BLENDED LEARNING

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DEPT. OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

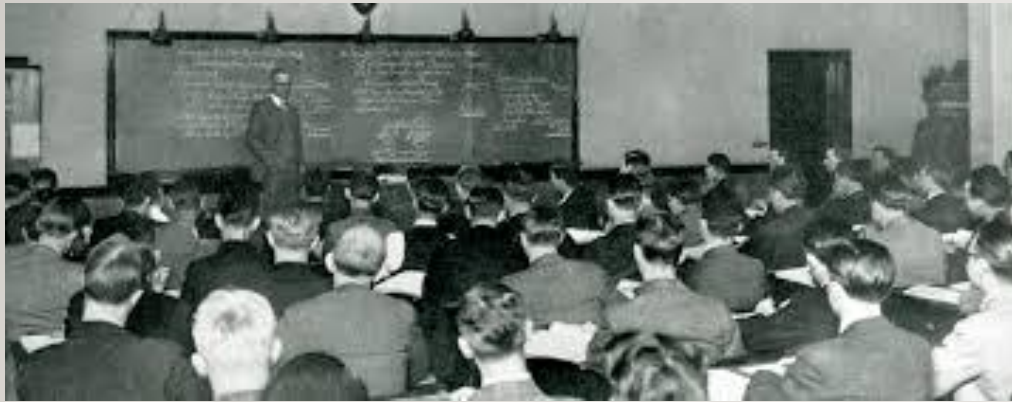# SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

MY PERSONAL MOTIVATING PHILOSOPHY

- It's time to admit that there is a problem.
  - Most students graduate without ever entering the library.
  - Some students in Jordanian universities engage in group fighting.
  - Our students care about grades, not learning.
    - This creates the need for cheating!!!
- Wherein lies the source of these problems?

MY PERSONAL MOTIVATING PHILOSOPHY

- Wherein lies the source of these problems?

  - We cannot blame the students before we do OUR job.

- Ask yourselves

  - Would students have time to think about fighting if they were busy with schoolwork?

    - The answer is NO.

  - Therefore, I believe keeping students busy will

    - Get them focused on their education instead of other matters.

    - Help them discover their own learning and thinking habits.

    - Create independent thinkers, NOT great memorizers.

THE PHILOSOPHY

- Don't give me a fish, teach my HOW to fish!

- Moving from Teaching to Learning

- Quality of learning is better than empty Quantity.

- Learn through understanding and critical thinking, NOT through blind memorization.

Outline

1. Traditional vs. Online vs. Blended Learning

2. Overview of Blended Learning

3. Feedback, Issues, and Progress in JU

4. Benefits of BL

5. Suggested Schedule

6. Syllabus Design

Our Options When We Started

- Traditional Method

- Online Learning

- Blended Learning (The best of both worlds)

Our Pedagogical Style

- Blended Learning Alone (*Liberal Method*)

  - Students are fully responsible for part of the course material

- Blended Learning + Flipped Classroom (*Conservative Method*)

- Blended Learning + Project-Based Learning

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WHAT THE COURSE LOOKS LIKE

- 30% of the course should be online.

- Out of three lectures a week, students come to class twice.

- Thursday was the day they don't come to class.

Blended Learning: The Conservative Method

- Thursday ⟶ New Topic
  - Students watch an 8-20 minute video posted to e-learning
  - They are asked to complete an assignment and submit via e-learning before Sunday's class.
  - Assess their assignments not based on right or wrong but based on effort.
    - Eliminates the need for cheating!
    - Eliminates the stress involved in assignments.

Blended Learning: The Conservative Method

- Sunday
    - Launch a thoughtful class discussion.
        - It could start out in the form of 'I think the guy in the video is nuts, how about you?'
    - Guide them through reviewing the correct answers to their previous assignment and relate to the material and the discussions they had.
        - This should be more student-centered, NOT lecturing.

Blended Learning: The Conservative Method

- Tuesday
  - Now it is our turn.
    - I had a Power Point presentation ready (and available online, as well) to use for my lecture.
    - It covers the same topic discussed during the previous two lectures.
    - It is a chance for instructors to give their professional take on the topic.

Blended Learning: The Conservative Method

- Tuesday
  - Now it is our turn.
    - I had a Power Point presentation ready (and available online, as well) to use for my lecture.
    - It covers the same topic discussed during the previous two lectures.
    - It is a chance for instructors to give their professional take on the topic.
  - Hint to the next topic:
    - End class with a lead to the next topic and remind students about online material and assignments for Thursday's e-learning class.

