A Conversion of a Face-to-Face Course to a Bi-Synchronous Blended Learning Environment

by

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Abstract

This project focused on converting EDUC202, a fully face-to-face course, offered through the Faculty of Education at Vancouver Island University (VIU), to a synchronous, blended learning course accessible by students in a variety of locations. The two major focuses of the project were the appropriate conversions of the face-to-face activities that the professor of the course had already created and ensuring that all modifications to these activities allowed both online and face-to-face learners the opportunity to contribute and participate. A variety of online tools were considered and the appropriateness, with respect to ease-of-use and learning objectives, caused a specific subset of these tools to be utilized in the revised course activities. Furthermore, course modifications were considered through the lens of collaboration and group learning. The course was first delivered in the Spring 2016 academic term at VIU’s satellite Cowichan campus.
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Chapter 1 – Introduction

Purpose of the Major Project

Collaborative communication and digital technologies have opened the door to a number of opportunities in the areas of online and blended learning. These areas are being taken advantage of in a variety of ways for a variety of purposes (Reeder, 2010). Johnson and Aragon (2003) have a simple definition that fully encompasses the intention for this major project; simply stating that “distance education...allows students to participate in an educational opportunity without being in the same location as the instructor” (p. 31). In my case, I chose to take advantage of an opportunity to take a fully synchronous, face-to-face course, and adapt it to a blended experience for students both in the classroom, but also for students who attend fully online. EDUC 202 (Teaching: Making an Informed Decision) is an introductory Education course that was designed to provide students who may be interested in teaching as a career an opportunity to explore a variety of topics related to the teaching profession. The course instructor, David Sufrin, was interested in adapting of his current course, which is primarily taught at the VIU Nanaimo campus, to make it available to a variety of students in a number of different geographic locations.

For myself, working in an independent school that is also considering the use of blended learning, this project provided me with a fundamental foundation in the creation and analysis of a blended learning opportunity. Furthermore, because many of the definitions of blended learning incorporate synchronous face-to-face learning with asynchronous online or technology mediated learning, I was in a unique position to work with a definition of blended learning that hadn’t been fully explored previously. The opportunity to provide students in a variety of places with a synchronous experience mirrored a number of avenues that my own school was considering.
adopting. These included a traditional style of blended learning, but also a more synchronous style whereby students in a face-to-face classroom would spend the majority of their time working with an online instructor.

**Critical Challenge to Be Addressed**

Creating a course that was both face-to-face and fully online while still keeping with the instructor’s teaching style and requirements was the initial challenge for this project. Because the content will be delivered to students who are able to interact with one another in the same classroom space simultaneously with students who are able to attend only via Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing, a number of activities had to be created or modified with two distinct groups of learners in mind. Rovai (2002) brings up the important fact that developing community in an online course can be more challenging than in a face-to-face one. Having to create a community amongst both groups was an engaging opportunity that I was interested in tackling.

Another aspect of the challenge in this project was ensuring that the engaging and active teaching style that the instructor used in his face-to-face, traditional classroom could also be conveyed through all of the activities students would be doing in diverse locations. As Dixson (2010) discusses, an engaging instructor presence is an important consideration in an online course and ensuring that the attitude and enthusiasm of the instructor could be conveyed was at the forefront of my course design. Furthermore, ensuring that the activities designed in the course were pedagogically sound while also appropriate for all three stakeholders (face-to-face students, distance students, and instructor) was an important consideration in the design and implementation of a new EDUC 202 course. As Alzabhol (2012) comments, activities should be focused on a variety of learners and addressing a variety of learning styles. Creating activities
that allowed for these different learners and styles was central in the creation of the adapted EDUC 202 course.

The critical challenge question that guided my literature review was “how can a purely face-to-face course be transformed into a blended environment with both distance and local students?” This question arose from the fact that I am creating a blended environment whereby students will access material in a variety of ways, however, this environment differed from the traditional definition of blended learning. Because of this departure from a standard definition, my literature review focused on a variety of topics related to synchronous, online education while still considering the basic pedagogy required to deliver an excellent course.

**Deliverables**

EDUC 202 (Teaching: Making and Informed Decision), is defined in the VIU course calendar as “An exploration of education and its relationship to society examining current and relevant questions such as cultural diversity, mass media, technology, societal changes, and ethical decision making.” This course consists of 12 distinct lessons, each of which has a variety of elements and transitions. The project deliverables centered around the minor and major modifications required to make these lessons accessible to both distance and local students, and the creation of a centralized course homepage in Desire2Learn that would serve as the central hub of the student and instructor experience. Major deliverables included; formatted documents related to the modified lesson plans used to teach the course, instructor and student instructions for each activity, and a turn-key Desire2Learn course housed within an LMS for the instructor to use during the upcoming January 2016 course offering.
Project Timeline

The project was completed in approximately 9 months, with the bulk of the work completed during July and August 2015. Initial meetings occurred throughout the months of February to May with David Sufrin and Mary O’Neill (MEDL Project Supervisor) in order to determine the size and scope of the project. Further meetings with David included demonstrations of the technologies that would be used throughout the digital aspects of the course as well as ongoing discussion about the tone and classroom atmosphere that would be required in the completed course. Much of these discussions focused on Gunawardena and Zittle’s (1997) ideas of social presence and the creation of an online community. Together, David and I determined the appropriate pedagogies and strategies that would be used in the final, blended course. This conversation was both theoretical and practical in that a number of learning styles were considered, and a number of researchers were discussed, but we also considered the style and format of the course and the level of technological understanding that the instructor would be bringing to the course delivery.

The lesson plans the instructor used when the course was taught in a face-to-face only environment were modified in the first two weeks of July with proposed changes based on the new requirements of the course. (See Appendix A.) These modifications were subsequently approved in the middle of July and construction of the modified documents and online experiences began. Throughout the rest of July and August the course was created in Desire2Learn and specific instructions were designed to support the curriculum. Finally, in September the course was submitted to peers for review and field testing with changes considered and applied throughout the month. A final meeting at the end of November was used to demonstrate all of the functionality of the new course with David in order to ensure that he
was able to navigate the course, utilize the content and learning activities created and ultimately approve the blended learning format.

**Definition of Terms**

Bi-Synchronous Blended Learning – There are a number of definitions of blended learning, however, for the purposes of this project I have created a hybrid definition whereby ‘bi-synchronous blended learning’ is the deliberate combination and utilization of synchronous and asynchronous learning opportunities between teachers, students and resources.

Flipped Learning – A flipped classroom is one where the lectures are delivered outside of the classroom and interactive, engaging activities and discussions occur inside. These lectures can be delivered via video, audio or written, however, the majority of the time a short video is used to provide content to the learner (McFee, 2013).

Social Presence – Because in online communities, people are interacting with screen names, avatars and only sometimes video displays of other people, social presence is the how much we feel other people are ‘real’ in this online environment (Gunawardena & Zittle, 1997).

