread.
- Remember to click Submit to save and post your submission.

2 Virtual learning environments and the benefits of online learning (learning module)
In this module, you will study materials on online learning and virtual learning environments. You will also study the principles and guidelines for using Blackboard (e-learn.sdu.dk) at SDU and complete a quiz on the subject. Following this, you are to analyse your existing use of Blackboard and reflect on your future use of Blackboard in the light of the materials you have studied.

- See this activity for further instructions.
- When you are ready to complete the quiz and post your analysis and reflections click the link above 2 Virtual learning environments and the benefits of online learning.

1 Introduction to the course (blog)
In this module you will study the course description and the introductory video to become familiar with the course content, activities and assessments as well as the course site in Blackboard. You will then write a blog post on your expectations towards the course and you will read and respond to the blog posts of your fellow participants.

- Study e-activity 1.1 that contains detailed instructions.
- When you are ready to post your expectations, click on the link above 1 Introduction to the course to access the blog.
- Then click Create Blog Entry to start writing.
- Remember to click Submit to save and post your expectations.
Module contents and structure

3 Communicating with students online (discussion board)

In this module, you will study materials on how to formulate and submit a welcome announcement. See this e-tivity for detailed instructions and resources. Organise Forum Threads on this page and apply settings to several or all threads. Threads are at top of each column. More Help.

Module 3. Communicating with students online

Purpose
When you have completed this module, you will have obtained knowledge on
- how to communicate effectively with students online.
- relevant communication tools in Blackboard and when to use these.
- netiquette – code of conduct for online communication.
- the skills to
  - communicate with students online via the tools available
- and the competences to
  - formulate a welcome announcement for students.
  - formulate and carry out a strategy for your online communication with students.
  - choose the appropriate means of communicating with students online before and during the course.

Brief summary of overall task
In this e-tivity, you will study materials on how to effectively communicate with students online and get to know the tools available for doing so in Blackboard. Then you will be asked to formulate and submit a welcome announcement and a strategy for your future online communication with students in Blackboard.

Spark
Communicate effectively and appropriately online
Results: Adult learning and work-based learning

Adult learning – motivation for a self-paced course
“I had to get prepared for my first course I had to teach at SDU it would be me who had to set up the course on the Bb site” and “I could choose how to do these modules. Showing up for class would have been more difficult” (From interview)

- “It was really good. Could fit it around other things, if I had a little time spare, whenever, I had time for it.” (From interview)

- “I like to be kind of free, making choices so that sounded good to me. Less pressure if you have the option to self-pace you can do it faster or slower according to your lifestyle work nights or early morning” (From interview)

Work-based learning - Did you work on an actual course when doing the module activities?
- “Yeah, I did. Yeah, I did it all for one course. Used everything I did for an actual course. The video I made at the end, I put that on my Bb course, the welcome announcement I wrote for one of the assignments, I used that pretty much as it was.” (From interview)
E-tivities

• Structured learning paths with clear instructions

• Interaction, feedback and reflection

  ➢ Did it support your learning that you could see and comment on the posts of other participants? 68%

  ➢ Did it support your learning that other participants could comment on your posts? 75%

Module 1. Introduction to the course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>When you have completed this module, you will have obtained knowledge on:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• the contents, learning activities and assessments of this course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• the structure of the course site on Blackboard, how to navigate it, retrieve materials, participate in activities and complete assessments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and the skills to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• interact with other participants on the course.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• create blog posts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• respond to the blog posts of fellow participants.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Brief summary of overall task

In this e-tivity you will study the course description and the introductory video to become familiar with the course content, activities and assessments as well as the course site in Blackboard. You will then write a blog post on your expectations towards the course and you will read and respond to the blog posts of your fellow participants.

Spark

Before embarking on a course it is wise to consider your reasons for doing the course and to formulate your expectations. Expectations should then be matched against and adjusted to the actual learning outcomes, the teaching and learning activities and the assessments of the course in order for you to move on with realistic and relevant goals for your learning journey through the course.

Design tools & principles

Individual contribution

TASK 1: Study the course description and the introductory video and consider your expectations towards this course. Write a blog post in the blog 1 Introduction to the course explaining your own expectations and giving your reasons for enrolling in the course.

Dialogue begins

TASK 2: Study the blog posts on expectations posted by other participants and the e-moderators. Comment on the expectations of at least three of your fellow participants. You can respond to those posts that surprised you the most, provided you with new perspectives or the like. Use the comment button below the relevant blog post to write a comment.

