ESL 263

WA#2

Draft # 2

Name: Brad

Date: 10/25/19

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 tailored to each student. However, online platforms distance them from the instructors. Online instructors cannot observe the students in action. Also, online courses use discussion forums as a communication tool between students and teachers. Discussion forums, however, take 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 are keeping them from allowing face-to-face 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 because it creates self-awareness to stay focused. But low achieving students lack the ability stay on track. My experience with Harvard’s introductory online Computer Science course, CS50 is a prime example. A CS50 class can last up to 120 minutes. I took CS50 because I kept 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, leading to getting Cs all over again. My failing grades in CS50 shows underperformers in online courses are more susceptible to distractions. Since the lack of self-control makes them more vulnerable to getting sidetracked, online courses fail underachievers rather than helping them.

Works Cited

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