E97   The Trials and Errors of Transitioning to a Hybrid Learning Platform

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After attending this presentation, attendees will have gained insight into the process of transitioning a traditional on-ground or Face-To-Face (F2F) classroom to a hybrid, or blended, classroom in order to fully embrace the learning styles of all students and to take advantage of technology. Additionally, attendees will understand what worked and what did not work for two different educators and pick up tips on how to successfully implement hybrid learning into their own curriculum.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by providing information on transitioning to a hybrid learning platform and how to overcome the barriers that come with change. Attendees will also learn, step-by-step, how a criminal justice program transitioned from fully on-ground to hybrid, as well as the problems encountered, what worked best, and what needed to be revised in order to achieve the goals of a successful hybrid classroom.

Effective hybrid-course instructional design blends on-ground and online classroom methodology and is based on student-directed instruction.[1] Finding a balance between the two types of instruction is the goal of hybrid learning; however, this is not achieved overnight or without trial and error. Students and educators alike may be resistant to change and effort is required from both to successfully implement change.[2,3] Hybrid learning offers a variety of advantages that have earned hybrid learning the name "education for the future."

Many individuals believe that when transitioning from a traditional learning environment to an online program, the learning is diminished and student engagement is lost.[4,5] With hybrid learning, many of the obstacles associated with both online and traditional brick-and-mortar learning can be overcome.[6] Hybrid learning also allows for maximum student engagement, which is one of the biggest challenges in any educational setting.

Over the past few years, hybrid learning has grown in popularity. Ideally, hybrid classes combine the best attributes of both F2F and online formats into a course delivery method that is both flexible and accessible, while providing students an interpersonal experience with instructors and a physical connection to campus.[3] Hybrid learning caters to different types of students from Baby Boomers to Gen Xers, bringing together paths of learning that allow students to learn from each other as well as forensic educators.[7]

Through continued growth, trial, and error, the field of education will continue to change by capitalizing on new techniques that maximize the student's education experience and skills.

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