**Methodology**

The decision to create some lessons as synchronous, fully online lessons, and some as a blended experience was made early in the process. The instructor was very interested in working in a blended model for two of the lessons that were already “nearly” blended. These lessons had been delivered by David in such a manner that students were quickly introduced to the topic for the day and then worked at their own pace, in groups, for the remainder of the class. He was already using a “web quest” style activity with students and thus turning those lessons into a fully blended experience was an obvious choice. These “web quest” lessons involved a series of prompts, instructions and questions that guided students through a number of websites.
and ensured they recorded and synthesized important information. This information was then used to answer critical challenge questions and to form the basis for class discussion. As Garrison and Kanuka (2004) discuss, blended learning offers a variety of educational experiences not available to a traditional face-to-face or fully online classroom. These include communicating with other students in a more objective way and developing a stronger sense of community than a traditional online class.

In the creation of activities, I was cognoscente of Knowlton’s (2000) breakdown of the three aspects of a classroom; things, people and processes. The creation of specific “things” in a classroom, usually at the instructor’s discretion, isn’t as effective as if a student and the teacher together produce a variety of learning artifacts. These “things” could include physical products, videos, ideas and concepts, and questions. In modifying the original lessons, I ensured that both the instructor and the student were able to contribute a variety of pieces into the learning process. The idea of incorporating both the student and the instructor is again considered by Knowlton (2000) when he talks about people in a classroom. He explains, and I agree, that both the student and the instructor need to be engaged in all aspects of the lesson. Thus, during the modification of the initial lessons, I ensured that the back-and-forth instructor-student discussion remained as it was originally intended in the face-to-face classroom. This idea leads directly into the process aspect of Knowlton’s (2000) work whereby the instructor and the student both process and discuss the information rather than simply having the professor present a lecture. The initial lesson plans that I received included a number of opportunities for students to become engaged in the lesson and I ensured that these opportunities remained, or were enhanced, based on the technology available.
Throughout the design process I considered the integration of technology in the lessons and activities intentionally based on the ideas put forth by Findlay-Thompson and Mombourquette (2014) that technology is designed to increase collaboration and learning amongst students. It was important to me that I didn’t use technology simply for its’ own sake but rather to create experiences that would otherwise have been impossible with distance education students and face-to-face students interacting with each other. The entire Google Applications suite of tools was invaluable in creating online, collaborative areas for students to record information and present it to other, smaller groups or the class at large. In addition to Google Applications, I considered a variety of other web-based applications that allowed students to discuss and display their understanding of the course content. These applications took students outside of the Desire2Learn forum environment and provided them with tools that would have been unavailable to them within the learning management system. The tools were selected based on their ease-of-use by all involved and how closely they were able to match an activity that would have been completed in a face-to-face environment.

A thorough literature review that considered not only the pedagogy and learning theories but also the actual design and implementation of a blended course guided my overall course design. A number of authors had researched “best practices” around creating communities, designing courses where students succeed, and integrating technology into an online environment. These authors provided me with a number of guiding principles such as providing ongoing feedback to students, ensuring they feel welcomed and supported, and providing enriching and interesting content to keep their interest. The review of the literature available at the time of writing showed me that while I was creating a unique course in that there would be
attendees in both a physical and digital sense, a number of principles to good online course design still applied.
Chapter 2 – Literature Review

Introduction

The process of taking a course that has been traditionally taught in a face-to-face environment and turning it into a wholly online environment requires a thorough analysis of a number of important topics. All good course construction must begin with a review of the various learning theories and the implications these have on an online, blended course model rather than a face-to-face only classroom. After this review, seven key themes have emerged with respect to the transition from purely face-to-face and blended learning. A purely academic theme of an analysis of the various learning theories provided a framework for the entire course. The broadest theme, that of blended learning itself, is an important initial consideration because the final ‘online only’ course that was created is based heavily upon blended learning principles. The creation of online courses in general, and online learning communities specifically, guided the author in creating an engaging and interactive learning experience. Ensuring that the course was created with student engagement in mind required a review of the literature surrounding the creation and maintenance of student engagement. While a specific learning management system was mandated for this project, specifically Desire2Learn, a review of the literature revealed a number of important considerations in the creation and implementation of Desire2Learn. Finally, reviewing the literature surrounding flipped learning provided the author with a number of considerations with respect to the pacing and assignments that the course contains.

Learning Theories and their Application to Online Learning

As Morris (2014) bluntly puts it, we need to study learning theories in order to become better educators. Thus, any discussion of the creation of an online course must therefore include a discussion of the overarching learning theories the course is based on. There are three primary
learning theories that have been widely accepted amongst educators; these are behaviourist, cognitivist, and constructivist. The behaviourist and cognitivist theories can be combined to form the social learning theory (Sargeant, Curran, Allen, Jarvis-Selinger & Ho, 2006), which some consider a theory on its own and some consider a blend.

From a behavioural theory perspective, external factors shape the learner rather than the learner himself, and any learning that occurs is noticed as a behavioural change (Sargeant et al., 2006). The two principles central to learning, according to the behaviourists, are contiguity, or the time difference between events that causes a link, and reinforcement, or the use of any sort of feedback to strengthen a connection (Sargeant et al., 2006). Alzabhoul (2012) suggests that those interested in utilizing the behavioural theories should ensure that courses are well structured, with a series of well-defined branches that inform learners to the next step required in their learning. Summative tests should also be utilized to determine whether the learning outcomes have been met. In designing the course for this project, a structure will certainly need to be implemented and learners will need to understand the process by which they will learn the content.

Cognitivist approaches focus on the idea that mental processes “such as information acquisition, processing, storage, and memory are central to learning.” (Sargeant et al., 2006, p133). Learning is seen as an internal process and is solely dependent on the individual learner and their ability to retain the required information (Alzabhoul, 2012). Sargeant et al. (2006) go on to suggest that course instructors can ensure that they include open-ended questions to promote a cognitivist style of teaching. This is certainly a central aspect of the course designed for this project as many of the questions asked throughout the class involve a level of critical analysis and thinking. As Alzaghoul (2012) points out, it is important in an online environment
to consider the individual differences of the learner and provide a series of activities that allow
multiple senses to be engaged. It was important that a variety of activities were considered in the
creation of the blended course because of the variety of learners that could be supported by the
delivery style.

Alzabhoul (2012) defines constructivism as “...active construction of new knowledge
based on a learner’s prior experience” (p 28). He goes on to discuss that since a major
component of constructivist learning is situational, this can be well suited for online learning
because learners can be placed in a variety of situations through the activities they are asked to
complete (Alzabhoul, 2012). Sargeant et al (2006) suggest that beginning the course by asking a
critical question or to offer advice to a case-based question is an excellent way of utilizing a
constructivist teaching approach. Both of these are excellent suggestions which shaped the
construction of a variety of learning activities throughout the course. Koohang, Riley & Smith
(2009) break down online constructivist teaching into three major components – fundamental
design elements, collaborative design elements, and learning assessment design elements.
Throughout these various elements, the learner is expected to apply what they have learned to a
real world situation. Within an Education course, this approach was a natural fit because so
much of what teachers learn must be considered in the broader context of a functioning
classroom.

