Facilitating open communications in an online poster presentation symposium

Instructor workload
- A
- B
- C
- Instructor

Measurement of Work
- A
- B
- C
- Class size 75

CONTEXT
In the year of an engineering course of the bachelor's (honors) level, students undertake a year-long project which ends up with a final presentation and poster symposium in a semester setup. Due to the inability to carry out the poster symposium due to face-to-face, the Discussion took place, allowing students to present their view, view, and comment on each other's posters. In total, around 75 students uploaded their work and about three-quarters of them actively contributed to discussions in this symposium, writing about 4-6 comments each.

The Discussion tool was used informally to let students asynchronously post their views into a seamless formal environment, aiming to review some of the areas of a mandatory review. Additionally, the tool provided a suitable platform upon which to base the poster conference, allowing students to interact with each other and share their final work at the end of their degree.

I really like the Discussion tool's ability to give students the freedom to view and discuss each other's work in a combination of a summative assessment task, to give their opinions without the fear of shot assessment.

CONSTRUCTIVE ALIGNMENT
Learning objectives:
- Students undertake a research project, learning about what is happening at the edge of their research field.
- Students demonstrate an ability to communicate through various modes and media.

Learning activities:
Throughout the year, in the engineering unit, students were involved on their own initiatives, producing both written reports and video assignment which constitute the final grade that they will receive. In addition, students have a presentation in the form of a poster that outlines their research and findings. This symposium would normally be held in a physical venue but this time round, an online platform was needed. "It was the Discord, the Discussion tool's ability to allow students to interface and see each other's project work, and provide the opportunity for questions or comments to be posted. A notice was sent well in advance of the activity as the interface was kept to one so as not to pose a risk, reflecting the nature of the face-to-face interaction of such a symposium. Academic staff were also able to view student presentations although this was not the primary intention.

Learning activities, according to Thomas's 'Learning', were mainly at the level of:
- Accessing the poster presentations of posters within the tool.

Evaluating the context in posters' presentations through discussion comments
Creating a poster presentation which summarizes the findings of a research thesis

Assessment of learning outcomes
The poster presentation and use of case tool did not go well. The transition was intended to provide students with a platform to view and discuss each other's work in as well, in a more informal activity setup.

Reliable outcomes:
The instructor designer noted that the Discussion tool had been an effective "teaching presentation format," allowing the symposium to continue online. However, it was noted that the format would not provide the opportunity for the same sort of symposium as face-to-face, and in this aspect was not formed.

The usefulness of each student's upload visualized a review of which viewers saw as one of each poster without having to open each one up.

The platform was found to be effective for stimulating a discussion among students, "they were willing to go on their way and discuss within the pedagogical tool."

Deeply simplified is an optional step, for students started to follow a typical discussion within the tool, as a follow-up step after the initial poster-viewing activity.

The role of the instructional designer:
The instructor designer set up the activity for providing guidance in presenting information by showing the "individual hand-and-introduction discussion" option, and enabling the "open discussion" step.

The instructional designer instructors, facilitators, and other support staff were able to view the student presentations outside of the tool, as well as access the descriptive data about each student's performance (period data, number of comments, etc.), often with the guidance of those teaching.

Added value of technology
Learning was the key benefit of the lack of interaction between peers, as choosing a purpose for communication and discussion became less frequent. With tools such as Discussion which stimulate collaboration and peer-peer interaction, classes can build up an online learning community whose members challenge each other, requiring face-to-face interaction. Giving students the space to accepted material together through activity venues which facilitate this option, as an essential component of effective digital pedagogy.