GRADES AND COURSE LAYOUT

- 30% Online Assessments
- 30% Midterm Exam
- 40% Final Exam

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INITIAL FEEDBACK AND ISSUES
RESPONSES FROM STUDENT SURVEY

- Students were asked to fill out a survey about their experience with the BL course.

- Initially, the responses stated some technical difficulties, some doubt about the idea, and some rebellion against the fact that they had to put in some effort.

INITIAL FEEDBACK AND ISSUES
RESPONSES FROM STUDENT SURVEY

By the end, some students stated:

- What did you find most difficult?

  - "That I sometimes had to learn/understand, search/research for answers **by my self**.

- Before taking this course, I thought blended learning was…

  - "Hard, because I had to depend on myself."

INITIAL FEEDBACK AND ISSUES
RESPONSES FROM STUDENT SURVEY

	Before	After
Your thoughts about BL	Hard because I have to depend on myself	Interesting, attractive, and discovered that depending on myself makes learning more effective.
What to Keep		What to Add
Day Off, Online HW, Group Presentations, Linking ideas with our lives, review of HW together, availability of material online, etc.		Nothing, an app for e-learning, online exams

INITIAL FEEDBACK AND ISSUES
RESPONSES FROM STUDENT SURVEY

Do you find BL HW useful?

- Yes, because I am forced to study every week.
- Yes, because I come to class already understanding the topic and I don't have to study very much for the exam because we practice a lot.

PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

- "I didn't know we had homework."
  - By the second week, it should become a habit for students to check for an assignment. Basically, every week there is a video/chapter they should engage with and expect an assignment. NO EXCUSES.
  - E-learning shows you all student logging data.

PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

- "I couldn't log in to e-learning, can I send my assignment via email?"
  - There should always be a backup method! Of course you can send via email, but upload to e-learning ASAP, for the record.
- "I don't have internet access at home."
  - You are given ample time for the assignment (roughly, 5 days) so don't procrastinate, you can use the university labs, and if there is still a problem you should let me know ASAP, NOT after the deadline.

PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS
SWIMMING AGAINST THE CURRENT

- "I would rather come to class three times a week with no assignments and no need to pay attention then go with BL."
  - Some students will fight back at the beginning, but by the middle of the semester, they realize that they only had to study 1 hour for their difficult mid-term exam.
  - Your Stress-Free life is showing:
    - You will notice that other students will want to take a BL course the following semester because they see how BL students are not very worried about grades or exams.

PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS
SWIMMING AGAINST THE CURRENT

- Instructors: " BL will create extra work for me and I'm not paid to do that much work."
  - Pace yourself until you get in the habit.
  - Think of your students, and your moral obligation towards them. Students will thank you later in life.
  - The ship is sailing. Better get on-board before you're left behind!

Progress

- We started with:
  - 2 classes during the Spring of 2016
  - 2 instructors
  - In ONE Faculty (Foreign Languages)
- Now
  - more than 90 instructors are onboard
  - Almost all Faculties

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Overall Benefits

- BL creates better and more independent thinkers/learners

- Instructors are forced to constantly be updated in field

- Logistically, we can make better use of classrooms

- In the long run, instructors gain more time for research, which reflects positively on the institution

- And much more

HOW WE STARTED

- The first step is to design the course
  - The course book, PowerPoints and Videos are all available on Moodle.
  - The course book should not lecture the students, but instead it engages with them.
    - The videos are in high-quality, are in understandable English, and are available on Youtube, as well.

HOW WE STARTED

With the help of our IT guys, we created a How-to guide.

- This can easily be customized to fit any course's needs.
- Is used to guide students to the e-learning platform during the first orientation class.

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A suggested Schedule

Suggested is 30% online. This is how that might look.

Course Type	In Class	Online
Sun./Tue./Thu.	Sun. & Tue.	Thu.
Mon./Wed. First 4 Weeks	Mon. & Wed.	NONE
Mon./Wed. After Week 4	Mon.	Wed.

Alternative Schedule

An alternative for Monday/Wednesday sections that increases face-to-face time.

Course Type	In Class	Online
Sun./Tue./Thu.	Sun & Tue.	Thu.
Mon./Wed.	**Week 1-2:** Regular in-class meeting time. **Week 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15:** Blended Learning on Wednesdays (**Consideration**: The irregular meeting times might cause confusion until routine is established.)	