E-Moderator interventions

The e-moderators are standing by to clarify any questions you may have. You can post your questions in the Q & A forum.

Schedule & time

Total workload: 1 hour.
You can complete this e-tivity at your own pace and time.

Badge

The module 1 badge will be released when you have completed the tasks listed above.

Next

Move on to module 2 which will become available once you have completed the tasks in this module.
The course material and instructions were very clear, concise, and easy to follow, as well as being a 'meta' example of the course content. (From survey)

The e-tivities made it very easy to follow the course, especially when (as often happened) I had to stop the module, do something else, and come back to it later. (From survey)

I find very useful to complete my tasks to have the opportunity to see the others' people posts. However, I saw commenting on their posts quite unnecessary and time consuming so, quite superflus. (From survey)

Only a few comments were really helpful. But comments requirement was a great way to make sure that I got inspiration from others. Which was interesting. (From survey)
Badges

• Motivating participants to complete the course

• Providing a clear/visible learning path

• Signposting
Badges

• Motivating participants to complete the course

• Providing a clear/visible learning path

• Signposting

The badges system is pretty good to keep up continuous learning. (From survey)

I was receiving very quickly a badge after completing every module this in particular brought a certain level of confidence. I have done something and somebody has seen what I am doing. (From interview)

Nice that you got a little reward, a badge at the end of the section. Nice to see where you were going(From interview)

Advancing from one stage to another – feeling ok I have completed something. I have rewards makes me feel confident I passed this is what I learnt I therefore go to the next step. (From interview)

It was quite motivating, made you feel that you were achieving something as you went through, that was nice. (From interview)
When I have a course of my own, I will be in charge of the design, I intend to incorporate what I learnt in this course to make my teaching more interactive than it was. Mainly, I would like to use more e-tivities and audio-visual stuff. And now, thanks to this course I know how to do it! (From survey)

I feel much more confident using Bb, I know how to set up my course, using in the correct way all the sections in bb, announcement ... And yes so I think the course provides all the necessary basics. (From interview)
Online and self-paced

Would you like to see more of our courses offered as online, self-paced courses?

• Convenience:
  • Freedom if you have a busy schedule
  • Accessibility when not living near campus
• Much more time consuming than expected
• Working at your own pace – taking the time needed
• Challenging – requires skilled faculty
• Lack peer feedback – F2F interaction

![Pie chart showing percentage of responses: Yes (53%), No (5%), Don't know (42%)](image)
Online and self-paced

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time spent in the course site in Blackboard</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>4,44 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>32,28 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>12,3 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated workload</td>
<td>13,5 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Participant activity

Enrolled participants: Green line
Active: Red line
Passive: Orange line
Completed: Black line
Potentials of the learning design

Fulfils the aim of facilitating
• A hands-on approach
  • Active learning
  • Not just knowledge goals but also skills and competences
• Work-based learning
  • Combining work tasks and learning

Adult-learning
• Freedom & flexibility
• Design tools & principles
  • Contextualisation & exemplarity
  • Transparency & motivation
• Progression
• Wider audience

Challenges of the learning design

• The ideal of collaborative vs the ideal of self-paced learning online
  • Staggered collaboration?
  • Introducing (a few – an overall) deadline?
• Loose vs strong structure
  • Freedom & flexibility vs completion
• Online learning still unknown
  • F2F is given priority
  • Deadlines to add importance?
• Timing is everything
• Time consuming to design
  • Consecutive time is needed
Concluding remarks

Simple design that inspires - further development of the design

• Simplify instructions
• Consider how the challenges can be minimized
• Transform more F2F courses into online, self-paced courses
• External factors
  • Management support needed
  • Make course compulsory
• Professionalisation of the teacher role – working towards the online teacher
  • Required basic course – foundation for further, more advanced courses
• Time management for e-moderators
References


Thank you

Questions
## Reasons for non-participation/non-completion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Respondener</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It’s no longer relevant</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t have the time</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bed timing – I’m not teaching this semester</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The course is boring</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s a barrier to me that the course is online</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of motivation</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I forgot that I was enrolled in the course</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s more time consuming than I thought</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t find the assignments relevant to my context</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t find the course materials engaging</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I lack interaction with other learners</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I lack interaction with the teachers</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I prefer face-to-face courses</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>