To conclude Alzabhoul’s (2012) paper, he discusses the idea that all online courses
should include elements of all three learning theories. The behaviourist strategies can teach the
facts of a course, the cognitivist strategies can teach various principles and processes, and the
constructivist approaches teach the real life and personal applications of the various content.
The three learning styles need to be considered together when designing an appropriate online learning experience for a variety of learners.

**Blended Learning**

As Bliuc, Goodyear & Ellis (2007) comment, there hasn’t been a standardized definition of blended learning. It has been described as “the thoughtful integration of classroom face-to-face learning experiences with online learning experiences.” (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004, p 96). While many would argue that face-to-face requires participants to be present in the same room, with the advent of video and web conferencing technologies, face-to-face does not necessarily imply this restriction anymore. Another, broader definition is that blended learning is “a systematic combination of co-present (face to face) interactions and technologically-mediated interactions between students, teachers and learning resources” (Bliuc et al., p234). This project will use a very broad definition of a new term that is similar to blended learning that reads as follows: ‘Bi-synchronous blended learning’ is the deliberate combination and utilization of synchronous and asynchronous learning opportunities between teachers, students and resources.

The creation of a successful bi-synchronous blended learning course requires a conscious focus on some important design principles. Knowlton (2000) breaks the classroom down into three areas: things, people and processes. He further discusses the importance of ensuring that the online environment is student centered rather than teacher centered, commenting that “[n]o longer is the professor an umpire, judge and dictator” but rather a “…coach, counselor, and mentor”. (p7). Garrison and Kanuka (2004) agree that blended learning is not simply putting online learning together with direct instruction but instead it is about rethinking the entire teacher-learner relationship.
It is especially important to consider this intentional shift in pedagogy because when comparing online and face-to-face courses, the online courses tend to show a lack of overall success. Helms (2014), found that the final grades of students in a face-to-face classroom where considerably higher than those in an online class. Nearly half of the students in the online course he studied would have to retake the credit whereas only 16% of the face-to-face students would need to similarly retake the course. Helms (2014) notes that it is important to consider the type of student taking an online course and the possibility that they are busier than the student in a face-to-face section. Retention is also an issue as Wladis, Conway & Hachey(2014) discovered when they found that online retention rates are lower for all classes compared to their face-to-face equivalents. They suggest that in order to alleviate this problem a concerted effort must be made early in the course to assist students with technical issues and course content. Finally, student perceptions of online courses are not always positive, with respondents to a study stating that online courses require more time, that online discussion posts are not helpful in clarifying information and that an e-Learning context was not supportive learning (Ginns & Ellis, 2007). Ginns & Ellis (2007) point out that it is equally important that professors consider the student perception of an online course and to ensure that the teaching strategies employed emphasize the value of student-student interactions.

**Online Course Design**

The creation of online courses is a much-discussed topic, however, some common themes emerge in the various suggestions provided by the literature. Palloff and Pratt (2001) suggest that before beginning online course design, two decisions are required – a vision, and how the process will work. They discuss a number of important questions related to understanding who the students are, what the course goals are, and how the overall material will be delivered to the
students (Palloff & Pratt, 2001). Both Reeder (2010) and Dalsgaard and Godsk (2007) emphasize the importance of providing students with the sense that they are guiding their own learning. Reeder (2010) suggests that professors ensure that the student doesn’t feel that they are simply dealing with a remote, impersonal teacher but rather a connected, caring person. He goes on to suggest that a picture and a biography are important building blocks in creating courses. Course pedagogy such as requiring interaction amongst the students (Johnson & Aragon, 2003) and asking critical questions that dig deeper (Reeder, 2010), are both important in the development of a successful online course. Salmon (2000) lays out five important stages for an online course and suggests that all online teachers need to spend time in each of these stages. They are access and motivation; online socialization; information exchange; knowledge construction and development. With respect to the socialization aspect, which comes up often in a number of articles, Salmon (2000) suggests that teachers “…should create opportunities for socialization not only in the online group, but also to understand how online contributes to learning…” (p33). This is an important distinction in that teachers differentiate between connecting individuals and connecting to the learning itself in an online context. Both goals are very important and both are repeated time and again.

The creation of content and activities is an important consideration when creating a fully online course. Dalsgaard and Godsk (2007) argue that online courses should be created around a problem based learning approach. They found that, upon the conversion of a traditional lecture-based course into one that was problem based, students performed better than they had previously while spending less time listening to lectures. It should be noted, however, that that moving towards a student-centered approach does not immediately mean that traditional theories and practices should be completely removed from course design (Johnson & Aragon, 2003).
Indeed, Reeder (2010) suggests that all assignments be very clearly laid out on the class website and that a checklist be present for each assignment so students can fully understand what they are being asked to do. Blending the two approaches and providing traditional lectures, tests, quizzes, and standardized feedback can be valuable within a problem-based or student-centered classroom (Johnson & Aragon, 2003).

Providing feedback is another important consideration that online teachers must consider when designing their course. Salmon (2000) suggests that by the information exchange stage of a course the participants are looking for ongoing feedback from the teacher in order to ensure they are using the most appropriate material available to them. It should also be considered that the fully online environment removes some of student-teacher interaction that can occur in a classroom and thus instructors provide enough feedback that the ‘back and forth’ action that can occur in a classroom isn’t required in an online environment (Johnson & Aragon, 2003). In the reverse role, Reeder (2010) makes the important point that online teachers need to consider how the students will be able to provide timely, ongoing feedback with respect to how the course is designed and the quality of the content being delivered.

The ideas that an online course needs to create community, use a progressive pedagogical approach, and allow for two-way feedback are important to consider when a new course is being created or modified. Ensuring that learners feel quickly included in the online community through the use of introductions, biographies, focused discussion posts and avenues for additional socialization will mean that learners feel welcomed into a community of learners. By creating a student-centered classroom with ongoing feedback, online teachers will ensure that the activities students are doing are both valuable and quickly assessed in order to further guide their learning. (Gibson & Dunning, 2012) summarize it well when they state that ‘[t]oday’s online...
course design cannot simply be moving the material from the lectern to the computer screen…” (p. 218).

**Online Communities**

Online communities are an integral part of delivering a course in a fully online environment. As Gunawardena and Zittle (1997) argue, one of the key factors with respect to the successful completion and enjoyment of an online course is the amount of social presence felt by each student. Social presence has been simply defined as “the degree to which a person is perceived as a ‘real person’ in mediated communication” (Gunawardena & Zittle, 1997, p9).

While the definition itself may be simplistic, the actual act of creating this social presence has been found to be challenging (Gunawardena & Zittle, 1997). Wilson et al. (2004) have defined a specific type of learning community, the ‘bounded learning community’, as a group that forms within a structured environment such as an online course. This type of learning community is bounded by various constraints such as time or content that is typical within a formal course rather than simply a group of people getting together to learn about a specific topic (Wilson et al, 2004).

