MAXIMIZING STUDENT ENGAGEMENT
THROUGH ASSIGNMENT MODIFICATION

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Introduction

Research into higher education outcomes demonstrates the value of student engagement (Carini, Kuh, & Klein, 2006; Gasiewski et al., 2012; Evans, Hartman, & Anderson, 2012).

Several methods to increase student engagement have been tried including focusing on engagement using the knowledge or curriculum itself (Ashwin, 2014); integrating specific information and communication technology (ICT) into the classroom (Zweekhorst & Maas, 2014); using a variety of assessments to determine student engagement (Carini, Kuh, & Klein, 2006); studying various instructor and student characteristics (Gasiewski et al., 2012; Carini, et al., 2006); and determining whether or not offering leisure studies and activities produced more engagement (Evans, Hartman & Anderson, 2012).

Beginning in November of 2013, Dr. James Moffett, adjunct faculty at the University of Phoenix, has offered students in MGT 360 an alternative assignment that appears to highly engage students, and has resulted in higher scores in the course compared to those of students who chose to complete the traditional assignment.

PRELIMINARY RESULTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Start Date</th>
<th>Participating (Part.)</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Part.</th>
<th>Non-Part.</th>
<th>% Points received</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MGT/360</td>
<td>11/7/13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MGT/360</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MGT/360</td>
<td>7/10/14</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>MGT/360</td>
<td>9/25/14</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>MGT/360</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MGT/360</td>
<td>5/5/15</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals:</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>98.3</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Point: Engaged students score better than non-engaged students do.

REFERENCES:


STUDENT ENGAGEMENT BENEFITS in Management 360: Green and Sustainable Enterprise Management

Benefits to students who participated in the alternative assignment:

- Students were able to display and share their unique knowledge
- Students conducted primary research and created knowledge
- Students expressed feelings of accomplishment in presenting their research to University administrators, staff, faculty and students
- Trade shows in the lobby at the Southern Arizona Main Campus were motivational and important to students
- Student engagement was reflected in self-directed, hands-on projects that supplemented learning through creation of questionnaires, analysis of data, presentation of findings, experience with professional speaking and other activities.

Management and Sustainability Trade Shows