

Blended learning: Improving student outcomes through learning spaces

[Direct video transcript]

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How are you using learning analytics to measure the success of learning spaces?

KRL So, we've got a real focus on getting our course delivery correct for new space when we transition in 2017, so we're doing a lot of surveys of our students both in class and online.

We're collecting the data that the university gains from students on a semester basis. And we are looking at the analytics that are available within the Blackboard to understand how the students are engaging with their course both in class and online, and then trying to take all of that data and improve our iterations of the courses in the future.

What interventions have you implemented to improve student learning outcomes?

KRL So, that's a really good question. In first semester the students told us that they wanted more face to face teaching time with their academics. And whilst we haven't necessarily been able to increase the face to face teaching time, we have been able to increase the resources put towards the teaching team.

So, we've modified things like assessments, group learning activities, whether we have a ten minute lecture within classes or not. So, we're really trying to be as responsive as we can. And where we can't solve the direct request from the student, we're trying to demonstrate how we've put an alternative solution into place.

What are your focus areas for the next 12 months to improve student learning outcomes?

KRL So, we have a strong focus on getting into our new building in 2017, and as part of that we are changing all of our undergraduate courses and moving more towards blended delivery.

So, I think our biggest challenge in the next 12 months is to transform a number of our courses and be prepared for new space and to take the student data that we're collecting, as well as the academic data, and apply that so that we can get improvements in our course delivery.

What is the value of attending the blended learning summit?

KRL I think the sharing is really helpful. I think hearing different scenarios from different universities, the academic and professional staff perspectives is really valuable to giving you new ideas and thinking through how you might do things differently, so I've found it really helpful today.

Dr Ben Cleveland, Fellow at LEARN, University of Melbourne

How can space improve pedagogy based on your research?

BC So, I guess the fundamental thing is that space has a range of affordances. It allows you to do certain things so it's an enabler in some ways and it restricts you from doing other things. So, you know, fundamentally space can allow certain forms of interaction, allows you opportunities to access certain resources and to utilise those resources in certain ways.

So, if you're designing to a known pedagogy, a known set of activities, then you're probably going to create spaces which are more enabling of the types of teaching and learning you'd like to see.

How do you evaluate the effectiveness of different learning environments?

BC I think evaluation is all about understanding what your objectives are and utilising those objectives, you know, whether it be a particular approach to teaching and learning, whether it be that it's a whole course that you're trying to imagine or a particular event on a particular afternoon.

It's understanding what you're actually aiming to do and creating a framework for evaluation that's based on those objectives.

So, in terms of space and teaching and learning, it's basically understanding the pedagogical framework and saying what components of that space, whether they be, you know, the building itself, but very importantly the furniture, the resources, the technology, all of those layers need to be understood and metrics around each of those embedded in the evaluation.

How does your research correspond to the wider approach for improving student learning outcomes?

BC So, a lot of our research is in the school sector, some of it in the tertiary sector. The university are aware of what we're doing. The director of our centre is in the provost office, so he has a direct connection with developments at the campus and across the various campuses at the university.

I guess there is probably indirect links rather than direct but in terms of understanding where the school and tertiary sector is going spatially and where it might go in the future, we probably can help inform that.

What is the value of attending the blended learning summit?

BC I guess for me, you know, I often go to architectural school design or tertiary design conferences, so this is nice to go to a conference with people taking a slightly different angle that is more focused on perhaps the utilisation of technology and what that can do for you and how you might utilise that in your teaching and learning.

So, I guess the Blended Learning conference, it's connecting up a whole range of tools and opportunities for teaching and learning and saying well, what can we do with them in a blended way to make the experiences of the teachers and students better?

To know more about the Blended Learning conference, please visit www.blended-learning.com.au or [download the brochure](#).