A further definition of a community in general is put forth by Rovai (2002), stating “members of classroom communities will have feelings of belonging and trust.” (p. 2). He further expands on this definition by bringing in the duties and obligations that students have to one another and towards the school as well as the ongoing belief that everyone’s educational needs will be met if everyone works together. (Rovai, 2002). Palloff and Pratt (1999) overtly state that attention must be given to creating an online community if student success is to be achieved. They go on to point out that in a face-to-face classroom, students work together and
therefore get to know each other. This must be facilitated in an online classroom explicitly as it will not necessarily naturally (Palloff & Pratt, 1999).

Social presence in an online learning environment ensures that people feel comfortable and at ease in their interactions with other students and the instructor (Aragon, 2003). Creating this social presence, or simply an engaging community, is an important consideration when creating an online course. Aragon (2003) has expanded on a number of possible strategies for creating a high level of social presence. These include the creation of course welcome messages, the incorporation of audio into classes and assignments, the active involvement of the professor in online discussions and the appropriate use of personal stories before and during class time. Rovai (2002) argues that there are four key components to creating a strong online community: spirit; trust; interaction; and the commonality of expectations and goals. Spirit is the “recognition of membership in a community and the feelings of friendship, cohesion, and bonding…” (p. 24). Trust is made up of the concepts of credibility and benevolence in that learners are able to rely upon the word of other learners and the extent to which they are interested in the welfare of others (Rovai, 2002). Interaction refers to all task-driven and socio-economically-driven interactions that occur within a learning community (Rovai, 2002). The common expectations that all students have and their commitment to learning is centered in Rovai’s final characteristic, that of commonality of expectations and goals. DiRamio and Wolverton (2006) have also suggested three key components of developing online communities that are very similar to three of Rovai’s. These components are connections, experience, and responsibility (DiRamio & Wolverton, 2006). Connections are very similar to Rovai’s spirit characteristic in that this refers to the connection between students, each other and the course material. The experience characteristic is closely connected to Rovai’s interaction component in
that it relates to the actual experiences and activities that instructors provide their online students. Finally, the responsibility aspect of DiRamio and Wolverton’s work directly relates to the trust aspect of Rovai’s work in that it discusses the motivation and maturity of students and their interactions amongst one another and the overall learning goals (DiRamio & Wolverton, 2006).

The success of creating an online community was investigated by Murdock and Williams (2011) they found that “students and instructors can indeed develop a learning community as effectively in an online course as in a traditional, on campus course”. (p311). This study, while small (r=37), did demonstrate that learning communities can be formed in online environments and this information can be further used to create a successful learning community in a blended course. Robinson (2006), found that students had to work harder than they believed they would need to in order to be successful in their online learning. This is important to consider in that the students entering an online class may need to be warned about the potential workload compared to face-to-face classes. Regardless, the research has shown that students can be successful in a fully online environment. Blair and Hoy (2006) were also successful in creating an online writing course, however, they made some excellent observations with respect to student learning preferences and engagement. They found that some students preferred to do the majority of their work in ‘private spaces’ rather than public, online forums, yet these students were just as successful as those who participated in the online discussions (Blair & Hoy, 2006). They ultimately concluded that the success of online interactions requires the understanding that there are relationships that are amongst students, and instructors, that can be both public and private. Both of these relationships can see success in an online course (Blair & Hoy, 2006).

Through the use of conscious decisions such as classroom welcome messages, engaging and interactive assignments and an appropriate use of various communication mediums, course
designers and professors can create online courses where students will see both academic and personal success. The intentional integration of these strategies are important in the creation of any online course and many of them have been integrated into the course created as this Major Project.

**Learning Management Systems**

A learning management system (LMS) “has proved necessary for eLearning by providing a nexus for learning activities” (Garcia-Penalvo and Forment, 2014, p. 143). The authors further elaborate and state that the LMS provides the support and management within a teaching environment that assists the learning process. While the actual choice of an LMS was not possible in this project, there was a body of research which discussed best practices in terms of how to organize and utilize an LMS. Martin-Blas and Fernandez (2009) find that, in general, utilizing an LMS during a physics course led to higher grades on a final exam than not using the LMS. This specific conclusion leads to a general assumption that LMS’s will enhance student learning if designed and used correctly. The LMS course configuration by Martin-Blas and Fernandez provided students with a number of possible uses ranging from formative assessment to additional learning opportunities (2009). Specifically, quizzes were provided to students utilizing multiple choice and true/false questions to provide a basic formative assessment of where a student was in terms of their understanding in the course when they took the quiz. The instructor also included fully worked solutions for students to consider and utilize (2009). Using this information, formative assessment opportunities are available to students in the blended course created for this Major Project. Martin-Blas and Fernandez (2009) conclude by stating that it is important that students feel involved in their own learning and the online quizzes and formative assessment tools provide them with this opportunity.
In general, an LMS must be modular and able to be restructured to adapt to the students’ needs. (Garcia-Penalvo & Forment, 2014). The particular LMS, Desire2Learn, is capable of being quickly reconfigured or reorganized in order to provide students with a different experience. In particular, specific applications can be added to Desire2Learn in order to enhance the student experience within the course. As Godwin-Jones (2012) notes, however, it is important for instructors to actually utilize all of the capabilities of an LMS in order to fully engage students. Another important point raised by Godwin-Jones (2012) is that we may be doing students a disservice by forcing them into a confined LMS experience rather than utilizing all of the web resources available to us. This problem has been considered, and countered, in the blended course designed for this Project by ensuring that a variety of external web resources are utilized throughout the course.

An important consideration in choosing an LMS is to ponder the possible issues that could arise in terms of student engagement or general usefulness. Juhary (2014), found that, in general, respondents to a study found an LMS helpful in their course. He did note that the least useful feature of the LMS was the discussion forum, attributing this finding to the availability of other communication tools such as social media (Juhary, 2014). Soares, Jacobs, Porto, and Moraes (2012), completed a usability study of Moodle, another LMS, and found that students struggled with the interface. The students also cited the forum as the location that caused them the most difficulty, followed by the overall interface of the course (2012). This is an important finding to consider because of the potential use of the forum within the completed course this Project is based on. In general, the use of online discussions will be potentially less than in these studies and instructor guided discussions will hopefully alleviate possible issues.
Desire2Learn is an excellent choice for this blended course as a centralized learning management system as it provides all of the requisite functionality outlined in the research and will provide students with a centralized location with which to engage in course content.

