

MULTI-CHANNEL LEARNING: INTEGRATING ONLINE AND FACE-TO-FACE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS IN A PROJECT BASED COURSE

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ABSTRACT

This article introduces an approach to structuring learning activities in marketing courses involving a meaningful semester-long project. The multi-channel learning activities occur both in a group and individually, online and offline. Mixing these modes and environments of learning allows the instructor to allocate class time appropriately to foster effective student learning. The approach involves working collaboratively with a group online using asynchronous discussion board technology to plan the project and make key decisions and then working individually to create the final "product." By shifting some learning activities online instructors can devote additional class time to skill building exercises.

This Multi-Channel learning process was developed utilizing Bloom's Taxonomy (Bloom et. al. 1956) as an organizing framework. Bloom's Taxonomy is a model that attempts to systematically classify cognitive operations. Recently, Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) updated Bloom's Taxonomy with the goal of making it more useful to educators. A major point of emphasis in the revision involved highlighting the different types of knowledge, including factual, conceptual and procedural. In order to effectively to complete an application oriented exercise, students must have each of these different types of knowledge. They must understand basic course terminology and facts (factual knowledge), be able to meaningfully relate this factual knowledge to the project (conceptual knowledge) and have the skills necessary to complete project tasks (procedural knowledge).

The learning activities described in the full paper have been designed to promote cognitive processing and learning at each of the levels of Bloom's Taxonomy. By designing learning activities to promote specific and higher levels of cognitive complexity students should learn more effectively. A key aspect of the approach is a semi-structured series of required posts that must be made on an online discussion board. Students are given clear requirements and deadlines indicating what and when they must contribute.

- **Initial Posts:** In this task, team members are given a set of application oriented questions that relate to the unit's content material..
- **Response Posts:** In the response post team members are asked to identify the concepts from one another's posts that best address the topic in order to begin creating a unified "team" response.
- **Team Leader Summary Draft:** A team leader takes the individual responses of their team members, applies their own insights and crafts a "team" response.
- **Team Member Critiques:** Team members critique the report with the goal of finding substantive means of improving the write-up.
- **Team Leader Final Draft:** The team leader must evaluate the appropriateness of their teammates' feedback and make decisions about how to best address that point in the team's response.

References

- Anderson, L. W., & Krathwohl, D.R. (Eds.). 2001. *A taxonomy for learning, teaching, and assessing: A revision of Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives*. New York: Longman.
- Bloom, B.S. 1956. *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The classification of educational goals*. New York: David McKay