Online Curriculum Planning and Preparation

Blended and online lesson planning and preparation is more than transferring face-to-face classroom sessions to an online environment. It may require teachers to reconsider lesson organizations, assessments, and student learning experiences. To structure teaching materials to benefit all students, it is essential to take advantage of the delivery format and make each lesson accessible and interactive. By planning lessons with Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in mind, teachers can build in accessibility to benefit all students.

1. How does the learning environment impact my curriculum lesson planning and preparation?
2. What should I consider when planning blended or online lessons?
3. How can I plan my blended or online curriculum so that it is accessible to all learners?

? to Consider

KEY Elements

Lesson plans work as a guide for teachers to organize what will be taught, how it will be taught and, and how it will be assessed. A lesson plan typically includes alignment between the lesson's objectives and educational standards, the organization and structure of content to be taught, a list of required materials, how instruction and learning activities will be presented, and the evaluation methods including assessment and feedback. When designing face-to-face, blended, or online lessons, the standards and objectives are the same, but other components need to be planned and prepared differently to be effective. Teachers need to keep educational standards in mind when planning online lessons because the standards guide what is taught. Students may have more distractions in online environments and may not have as many communication channels as in face-to-face classes. So, teachers may need to adjust and modify lesson structures, teaching materials, learning activities, and assessments to support student learning and engagement.

It is vital for teachers to engage in advanced lesson planning in order to facilitate effective blended and online lessons. One important lesson planning decision is considering whether learning activities should be completed synchronously or asynchronously. Students can have their questions answered right away in a synchronous video conferencing session, whereas they may need to wait for an answer to their questions when participating in asynchronous activities. These differences may lead teachers to adjust the lesson's instructional strategies, independent practice, group work, and media or technology. It is also important to consider how the assessment cycle is implemented. What kinds of assessment and feedback are suitable for students to achieve the lesson objectives? Having varied assessment methods from lesson to lesson may be the most effective strategy. For example, depending on the lesson objectives, assessments can be class discussions, group projects, or presentations. Using multimodal feedback involving images, audio, texts, and videos to evaluate students' performance and garner their feedback can be beneficial.

To make online lessons more accessible to all students, plan lessons with Universal Design for Learning, or UDL principles, in mind. Utilizing a detailed class website or LMS home page as a primary hub, channels can be established for communicating with students, ensuring accessibility and ease of interaction. For example, teachers can create a core space for students to access lesson materials, activities, resources, and assignments. The core space can serve as a hub for providing information and posting updates. Additionally, it might be beneficial to consider offering tutorials to show students how to get started and where to find relevant tools to support student success. A detailed class website or LMS homepage is more than a container of information, as it often serves as a two-way channel for regular and consistent communication between teachers and students.

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