Effectiveness of Learning Methods Featured in Warrington College of Business Online Courses, According to Students

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Introduction

This study focuses on the Warrington College of Business at the University of Florida, which offers popular online programs including business administration, marketing, information system, and finance. It seeks to identify which learning methods are most effective in enhancing student learning experiences within this setting.

Methods

Participants: UF undergraduate students who had either completed or currently enrolled in online courses offered by Warrington.

Survey Platform: Qualtrics.

Survey Distribution Platforms:
- UF e-Learning Canvas Page
- GroupMe (UF business courses)
- Reddit (r/ufl)

Data Collection Period: Four weeks (Oct to Nov 2024).

Survey Structure:
1. Demographics (5 Multiple choice questions).
2. Thoughts about methods featured in Warrington's online courses (4 Multiple choice questions).
3. Free response about Warrington's online learning experience in general (2 FRQs).

Results

Demographics:

Age			
	18-20	31	70%
	21-23	11	25%
	24-26	1	2%
	30+	1	2%
Race	White/Caucasian	23	52%
	Black/African American	1	2%
	Hispanic/Latino	10	23%
	Asian	9	20%
	Other	1	2%
Gender	Male	22	50%
	Female	22	50%

Grade Year			
	Freshman	3	7%
	Sophomore	26	59%
	Junior	11	25%
	Senior	4	9%
Major	Accounting	2	5%
	Business Administration	15	34%
	Combination Degrees	1	2%
	Finance	12	27%
	Information Systems	3	7%
	Management	1	2%
	Marketing	2	5%
	Other	8	18%

Thoughts about methods featured in online courses:

Method	Experienced	Found Helpful	Found Unhelpful	Not Participating
Recorded Lecture Videos	42	17 (40%)	12 (29%)	12 (29%)
Virtual Live Lectures	25	2 (8%)	8 (32%)	12 (48%)
Virtual Office Hours	19	2 (11%)	7 (32%)	12 (63%)
Proctored Online Exams	41	1 (2%)	15 (37%)	1 (2%)
Quizzes	41	4 (10%)	3 (7%)	6 (15%)
Writing Assignments	26	1 (4%)	9 (35%)	5 (19%)
Reading e-Books	37	2 (5%)	14 (38%)	14 (38%)
Lecture Materials	39	23 (59%)	2 (5%)	6 (15%)
Previous Exams	37	29 (78%)	0 (0%)	2 (5%)
Traditional Practice Questions	22	11 (50%)	2 (9%)	3 (14%)
Adaptive Smartbook Assignments	38	9 (24%)	5 (13%)	8 (36%)
Interactive Simulations	30	9 (30%)	4 (13%)	7 (23%)
Case Studies	16	2 (13%)	5 (31%)	4 (25%)

Free response about online learning experiences:

Positive Key Factor	Frequency
Flexibility (schedule, pacing)	8
Ability to watch recorded lectures	4
Clear course structure	3
Organized online materials	2
In-person lectures	2

Negative Key Factor	Frequency
Professors' teaching quality/methods	8
Difficulty with proctored exams	3
Lack of engagement/personal connection	4
Disparity between learning materials and exams	2
Disconnection from students/UF community	2
Unstructured lessons	2

Discussion

The most helpful methods for students in Warrington Online were mostly traditional materials, including previous exams, lecture materials, and traditional practice questions. In contrast, assignments that were made online such as e-books, proctored online exams along with writing assignments were rated as the least helpful. Participation was lowest in virtual events including office hours and live lectures and reading e-books.

Warrington's strengths in its online courses include flexibility through recorded lectures and online assignments, along with a clear course structure. Challenges with proctored exams, inconsistent teaching methods, unstructured lessons, and reduced community connection in fully online classes were noted as weaknesses.

Limitations: The survey's short availability period led to a limited number of participants, and the platforms used for distribution may have influenced the participant demographics.

Future Directions: Conducting a study with a larger sample size, detailed explanations of each method, and an interactive survey format could yield more accurate results.