ASYNCHRONOUS STRATEGIES FOR EXCELLENT LEARNING AND TEACHING

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Asynchronous Learning refers to a variety of teaching, learning, and educational methods that don't take place simultaneously or in the same location. It makes use of tools that make it easier for members of a network to share information without being limited by location or time. It is required in line with the policies for the postponement or cancellation of lessons and works in schools during natural disasters, power outages, and other emergencies such as extreme temperatures.

In the context of an online learning environment, asynchronous strategies—which provide students the chance to finish their coursework or take part in discussions at different times—offer significant benefits. The increased visibility of students' learning and thinking is one of the main advantages. The extra time can be used by teachers and teaching assistants to create deliberate and intelligent feedback. Additionally, these tactics offer flexibility in the event that plans don't go as expected.

The absence of simultaneous student participation is a defining characteristic of asynchronous learning activities. Effective asynchronous activities foster a succession of conversations between teachers, students, and themselves, but certain activities, such as watching recorded mini-lectures and taking online quizzes, are stand-alone. This resource offers examples of specific tasks and assignments as well as techniques for designing asynchronous courses.

Reflect on your essential learning outcomes

It will be helpful to determine the key learning objectives or outcomes you want pupils to attain by the conclusion of the term before delving into these tactics. You can make important choices and justify them to your students if you keep a limited number of things in mind.

You may make it easier for students to grasp your expectations by keeping your primary learning outcomes in mind when you give them assignments. Explain the aim of each learning activity and how it relates to important assignments or learning outcomes to keep students interested in the material. Consider an assignment where students post questions to a discussion forum that are motivated by what they have read. The goal of this assignment, according to the instructions, is to assist students acquire the ability to think like academics in the field and to come up with a creative research question that is based on existing literature for a future research proposal assignment.

Choose asynchronous strategies intentionally

Research indicates that students who participate in deep learning report that they acquire new information and abilities by analyzing their readings, lectures, and other experiences rather than memorizing facts by heart (Bain, 2012; Marton & Säljö, 1976). By doing this, students arrange the material, pinpoint the key components, and look for gaps in their knowledge. They also try to apply new information to higher order thinking by posing questions such as How, What if, and Why. Lastly, they use questions for their professors, peer evaluations, and practice exams to gauge their understanding.

If we purposefully design learning events to adhere to David Kolb's hypothesized learning cycle, we can produce more profound and long-lasting learning (1985; Zull, 2002). The steps in this cycle are as follows: (1) concrete experience (such as a reading or lecture); (2) introspective observation; (3) abstract conceptualization; and (4) active experimentation, which might start a new cycle based on the experience of getting feedback.

Choose asynchronous activities that enhance students' learning when you think about the experiences they will have—attending a lecture, reading a journal article, watching a video, etc. The more stages of the cycle an instructor teaches, even if it is not necessary to cover every step, the more enduring the teaching will be. The tactics that involve one or more of the learning cycle's phases are covered in the sections that follow:

1.Concentrate student attention

It is crucial now more than ever to focus pupils' attention before they read, watch, or listen to anything in the absence of co-presence cues in the classroom. An active learning cycle is built on top of these genuine encounters. It is helpful to clarify the experience's goal or provide detailed instructions on what the students should be focusing on during the activity.

2.Encourage students to use discussion forums to deepen their comprehension.

Discussion boards are a great way to help students think more deeply about important concepts, apply critical thinking techniques to novel settings, or use newly acquired abilities to tackle novel issues. An fundamental framework for online debates is provided by explicit directions for both initial posts and subsequent answers. More in-depth and sophisticated conversations can be sparked by providing explicit instructions for comments that ask students to expand upon, use, or synthesize peer posts. The following are some suggested techniques for asynchronous classroom discussions:

3.Enhance your understanding of what you read, use writing prompts.

Students' comprehension can be greatly enhanced and their fluency in the language of the area can be developed when they are given repeated opportunities to engage in reading. A crucial learning exercise might also involve asking students to consider how assignments, learning activities, or results relate to their values and goals, given that different students have different motivations. According to research, students can be

assisted in identifying methods to make the content relevant or encouraged to explain and explore a concept of their choice from the text through short writing exercises (Harackiewicz et al., 2016).

4.Providing students with independence possibilities

Offering options for how they will engage with the content or present what they have learned is a compelling tactic. People frequently have a sense of helplessness following negative experiences and traumatic situations, which leads to more difficulties (Marquart et al., 2019).

5. Encourage student motivation by providing clear directives and standards.

Even though most of our students are accustomed to using apps and other digital tools, it will be crucial to support their sense of competence in this new learning environment. To help students get started, it's helpful to establish consistent frameworks throughout assignment instructions. For instance, parts of your assignment instructions may cover the assignment's goal, the actions needed to finish it, and the standards by which students' work will be evaluated (Winkelmes, 2016). This impression of competence can also be increased by making references to prior accomplishments from the semester, providing samples of the kind of work you want, and utilizing well-known genres.

6. Provide thoughtful and engaging criticism.

One of the most important things teachers and teaching assistants can do to support students' learning is to provide feedback (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Sometimes the easiest way to give feedback is to make general observations based on evaluating all or most of the student work. It is more suitable to use feedback on individual student work for other assignments or activities.

References:

https://www.celt.iastate.edu/instructional-strategies/teaching-format/asynchronous-strategies/