Creating Student Engagement

Student engagement in an online course is an incredibly important part of successful blended, or fully online, course delivery. As Lewis and Rush (2006) discuss, the first step in creating an engaging online environment is for a professor or instructor to ask students to introduce themselves to the group in some way. After this, students indicated that they maintained a strong interaction through both formal and informal parts of the course (2006). The authors continue to elaborate on their findings and indicate that discussions with open ended questions and interpretations will keep a class engaged rather than a simple comprehension question where many of the responses are similar (2006). Teachers need to initiate discussions in order to engage students who may feel lost without initial, guided assistance (Omar, Hassan, & Atan 2011). Dixson (2010) suggests that simply offering the opportunity to engage in a discussion is not enough; instructors must require this engagement. As Omar et al (2011) note, “learners who take charge of their own learning are more engaged…” with their teacher (p. 473). This idea connects very well with the concept that students need to be engaged with questions that will challenge them to consider how to apply their knowledge rather than simply read and comprehend. Karaksha, Grant, Anoopkumar-Dukie, Nirthanan, and Davey (2013) found that instructors that supplement their lectures or activities with online tools generally saw an increase in student engagement as it allowed them to choose an avenue that met their learning needs. Finally, it is important to consider the issue of feedback in a course and ensure that all students,
in all aspects of the course, receive individual feedback so as to keep them engaged in the learning process (Lewis & Abdul-Hamid, 2006).

With respect to the different types of activities, Dixson (2010), separates them into active and passive activities. Active activities are application type activities that involve taking concepts and applying them to problems or laboratories (Dixson, 2010). Passive activities included reading assignments, quizzes, viewing PowerPoint’s, etc. (Dixon, 2010). An interesting finding that Dixson (2010) discussed in his conclusion is that

…the finding of no significant difference in student engagement levels between those reporting active vs. passive activities indicates that a myriad of content activities can be used to engage students in online courses. However, active learning assignments, particularly discussion forums and web pages, may serve the secondary purpose of helping to develop students’ social presence. (p. 7)

The importance of this conclusion cannot be understated and has been incorporated into the overall course design through the use of varied and active learning activities.

Karaksha et al (2013) found that students are known to engage and participate more when an instructor offers a reason outlining the importance and relevance of the various tasks. This could be simply considered good teaching, however, it is important to note and consider when designing tasks for students. McBrien, Jones and Cheng (2009) further emphasize the importance of synchronous sessions using some sort of virtual classroom in order to offer meaningful social interaction.

McBrien et al. (2009) offer a number of important points that relate to how a proper synchronous session should be run. Students noted that the chat functionality became confusing
at times. They also struggled with the number of things that were occurring concurrently in the synchronous session such as the ongoing presentation, various microphones being on, and the chat functionality. Having a designated student who will inform the teacher when an important question has arisen within the chat functionality of the software can mitigate this potential issue. Students expressed appreciation for speaking through a microphone so as to collect their thoughts before they spoke and also liked the voting features of the software that they used (McBrien et al., 2009). Collaborate, the web-conferencing software that will be used in this course, has the functionality to allow students to enable their microphone when required and vote on topics proposed by the teacher.

Overall the idea of engaging students through active, participatory activities and lessons is an important consideration with respect to the design of a blended learning course. By allowing students to engage in a variety of topics, in a variety of mediums, online instructors will be better able to assist their students in fully demonstrating all of the required learning objectives set out in the course.

**Flipped Learning**

LaFee (2013) says that “a flipped classroom is fundamentally about upending time on task” (p. 13). Love, Hodge, Grandgenett, and Swift (2013) suggest that “…the basic idea is to move the core knowledge out of the classroom and use class time for activities that deepen that core knowledge” (p. 318). Finally, Strayer (2012) summarizes by saying that while this idea has been around for a while, the inverted (or flipped) classroom simply came from a desire to make room for in-class investigations. Regardless of the definition, the idea is the same – take material that would have been delivered in lecture or reading style and assign it for homework. Teachers are then free to utilize the time they would have spent lecturing on activities, discussions,
individualized instruction, and deeper learning (LaFee, 2013). While the overall model remains similar across the research, Frydenberg (2012), cautions that every flipped classroom cannot be the same and teachers will need to consider their own learners in the process.

Love et al. (2013) bring up the important point that while the lecture has been a mainstay of classroom education for a very long time, instructors are still required to ensure that the content is discussed and learned. Students need both the lecture, and the activities, in order to be successful in a course (Love et all, 2013). Heng (2014) suggests that in the traditional lecture-based classroom, students who fell behind were unable to complete the hands-on activities, and were therefore not able to scaffold to the next phase of the lecture. Flipping the classroom is one potential solution to such a problem.

The actual act of flipping the classroom can be done in a variety of ways. Frydenberg (2012) used online videos that were a maximum of five minutes each to keep a student’s attention and to deliver lecture content in chunks. Heng (2014) suggests that videos be less than 10 minutes, and that while quality is important, it is equally important that instructors create videos that are coherent and clear. Love et all (2013) used screencasts in addition to textbook work and provided students with a pre-class assessment based on the material covered in the at-home portion of their class time. As Frydenberg (2012) notes, it’s very important that students are motivated to complete the pre-class work at home in order to be fully prepared. This motivation can come in the form of an assessment at the start of class as both Frydenberg and Love et all did, or a penalty on their participation marks as Heng saw. In creating digital material for the course constructed for this project, it was important that students had enough information to fully understand the topic while not having too much that they would be unmotivated to complete it.
In looking at the success of a flipped classroom, Heng (2014) found that there was “a very high level of student engagement…” (p. 9). He also notes that students were more likely to remain on task rather than engage in off-task behaviours (2014). LaFee (2013) finds that in a single semester the flipped Government class had higher grades than the traditionally taught one. Love et al. (2013) found similar results in that the average score change for students in a flipped classroom was higher than those in a traditional classroom, but both sets completed the final exam to a similar level. Frydenberg (2012) found success in that his students were thinking critically and talking in class about the content rather than sitting passively or being unengaged.

There are some reported downsides to flipping the classroom, specifically, according to Strayer (2012), that students need to have an interest in the course in order to be successful and that an introductory course may not be the best starting point for a flipped model. Heng (2014) notes that teachers need to be much more prepared and able to provide the close monitoring that students require in a flipped model. He goes on to note that students must complete the preparation for class in order to make the activities and discussion worthwhile. LaFee (2013) also raises a good point that, to date there really aren’t any broad-based studies about the effect and impact of flipped learning.

A flipped model can be valuable as a model for an entire class, or for portions of one. The course designed for this Project utilized a flipped learning experience at various times throughout the content delivery in order to provide students with a number of possible learning experiences. The points raised in these articles were considered when the flipped experience was created for this blended course.
Conclusion

In discussing the available literature and considering the implications of taking a face-to-face course and moving it to a blended model, a number of important design considerations were evaluated and discussed. The fundamental learning theories provided a basis for good course design and assignment creation. A discussion of the definition and intricacies of blended learning ensured that a solid understanding of the actual context and structure of a blended learning course should take to be considered ‘blended’ was present. Creating online courses and online communities was an important topic because of the importance of the community of learners that would be present in the course. Not only would these be students who are learning new content, but they are also potential future teachers who will need to create their own classroom communities. Because the course was built around a learning management system, an investigation and discussion surrounding the various design choices made sense in terms of the best approach to creating the course structure for the students. Finally, creating student engagement in general, and specifically through flipped learning, ensured that a number of pedagogical approaches were considered in the overall course design.
Chapter 3 – Procedures and Methods

Major Project Design

The critical problem of creating a course that could be delivered via a fully online environment while still ensuring that face-to-face learners were engaged, all the while ensuring that lessons fit within a professor's desired teaching style, was the focus of the course design. Because EDUC 202 was 12 lessons long, each of which had a different theme and topic, the overall course needed to be designed in individual lesson chunks rather than larger units or topics. In Appendix A, the initial lesson plan provided by David Sufrin is available along with the notes I created in terms of modification and adjustment. Each lesson was further broken down into individual activities, which had specific learning goals attached to each.