Syllabus Design
This is what we want to start preparing for

1	Overview of Semantics in Linguistics	Th.	Sem101 (Video) + Unit 1 (Course Book)	Unit 1 Study Guide & Exercises pp. 14-15
		S	Discussion & Review HW	Student-led *moodle* discussions
		T	Lecture 1 (PPT)	N/A
2	Levels of Abstraction, Utterances, Sentences and Propositions	Th.	Unit 2 (Course Book)	Study Guide Questions pp. 24-25
		S	Discussion & Review HW	Student-led *moodle* discussions
		T	Lecture 2 part 1 (PPT)	N/A

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Syllabus Design: Preliminaries

Think about TOPICS you want to teach, NOT UNITS!

Instead of choosing a book and dividing the syllabus based on the units in the book, it is a better idea to reverse the process.

Syllabus Design

I.   Syllabus Design
1.   Choosing the right method
2.   Course Description
3.   Learning Outcomes
4.   Course Outline
5.   Choosing the right Material
6.   Creating a plan
7.   Adding Assessment strategies

Syllabus Design: Preliminaries

Method 1: **Liberal**		Method 2: **Conservative**
Online	English Consonants Full responsibility on students (Included in Exams)	Everything And Weekly assignment to ensure work is done
In-Class	English Vowels	Review Assignment and Discuss (with a focus on listening to the students)
In-Class	Arabic Sounds	Present your PPT lecture + Some little thing you keep for yourself.

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An Example

Course Description:

This course introduces students to the science of meaning in language. It focuses on how meaning is arrived at in natural languages. Main topics include meaning in relation to grammar, sense and reference relations, entailment, semantic ambiguity, and propositional logic.

This course also offers students a modern and cutting-edge method of learning, through the Blended Learning program. With blended-learning, students are given the opportunity to learn by themselves via a partly online designed course syllabus, where part of the required course hours are done by the student at home via the internet, instead of physically coming to class. This not only gives students more time to interact and collaborate with other students (through online discussion forums and meetings outside class), but also helps students discover their own personalized learning style.

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Step 3: Clear Learning Outcomes Example

Course Outcomes

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Demonstrate sound understanding of the basic concepts of semantics through:
    - Identifying various types of sense relations and reference relations
    - Identifying and describing concepts of lexical relations and derivational relations
    - Differentiating between semantic ambiguity, structural (syntactic) ambiguity and vagueness
    - Demonstrating understanding of concepts of entailment and presupposition
    - Distinguishing the difference between utterances, sentences and propositions

Syllabus Design

Step 3: Learning Outcomes Example Cont'd

- Learning outcomes must match the topics you have chosen for the course.

Good Quality is better than Poor Quantity

Syllabus Design

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Syllabus Design

Step 4: Planning

Now you want to plan exactly what you want to do on each day of the week.

- This is a difficult stage, but one that will help you and your students along the way.

- You need to plan for and get this ready during the summer!

Course Outline

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		T	Lecture 2 part 1 (PPT)	N/A

Syllabus Design - Step 4: Planning

Activities During the Week – Thursday (Online)

- Let's say the topic you want to cover for a particular week is 'Photosynthesis'.

Blended Learning Thursday: Online Task + Assignment

1. Watch a short video about Photosynthesis.

2. Answer questions in the textbook related to photosynthesis, OR summarize the main ideas in your own words, OR react to a thought-provoking statement.

3. Submit the assignment on E-learning no later than Sunday's class.

Syllabus Design

Activities During the Week – Sunday (In-Class)

Face-to-Face Meeting Sunday - Discussion In Class

1. What students found hard to understand
2. Their comments or ideas
3. Your thought-provoking questions and let them run wild with answers.
4. Ask one/two of the students to summarize the main points of the class discussion and post online (5 marks/once per semester).

Syllabus Design

Activities During the Week – Tuesday (In-Class)

Face-to-Face Meeting Tuesday – Your traditional-style Lecture

1. Use a PPT that also talks about the same issues related to Photosynthesis but with slightly more detailed or complex ideas, and include some of the questions, comments or ideas presented in the video, discussion or homework.

2. Note: Upload this PPT to e-learning for students to make use of.

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Choosing Your Material…Wisely!

- The material should fit the design of the course and give students a chance to learn for themselves.

- You will need to use multiple methods/sources of information.

- Relying only on your Textbook will not do!

- Youtube is an invaluable source of information with tons of e-lectures.

- Whatever it is that you're teaching, there is bound to be someone out there teaching the same thing.

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THE END

Thank You