Optimising the flipped classroom and group assessment at Monash University

Using
- Interactive Document
- Group Member Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COURSE FORMAT</th>
<th>CLASS SIZE</th>
<th>LMS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>moodle</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DOMAIN</th>
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<td>Introduction to Management</td>
<td>First year</td>
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Background

About the institution

Monash Business School represents all Australian-based operations of the Faculty of Business and Economics, operating on three of Monash University’s four campuses in and around the city of Melbourne – Clayton, Caulfield and Peninsula.

About the instructor

Dr. Jess Mitchell currently works as a lecturer in the Department of Management at the Monash Business School. Dr. Mitchell has more than 25 years of university teaching experience specialising in management, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation across universities in Australia.

Course objectives

Students work on a case study to develop analytical, research, and report writing skills. Collaboration also remains a key learning skill, being integrated into both assessment and weekly activities.

Creating
- Evaluating
- Analyzing
- Applying
- Understanding
- Remembering

BLOOM’S TAXONOMY

The learning activities, according to Bloom’s Taxonomy, were mainly at the level of:

- Understanding different concepts in the use case
- Applying feedback to complete the worksheet
- Analyzing own and peers’ work for adherence to a rubric
- Evaluating group members’ contribution
The challenge

Since 2019, Dr. Jess Mitchell has been in charge of running the first-year Introduction to Management course, (MGC1010) at Monash. Even though this course is designed for freshmen, second- and third-year students taking double degrees usually make up about half of the class, leading to great variation among students’ disciplines, levels and backgrounds. Dr Mitchell remarked that this “builds up the level of complexity in delivering the unit to the students”.

The flipped classroom was used to model the redesign of this introduction unit, as this approach was seen to be most fitting with the learning objectives. The course involves students working on a case study to develop analytical, research, and report writing skills. Collaboration also remains a key learning skill, being integrated into both assessment and weekly activities.

The solution

Before the pandemic, the course was conducted face-to-face, with instructors distributing case studies for students to download and annotate on their computers. In-class group discussions followed the preparation stage where students exchanged thoughts on the study materials. During these sessions, instructors evaluated students’ participation and contribution based on a rubric. With all the input from prior reading and discussion, students worked together to complete worksheets detailing questions or tasks.

The emergency remote transition took the module online, as the group discussions were facilitated via Zoom, with students interacting with each other in breakout rooms. The lack of physical contact in the new setup resulted in a significant decrease in student engagement. This prompted Dr. Mitchell to search for an innovative solution that would help activate students during both the asynchronous and synchronous phases of the course. FeedbackFruits Interactive Document and Group Member Evaluation were chosen.

I think this works better than the Forum in Moodle. Students don’t engage like this is discussion content in Moodle, but they do in FeedbackFruits.”

Dr. Jess Mitchell
Lecturer, Monash University
The set-up

Interactive Document for content preparation
- The case study was annotated with explanations of terminologies, questions and discussion threads, allowing students to make connections between a specific detail with a theoretical concept, and exchange thoughts with their peers.
- Grading distribution was enabled to allocate for certain steps being completed, like reading the document or answering all the questions.

Group Member Evaluation for group assessment
The instructor designed and issued a weekly group feedback activity:
- Students evaluated their teammates’ performance and contribution based on a rubric.
- This activity aimed to let students learn from the received feedback and improve their work accordingly.

The outcomes

The in-line questions and discussion threads in case studies significantly encouraged students to go through the case study and actually “read” the content. Furthermore, they were able to associate the relevant concepts "based on what they get from FeedbackFruits activities”.

A survey was conducted to measure the impact of Group Member Evaluation. Most of the students noted that the received feedback helped adjust their performance, and provided valuable insights into how their work is perceived by others. This, as remarked by Dr. Mitchell, critically "stimulates critical self-reflection" among the students.

Since students developed in-depth understanding of the content and consciously monitor their group performance, and team worksheets completion was much much better as well.

Besides positive feedback, the responses revealed room for improvement: students need more instructions and guidelines on how to conduct peer evaluations. Most importantly, instructors should emphasize the importance of delivering objective, unbiased feedback based on the feedback rubric.

For more details of the use cases and suggestions on how you can apply to your courses, watch this video.

“...For me, it is actually important that they went through the case study. I find that compared to last semester, this semester the students coming to the workshops are a lot more prepared in terms of the quality of the answers they provide to the questions."

Dr. Jess Mitchell
Lecturer, Monash University