In creating the activities it became clear that there were three overarching types of activities that David was interested in utilizing in a classroom environment. The most common was that of a student-centered exploration and discussion in small groups that included a “report back” part to other students, or the whole class. The second type was a traditional lecture style presentation where he provided students with content, all the while ensuring that student engagement was kept up through guiding questions and discussion points. Finally, the third type of activity was a mostly online activity whereby students utilized a website or series of sites in order to find information about a specific topic and complete assignments. While there were different methods of implementing these overarching activities, the activities themselves remained mostly constant.

An ongoing challenge that had to be addressed was the amount of technological integration that would be present in the activities. I was very aware of Karaksha, Grant, Anoopkumar-Dukie, Nirthanan, and Davey’s (2013) work indicating that online activities
provided to students increased engagement in the overall class. Dalsgaard and Godsk (2007) also note that a problem based learning approach, much like the current style that David utilizes, is an excellent way to scaffold a course. Technology lends itself nicely to creating a problem based learning environment in that a variety of presentation and communication mediums are available to students. This had to be balanced, however, with the overarching idea that technology needs to be utilized in a manner that is appropriate for the task rather than being the focus of the task.

Two key requirements emerged in my selection of technology for all aspects of the lessons I was creating or modifying. The first aspect was the ease of access to the tool I was asking the professor and students to utilize. The tool had to be easily shared via link, and the majority of the tools needed to have no account creation requirements. The second aspect was the ease of use of the tool and how long it would take a student to be able to become proficient enough to complete a task. In the majority of cases, an activity was designed to take only 10 to 15 minutes and thus I couldn’t have students and the professor constantly learning a new tool to complete an activity, even if that tool would have been the ideal one to teach the required learning outcomes.

Because of these considerations, a number of activities were created in, or centered around, the Google Apps for Education suite of tools. These applications allow for collaborative editing and sharing of documents in such a way that students and professors can easily create and modify activity documents while still ensuring that they remain focused on the learning rather than learning a new tool. While this tool does require an account to utilize a number of key features, it was the only tool that I selected with this requirement and additional instructions were provided to students in order to create their accounts. The Google Applications suite provided
me with a number of powerful tools that would meet the majority of activities where writing or brainstorming was required. These documents could then be easily shared via a link in the Collaborate software chat box.

Many of the group activities and discussion groups were best facilitated directly in the Collaborate software. This software allows the teacher to create breakout rooms for students to move to in order to provide a number of separate meeting spaces. The software also provides a shared whiteboard experience for all students, and the professor, that allows them to formulate ideas and document discussions. Finally, the professor is able to take any whiteboard from a breakout room and display it for the entire class in the main room, ensuring that recaps and debriefs are possible from each group. These characteristics, while available in other software applications online, were best utilized directly within the software that was being used to teach the full lesson.

Finally, teacher-directed lessons, most of which are lecture based, were also designed to be delivered within the Collaborate software. Special, pre-formatted slides in the PowerPoint presentation slide deck were created to allow David to ask critical questions or garner student responses in a formatted fashion. Examples of this include, discussion questions posted to a slide with room for multiple student answers and opinion based questions for students to respond with text or drawings directly in the lecture. The ability to ask for and receive direct student feedback from both in-class and online participants through Collaborate made it an obvious choice for the lecture-based teaching that was planned for some activities.

A critical challenge and design point was ensuring that students in the classroom were able to fully communicate with online students without making the online students feel excluded or secondary to the process. For this reason, the instructions created in the activities, and in the
notes to the professor, emphasize utilizing online tools such as Google Applications or the Collaborate whiteboard rather than simply using a microphone to discuss. I was concerned about the possibility of having online students excluded if their group members were both in-class and thus able to communicate without the need for a microphone. By designing activities that focused on utilizing the tools, and collaborating that way, I was able to create an experience whereby all members of the group would need to communicate to successfully complete the task.

Creating activities that allowed all participants to be active and engaged in the learning process while still ensuring that the technology tools selected were appropriate comprised the bulk of my Major Project course creation. By breaking lessons into three defined activity types I was able to utilize similar tools and processes to achieve a variety of learning outcomes. By utilizing similar processes, both the student and the professor were able to quickly become familiar with the selected tool, thus ensuring that the learning was at the forefront of the activity rather than the technology used to get there. Furthermore, as an added bonus, the students were exposed to a number of tools that they may choose to utilize in their own classrooms in the future.

**Major Project Development**

The Major Project began with a series of meetings with David Sufrin and myself over a period of weeks in order to create the scope of the project. Initial meetings were completed much as an engineer would gather information for a project in that my aim was to understand how he ran his course currently and what his major philosophies of education were. During these early meetings, David was teaching the course to a fully face-to-face audience, and provided me with detailed notes regarding the activities he completed in class and which he wanted to move towards an online environment. These early meetings were primarily designed
to allow both of us to ask questions and work out the scope of what was to be created. It became apparent quite quickly that the vast majority of the content was able to be transferred to an online-ready state and that the bulk of my work would be ensuring that David was able to achieve the various learning outcomes required while still being able to deliver this content using his preferred teaching style. This style relied heavily upon inquiry-based learning and student driven activities so during the construction of my activities I needed to ensure that these approaches would still be valid.

As the meetings progressed I provided David with a series of lessons and demonstrations regarding the tools that may be used in the construction of the class activities. These included demonstrating Collaborate and Google Apps for Education as well as discussing in generalities some philosophies of online learning that he would need to be aware of. Near the end of May, David had completed teaching his latest iteration of EDUC 202 and thus I had everything I needed with regards to course content to begin the construction of online-ready lessons.

In June, I created Appendix A whereby I annotated the lesson notes that David provided me with in order to provide him with a series of ideas and proposals for how the online activities would be constructed. Upon approval, I began creating these online activities as described. This involved creating the actual activities, an instruction manual for David in terms of implementation, and the editing of various PowerPoint slides in order to make them online-ready.

Throughout much of July and August, I worked to create the various activities that were required based on the agreed upon modifications to David’s original lesson plans. These activities were created using my own personal Google account for simplicity’s sake, with the understanding that I would then transfer these documents over to David nearer to the January
start date. The activity links were posted to a development Desire2Learn site that I was using in order to create a central “home base” for students and instructors. Throughout the process I was also updating a series of instructions that would be given to David in order to manage and implement the activities.

In September, a number of colleagues from my OLTD cohort were given access to my demonstration course documents and lesson outlines and asked to provide comments and feedback. These comments came in the form of a survey that was created to better direct the comment topics and flow. This survey (Appendix B) was created in order to evaluate how viable the activities would be for a student sitting in the classroom and a student participating online. Because of the number of possible group combinations and activities I kept the survey general in order to capture as much information as possible through a limited number of questions. Because I was equally interested in the instructions given to David as well as the course activities I created I included both sections in the feedback form.

