

Graduate Showcase Submission

Mariya Khan

Program: M.ED. Educational Technology

James Madison University

## **Project Description – Blended learning**

Blended Learning is commonly referred to as “a formal education program in which a student learns at least in part through the online delivery of content and instruction with some element of student control over time, place, path and/or pace” (Horn & Staker, 2012). This means that learning can take place virtually anywhere with increased supervision at a coffee shop, a public library, or any other educational setting that allows connectivity to the internet. The constant development of technology permits the inclusion of content through various forms of blended learning and online delivery techniques in both K-12 and higher education. Effectively arranging various methods of online learning involves considerations that traditional instruction may not require. As institutions of higher education, state departments of education, as well as K-12 educators become increasingly familiar with innovative blended learning initiatives, the need for modern strategies to design and deliver quality instruction is evident. Therefore, educators capable of implementing successful online instructional strategies are becoming increasingly essential to the field of education.

**The blended teacher.** I designed an asynchronous learning module about online teaching for Content Teaching Academy participants at James Madison University. To do this, I used gamification strategies as the framework to not only keep learners engaged, but to also enable participants to gain tools to successfully incorporate gamification into their own instruction. As the Instructional Designer, I analyzed potential needs based on the intended audience and designed unique instructional materials to accommodate for a diverse set of learners. Each concept provided in this module allowed learners to gain access to cited research, definitions, examples (using videos or images), and provided opportunities for further content exploration. A variety of strategic materials were developed which allowed content within each module to offer instruction based on various aspects of planning, implementing, and evaluating instruction.

**The blended student.** This international, distance-education internship with Bath Spa University allowed me to collaborate with a faculty member, to redesign a module in Blackboard VLE (Minerva) intended for blended learning use. This experience enabled me to effectively redesign a Graduate level course, while collaborating with a real client, (via e-mail or Skype) on a weekly basis. As the Subject Matter Expert (SME) and the instructional designer, I immersed myself in the contents of each topic to develop appropriate course materials for international, graduate students. After conducting thorough planning procedures using the ADDIE model, not

only were Instructional Design Principles applied, but effective visual design and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Principles were addressed as well. Various forms of multimedia were used to create seamless, engaging content to ensure learner success. Some examples of this included: creative PowerPoint presentations, Microsoft Mix, videos, and even interactive simulations. In these cases, modules were utilized to increase the rigor of learning content using diverse learning activities. These collaborative experiences empowered me to conduct my final research project based on the topic of blended learning.

## **Goals**

- To communicate the educational value of various blended learning techniques in diverse educational environments
- To demonstrate the importance of the ADDIE model in order to effectively design and develop online learning
- To increase awareness of necessary learning theories such as multimedia theory, Gestalt's Principles (effective visual design), and adult learning theories, in order to create effective online or blended instruction

## **Relevance**

Over the past several years, technology continues to influence various aspects of the United States educational system. By 2020, the United States educational system is expected to completely integrate instructional and educational technologies into their daily schedules which predominately use online materials as the main source of information (Bailey, Ellis, Schneider & Ark, 2013). With this in mind, the central instructional goals of K-12 education are shifting to enhanced learning personalization, ease of access to materials, and effective teacher practice infused with technology to increase learner productivity (Bailey et al., 2013). The United States Department of Education meta-analysis (2010) demonstrated that courses that were offered fully online, outperformed face-to-face courses, while blended courses outperformed course options offered online.

Since teachers are expected to utilize 21<sup>st</sup> century technology skills in order to facilitate learning within their classrooms, it is necessary for instructors to adjust from standard-based teaching (derived from standardized testing), to delivering customized approaches to learning which allows for increased content exposure. This can be established by infusing wide varieties of technology in today's 21<sup>st</sup> century classrooms. Redefining rigor, relevance in various contexts, and enriching interactions is increasingly becoming crucial to teacher and student success (Deuren, 2014.). This skill set requires teachers to enhance and redefine their toolbox of instructional strategies. Since using advanced technological skills in education encompasses many competencies and management strategies, this may produce an anxiety driven environment which requires additional work and time. As a result of this increased pressure, teachers find themselves unprepared and uncomfortable delivering effective blended instruction (Deuren,

2014). Since these issues impact online learning, it is necessary to keep these in mind while designing and delivering blended instruction. These projects were designed by using effective visual design skills, adult learning theories, and carefully planned using the ADDIE model to maximize learning opportunities for a diverse set of learners.

### **Summary**

The presented work is in the form of self-designed blended learning modules. I would prefer to present this as a poster session or exhibit in order to demonstrate the visual design principles used to create the work. Also, since I may be unable to physically be present at James Madison University during this time, there will be video presentations to further explain my body of work. These video presentations and/or posters will be set up by JMU Educational Technology graduate students or staff members who have access to the physical space at JMU. Also, the mobile telepresence unit may be necessary in order to present the information from a distance.

**Faculty Advisor**

Michele D. Estes, PhD,

Associate Professor Director, Educational Technology Graduate Programs

3325C Memorial Hall, MSC 6913

Learning, Technology, and Leadership Education College of Education,

James Madison University Harrisonburg, Virginia 22807

**Contact information**

estesmd@jmu.edu

540-568-4311