Innovation and Engagement in a 100% Online Program

TREO Talk Paper

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Abstract

Today’s educational landscape is changing at a rapid pace. Students are looking to take classes online for convenience while still expecting the same level of engagement and effectiveness of learning as in a traditional face to face classroom.

In the MS-Digital Innovation in Marketing program, we’ve promised the same level of engagement in the classroom as a traditional face to face program. To effectively deliver and engage, we’ve created an innovative, four part model that incorporates traditional face to face learning and an online component which has contributed to a 94% retention rate over our 2 years of operation and a high rate of student satisfaction. We are able to apply this model to all courses taught in our program – offered jointly through the MIS & Marketing departments.

In this TREO talk, I will talk about the model and the makeup of each portion. Our four part model is made up of the following components:

1. Learnathon – think of this as the traditional classroom environment in a virtual setting. Faculty deliver materials, faculty and students discuss topics, students present on case studies and work in team breakout sessions on instructor guided activities
2. Meetup – think of this like a virtual tech meetup for students – students are invited weekly to hear from industry experts on relevant topics. Students network and engage throughout this virtual session to hear real world experiences. In weeks where there aren’t guest experts, students and faculty interact as if they were holding office hours, reviewing course work and open discussions
3. Co-Creation – think of this as the students’ internal engagement. On our proprietary platform, students create blog like posts related to coursework, stimulating discussions and prompting innovation in new ideas in a very social media friendly atmosphere.
4. Professional Development – think of this like our own internal linkedin – students create their digital brand and then use that to share their relevant coursework and professional accomplishments. They build these out for use while in the program and then afterward.