ESL 263

Draft # 2

Title : “Online Courses’ Limitations Hurt Students”

The lack of face-to-face time can lead to online courses hurting low-achieving students. The lack of face-to-face is a problem because underperformers need motivation and feedback from teachers. Classroom teachers can observe the students’ behavior in classroom sessions to give motivation and feedback. The observations can lead to praises and criticisms that motivate and show students what can they do to improve. Office hours can also be used for quick and easy sessions that are tailored to each student. But online platforms distances them from the instructors. Online instructors cannot observe the students in action. Also, online courses use discussion forums as the communication tool between students and teachers. Discussion forums however, takes time for teachers to respond. The sheer size of the class that ranges up to thousands can keep them from timely responses. The delay leads to less improvement in learning. A study in Chicago schools highlights the outcome. Failing students were randomly put in online algebra courses or their classroom counterparts where the online students learned less than the former’s students (Dynarski 2). Online students’ reduced learning suggests online courses’ limitations lead to hurting underachievers. Online courses hurt them because their limitations is keeping them from allowing face-to-time with the instructors.

Online courses also hurt low-achieving students since they lack self-regulation skills. Self- discipline skills are vital to managing distractions. Well-disciplined students have the self-awareness to stay on track, while listening to lectures. But low achieving students can’t. My experience with Harvard’s introductory online Computer Science course, CS50 is a prime example. A CS50 lecture can last up to 120 minutes. I took CS50 because I was constantly getting Cs in my coding classes. However, I found myself constantly distracted after 30 minutes and looking at Netflix videos. Watching Netflix videos meant that it took longer to finish lectures. I learned less and it led to getting Cs all over again. My failing grades in CS50 shows underperformers in online course are more susceptible to distractions. The susceptibility of underperformers is why underperformers’ lack of self-control skill in online courses hurt them.

Works Cited

Dynarski, Susan. “Online Courses Fail Those Who Need Help.” *New York Times*, 21 Jan. 2018, p.BU3.

Fu, Angela and Wang, Lucy. “Harvard Time is Gone. Here's How to Navigate the New Schedule”, https://www.thecrimson.com/, 2 September 2018