

Trifecta of Engagement Final Project

by Dr. Peilin Fu

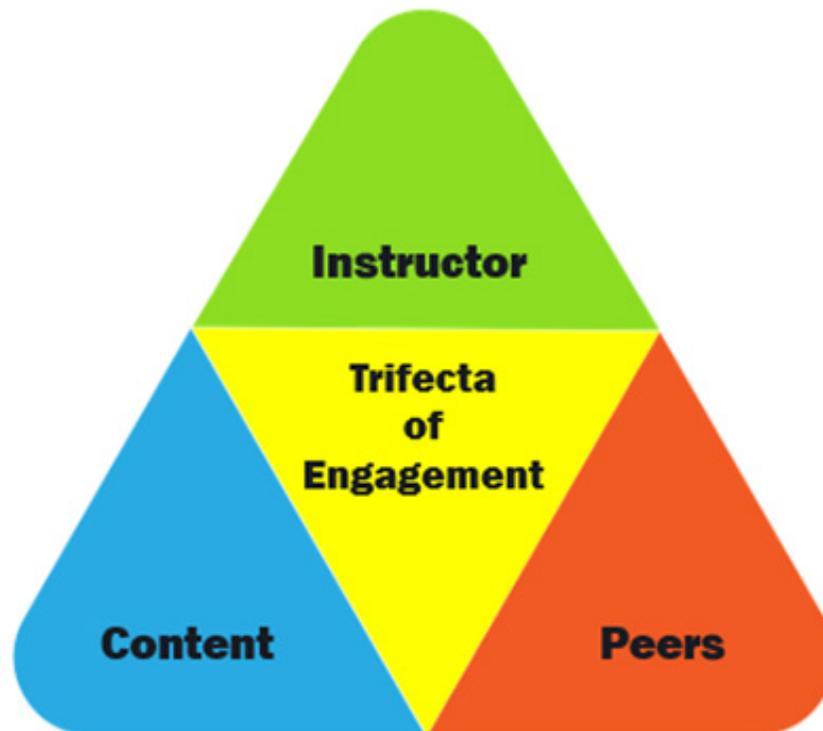


Professor, School of Engineering and Computing

Dr. Fu participated in the Enhanced Teaching & Learning Strategies Faculty Development program that consisted of online teaching practices using tools in Blackboard to engage students.

This program presents teaching strategies using the Trifecta of Engagement framework to (1) engage students with content, (2) engage students with peers, and (3) engage students with their instructor.

Faculty provide evidence of how they applied the Trifecta of Engagement when teaching a real course.



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It has been a rewarding experience participating in the Enhanced Teaching & Learning Strategies Faculty Development Program.

Through this program, I have learned how to create course content that appeals to diverse learning preferences; how to create activities that promote peer-to-peer learning and collaboration; and how to use advanced assessment strategies and give effective feedback.

More specifically, we were introduced to and given the opportunity to practice using various tools such as Kaltura media, group assignments, blogs, wikis, journals, and embedded rubrics. Among these tools, I successfully applied the Group Assignment, Journal, and Embedded Rubrics to my ENM603 online course.

ENM603 Operations Management is a core requirement course in the Master of Science in Engineering Management program. It introduces the principles and techniques for designing, analyzing, and managing operations processes. It addresses how all operations and behavior components fit together and how to identify and resolve the right problem. This course covers broad areas such as process analysis, quality and performance, capacity planning, supply chain, inventory management, forecasting, operations planning and scheduling, and resource planning, which are all closely related to the daily operations of enterprises. However, due to lack of experience in business operations, most of the students feel the course content is difficult to learn.

An online Operational Management course in which the students and instructor have limited-to-no face-to-face communications is even more challenging. How to stimulate students' enthusiasm and critical thinking, and increase students' engagement is crucial for effective teaching of this subject. In order to bridge the gap between the knowledge the students learned from the textbook and the business operations experience, I

designed a group project for students to complete. Each student group needed to apply knowledge from the course to solve a real world problem and turn in a project report by the end of the course.

Groups

There were nine students total enrolled in ENM603. The students were divided into five project groups according to their preference. Each group has two students. Each group selected a topic of their choice after consulting with the instructor the first week. The student groups were provided with the following tools: File Exchange, Email, and Group Journal to better communicate and interact with their team member.

Journal Assignment

The journal is a great tool to enhance the development of critical thinking, and increase student engagement with their team member and instructor. The following journal



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assignment was created for each group of students to post opinions, ideas, and concerns about their project, or discuss and analyze project related materials between instructor and students.

Instructions

Each week you will be writing a journal entry regarding your group project. This is a private space where you can share resources with your partner, discuss project related issues, record project progress, and get personalized feedback from your instructor.

Please make sure your journal includes the following information:

1. The progress you achieved in your project during the week.
2. The difficulties you encountered during the week and how you resolved those.
3. Useful published resources you would like to share with your partner.
4. Any other comments or questions you wish to ask your instructor.

Rubric

A scoring rubric was used in ENM603 to communicate the expectations, provide feedback, and evaluate the quality of the journal assignment and project report. They were also used to delineate consistent criteria for grading.

The journal assignment was evaluated using three criteria: reflection, clarity, and grammar. The levels of achievement were novice, competent, and proficient.

On the last day of the course, each student group submitted their project reports. The report was expected to be thorough to convey students' point and limited to a maximum of 10 pages in APA format. The evaluation of the project report was based on five criteria: facts, analysis, research, vocabulary and grammar, and form. The student achievement levels were poor, fair, good, and outstanding.

Students' Feedback and Conclusion

The Group, Journal Assignment, and Rubric tools were successfully applied and very well received by students in my ENM603 online course. The students demonstrated an apparent increase in engagement, enthusiasm, toward the subject matter and depth of learning through the group project and weekly journal. The rubrics not only made the evaluation and grading consistent, accurate, and fair, but also worked as a formative assessment to help students develop critical thinking skills and make independent judgments about the quality of their own work. Selected students' comments were:

"My engagement in this class was increased with the journal assignment and the group project."

"I definitely had a lot of interactions and discussions with my team member when working on the group project."



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“Professor provided timely feedback on my project through my weekly project journal.”

“I like the rubrics. They help us understand the expectations of the instructor, and provide us guidance when we write the journal and project report.”