**Major Project Implementation**

The course was officially launched in January 2016 and I attended the first class in order to ensure that David was comfortable with Collaborate and the various tools and activities I had utilized. Before the course began, I provided a number of hours of professional development for David in the areas of Collaborate and Google Applications. This professional development also included the transferring of the many Google Application documents that I created over to a new account created by David so that he had full control over the files. Students at the VIU campus in Cowichan and students in a variety of other locations participated in the initial 12-lesson course over the months of January to April 2016.
Chapter 4 – Field/Beta Testing and Findings

Methods and Process

Upon completion of the lesson plans, course outlines and course instruction document an open-ended survey (Appendix B) was created in Google Applications and distributed to all current and former VIU OLTD students and graduates. Google Applications was chosen because of its free nature and for its ease of creation and distribution. Only a link is required to view and submit responses which was important not only for the ease of providing this link but also because it didn’t require any identifying information to be given, as this type of information was not needed or wanted.

A link to the major documents created for this course was provided and the questions were focused on three major areas: tool selection, appropriateness of the activity to an online environment, and the instructor information sheet. These three topics were selected because they were identified in the research and ongoing development of the course as important considerations when designing a blended-learning environment. Free-response questions were chosen over multiple choice or a scale because anecdotal feedback was the goal rather than a statistical model of how an end-user feels about the course.

Unfortunately, the respondents that were initially emailed the survey didn’t have the time required to view and consider all of the work created in the course of this project. Only two responses were obtained from the full documents and while the majority of their comments were considered and implemented, additional feedback was needed to ensure that a fuller picture was obtained of changes that would be beneficial. For this reason, an alternative document (Appendix C) was created, and this shorter document was shared with potential respondents.
The response rate was higher with the condensed document and I was able to gather a number of responses that allowed me to modify, as appropriate, my initial design decisions.

A separate, but equally important testing process, surrounded my one-on-one instruction with Prof. Sufrin during our monthly meeting in November. This testing process, and anecdotal feedback, involved the presentation and execution of a standard lesson through Collaborate. I provided Prof. Sufrin with the instructions that were created for his benefit and asked for any feedback based on a sample lesson being executed. In addition to having him work through the instruction document and utilize Collaborate, I asked for his feedback regarding the overall lesson flow and the various modifications that I had made to his original designs. I was particularly interested in ensuring that he was able to manage the technology aspect of the lesson successfully and focused my anecdotal questions on this aspect.

We agreed that I would be present for the first class in January, 2016 so as to ensure that he and his students were all able to successfully connect to Collaborate and navigate through their first bi-synchronous lesson. In addition, I ensured that he was comfortable with the use of the technology in the classroom through ongoing technical support throughout the first session of EDUC202.

Findings

Because of the overall positive nature of the responses I was pleased with the work that I put forward for review. Confirming what I had set out to accomplish, respondents commented that the majority of my suggestions and modifications allowed for curricular content to be investigated and learned by both online and face-to-face learners in a synchronous environment. While the testers and reviewers did not have the opportunity to see the course fully delivered by a professor, they were, through their own experiences and education, able to imagine the impact
and appropriateness of the activities that I put forward. One of my goals was to ensure that learners would be able to contribute multiple items, artifacts and ideas towards a group learning process. The comments and reviews received made positive references to the number of places that students were able to contribute to the overall learning of the group.

As expected, my initial concerns about the balance that had to be met between providing extremely useful and related tools and ensuring that students didn’t feel pulled in multiple directions because of the large number of tools arose in the comments. As was discussed during Chapter 1, I made the intentional decision to limit the number of tools to only a handful in order to ensure that students were able to remain focused on the learning process rather than learn multiple tools.

Two major themes emerged from the comments and feedback that I was provided. The first theme was to ensure that the material students were creating on the whiteboards was saved in a reasonable fashion. Some suggestions that were brought forward included screen capturing, using a Google doc instead of the whiteboard, and simply saving the whiteboard files. I opted to simply suggest to Prof. Sufrin that he have students save their whiteboards (or save them himself) rather than utilize other tools. This decision was based on two key ideas, the first being that adding complexity to the process of brainstorming or responding to simple classroom questions could add both time and difficulty to a lesson activity. In the event screen capture software malfunctioned, or caused lag, or general problems, the students and the professor would be forced to either wait for the software to be fixed, or do without the saved information. Secondly, the whiteboards already have a save feature that is easily accessible, works reliably and doesn’t require additional software or participant instruction. These files could then be shared with the students on the Desire2Learn site or through email.
The second theme was the collaboration aspect of the tools and how many of the modified activities emphasized a group answer or group consensus before presenting these findings to the larger group. This was an intentional decision on both my part, and Prof. Sufrin’s in that his teaching style certainly focused on collaborative activities and group decision making. I was pleased that the majority of respondents commented on the collaboration aspect as it was a major design consideration that I outlined in Chapter 1 and discussed in Chapter 2. When speaking with Prof. Sufrin during our final meeting in November it was apparent that the implementation of collaboration aspects was done appropriately and in such a way as to ensure that his style would be able to be maintained throughout the delivery of the course.

The feedback received from the many different voices contributed greatly to a final, finished product. The act of engaging a variety of educational stakeholders in a series of varied discussions surrounding this project enabled me to make major and minor modifications based on this feedback. The final course, and future possibilities in the creation of such courses, are outlined in Chapter 5.
Chapter 5 – Conclusions and Recommendations

A full, 12-week course was converted from a face-to-face only model to a bi-synchronous blended learning environment, successfully completing the critical challenge of this paper. An important consideration in the creation of this project was the actual definition of bi-synchronous blended learning. While the traditional definition has focused on utilizing online and digital resources to supplement or replace traditional teaching, my course follows a new definition that focuses on a synchronous environment that both face-to-face and blended learners can simultaneously participate in. It was important that not only was the content successfully converted to be accessible to learners who would be only logging in through Collaborate but also that the teaching style of the instructor was able to carry through into these online activities. Building community was also a major component of the design because all activities needed to be accessible to blended groups of students both in the classroom and digitally through Collaborate. The actual goal of converting a fully face-to-face course into an environment that online learners could access was ultimately the challenge, and solution, to this Major Project.

At the beginning of this project I had to consider the type of model that I would use in order to successfully allow students from multiple locations to access a physical classroom setting via technology. The closest definition of blended learning that I had to begin with was Garrison & Kanuka’s where they discussed the integration of face-to-face and online learning (2004). Integration was a particularly important word in this definition because it spoke to the idea that online and face-to-face learning could be provided simultaneously, rather than sequentially, in a classroom environment. It became apparent early in the process that EDUC 202 would need to provide content through both mediums without overlap. Because of this, I
had to create a new definition of blended learning, which focused on a deliberate use of tools to promote both face-to-face and distance, online learning.

