Flipped over Flipgrid

Abstract

Isolated, distant, disconnected, disengaged. These words are often used by both students and faculty when discussing online courses; however, it does not have to be this way. This 60-minute session demonstrates a web-based audio/video tool that can improve interaction, learning, and engagement. The presenters will demonstrate how the software works, share their experience with the technology, show examples of faculty-student interaction, discuss advantages, and allow participants to create videos.

Keywords: Interaction in online classes, Flipgrid, web-based interaction technology

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Introduction

When teaching an online course, I have often felt distant from my students. I have also heard students express the same feeling about feeling distant from their teacher and classmates in online courses. Simonson and Schlosser (2004) list twelve golden rules for developing online learning and the one essential among those rules is interaction. One simple definition of interaction is engagement in learning (Hillman, Willis, & Gunawardena, 1994). I think we all know that student-faculty interaction is essential to the teaching-learning transaction. However, how do you get meaningful interaction when your students may be spread all over the world? This was my nagging question until I was introduced to a web-based asynchronous audio/video product that allowed me to post audio and video prompts and allowed my students to respond in a similar format. Responses can be private or available to all of the other students to see, hear and respond to.

Theoretical Foundation

The Institute for Higher Education Policy (2000), the American Council on Education (1997) and the American Federation of Teachers (2000) all list interaction as one of their criteria for good online learning. Interaction is so important that Roblyer and Wiencke (2003) developed and then validated (Roblyer & Wiencke, 2004) the Rubric for Assessing Interactive Qualities in Distance Courses (RAIQ). It uses five observable indicators: 1) social rapport-building designs for interaction, 2) instructional designs for interaction, 3) interactivity of technology resources, 4) evidence of learner engagement, and 5) evidence of instructor engagement.

Marks, Sibley, and Arbaugh (2005) empirically found that both student-instructor interaction and student-student interaction positively affected perceived learning in an online course. The counterpoint is that Perreault, Waldman, Alexander, and Zhao (2002) found that one of the greatest barriers to online success for some learners is the lack of face-to-face communication with the instructor and peers. These students say that they feel isolated and disconnected from their peers and the instructor and the more isolated they feel, the less satisfied they are with the learning (Billings, Connors, & Skiba, 2001).

Northrup (2009) found that conversation and collaboration interaction lead to forming and maintaining the online learning community. These online learning communities foster a sense of belonging, a sense of support, a sense of membership, and an ability to share in the educational journey together (Shea, Swan, & Pickett, 2004). When these learning communities are developed and nurtured through effective learning technologies, the students perceive they are receiving a rich learning opportunity.

Learning Objectives

There are two primary learning objectives for this thirty-minute session:

1. To learn about a web-based tool that increased interaction between student and faculty and student to student
2. To actually experience the use of this technology

Demonstration Overview

We will both show examples of how Flipgrid works and encourage participants to experience the use of the technology firsthand so that they and other participants and see how easy it is to use. We will provide some video prompts created ahead of time, so that participants can start responding to the prompts and each other. We will discuss other applications for Flipgrid such as building community between class sessions in face-to-face classes or for team development. We will discuss advantages of Flipgrid including no requirement for students to create an account and remember yet another password. We will also inform the participants of the differences between the free and nominal-cost accounts for faculty members.

Session Description

The following is the timeline for the session:

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| Timing | Topic |
| 5 minutes | Welcome and Greeting |
| 10 minutes | Participant introductions and what they want from the session |
| 20 minutes | Introduction to and demonstration of Flipgrid |
| 15 minutes | Opportunity for participants to create videos |
| 10 Minutes | Discussion, Questions & Wrap-Up |

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