Prof. Sufrin felt that it was important that an interactive and improvisational teaching style be maintained in the conversion of his class. This requirement required some specific design decisions in that tools that tended to focus on a synchronous model were chosen over tools where students would be working in small groups for long periods of time. Much as in a face-to-face classroom, the digital classroom that was to be used in EDUC 202 needed to be a place where students were guided by an instructor and asked to complete small, manageable tasks for debrief later in the period. As Knowlton (2000) discusses, it’s important the students create “things” together with an instructor during a blended course. This was a manageable goal during the guided lessons because most activities included an artefact to be shared with others or saved for later use.

The guided-lesson approach was a direct departure from many blended learning environments; however, and thus specific tools needed be chosen that would accommodate this requirement. The most utilized tool was actually the Collaborate software itself as it allowed students to be sent to breakout rooms within the learning environment and subsequently return, with completed work to demonstrate to to their colleagues. A similar environment could be, and was, created in Google Documents whereby pre-formatted files were designed and utilized by students when the learning being documented needed to be stored or referred to beyond the class time.

I made the conscious decision to limit the number of tools that would be utilized because of the technical requirements and background that both the professor, and the students, would be arriving with. Because activities were generally designed to be both short and very interactive,
the time required to learn a new tool, access this tool and successfully use it to complete a task was usually considered too great a problem to surmount in the time available. When I did select a tool with which to achieve a learning outcome it was chosen with the intention of using it a number of additional times as the learning goals would allow. By the conclusion of the course, students were familiar with a handful of tools because they had utilized them in a variety of ways to achieve a variety of learning outcomes.

The activity design was also guided by the idea that all activities needed to be accessible to mixed groups of students. The instructions provided to the professor when creating breakout rooms was to randomize the students through the use of Collaborate. This was done intentionally so that a variety of groups would incorporate the online learners, thereby ensuring that they felt part of the class rather than a subset of it. It was particularly important to require that all students be part of the discussions rather than simply inviting them in as Dixson (2014) discusses. Because of this, all activities needed to be completed within Collaborate rather than a traditionally blended environment where some activities would be completed fully face-to-face. The student instructions were developed to ensure that all members of the group, including those sitting next to each other in the classroom, were part of the online environment. This was done through the use of a digital whiteboard or document rather than any paper notes and the importance of communicating via the microphone rather than in person. Finally, because the breakout groups would be randomized, it was entirely possible to expect the online learners to meet and integrate with the face-to-face learners much as would happen in a traditional classroom.

Another major deliverable that was successfully completed was the instructions that were provided to Prof. Sufrin about the various activities. These instructions were created with the
understanding that he would be utilizing them as a sole resource when he was delivering his lesson. It was important for me to consider his understanding of the technology available to him and to ensure that I considered the various links and documents that he would need to have available. When these notes were created, the initial instructions were quite detailed, even to the point of discussing individual mouse clicks or option menus. As the notes progressed, however, a task such as putting students into groups or sharing a Google Document didn’t require as much explanation. I was happy with the overall layout of the notes and felt that they were appropriately detailed without being too complex or long.

Prof. Sufrin received instruction on Collaborate and the use of the Desire2Learn course from me at our final meeting in November. We focused mainly on the major tasks that he would expect to complete throughout the course. These tasks include loading content into Collaborate, forming random groups with students, and understanding the intricacies of the tools available throughout Collaborate. Of particular interest was the process that would be required to form jigsaw groups whereby students would work with others to become “experts” in a field, and then distribute themselves amongst others to teach and learn various topics.

**Recommendations**

Working with a new definition of blended learning was an interesting experience and one that I would encourage others to consider when looking at the future of online and face-to-face learning. The traditional definitions of blended learning do not account for a situation where some students are unable to participate in face-to-face activities and other students have the rich opportunity to be guided by the direct instruction of a teacher. It was a challenge to create activities that would benefit students sitting in a classroom equally with students attending a lecture through Collaborate. These activities could certainly be critiqued, refined and adjusted to
better suit both types of learners. I suggest that instructors creating blended learning experiences that will have both face-to-face learners and online-only learners consider the activities they are creating from both perspectives. It is recommended that the advantages of the face-to-face environment, such as direct access to a professor and a variety of different learners at the same time be balanced with the advantages of an online environment whereby tools and resources are better available for all learners.

Furthermore, the major decisions around which technological tools to be utilized could be reviewed and considered. If this project were to be done again I would potentially devote an entire lesson to the teaching of more key tools in order to provide students with the opportunity to utilize a tool that may be better suited to an activity than one that was chosen simply because they had used it before or it was the easiest to use. It was disappointing to have to give up major tools that could have enhanced the learning of the students simply because the time wasn’t available for them to be presented in such a way as to fully utilize them. While a balance does have to be struck, I would encourage other course designers to consider the time needed to properly teach a specific tool that will be helpful in a given situation rather than focus only on a select few tools that are easily taught or are easily accessible.

Finally, creating or modifying a course in a collaborative atmosphere may allow for a wider variety of activities that learners could complete to accomplish the specific learning outcomes. Because of time constraints and general knowledge, multiple authors of learning activities could perhaps create a blended environment where a variety of potential activities could be chosen by individual students, thereby forming complete groups. These activities could each target a specific learning objective and, because of the number available, there would be an activity that could suit any learning style or time commitment. An asynchronous model could be
considered whereby students that wanted to attend a face-to-face, or synchronous online session could be guided towards activities that involved group discussion and activity whereas students who would prefer to work in a purely asynchronous environment could be accommodated with group activities that required little to no direct, synchronous contact.

The process of creating a unique synchronous learning experience whereby students could choose their interaction medium while still fully participating in EDUC202 was valuable for both myself and Prof. Sufrin. The process of taking an initial idea, inquiring and considering all possible methods of delivering EDUC 202, and then working with Prof. Sufrin to create a course that both met the needs of all potential students and kept to the theme and spirit of his teaching style has provided me with an excellent experience in course design and creation. Furthermore, it has created an opportunity for students who would have otherwise been unable to participate in EDUC 202 because of time or location challenges. Traditional, asynchronous online learning may not be the most appropriate method for some students to learn the content of EDUC 202 and this synchronous, blended course provides them with a viable alternative. I am hopeful that additional Vancouver Island University courses can be offered engaging this synchronous blended model.
References


Appendix A (Conversion of Initial Lesson Plan)

LESSON 1: WHY BE A TEACHER?

1. EDUCATIONAL QUOTE (5 MIN)
   Teacher Based Instruction
   Show a quote with a visual image.
   Tell students that they will e-mail quotes each week for inclusion in the power point
   Students will read out the quote and explain why they chose it.
   Two or three students each week will find a quote

   Modifications:
   Students will also be pasting their quotes into a formatted Google doc that will be later used as a
   Wordle for display and publication to students. Students will still need to email their quotations for
   inclusion in the master powerpoint slide deck to be created.

2. GETTING TO KNOW THE CLASS – ACTIVITY 10 MIN)
   Class Activity
   L 1.1 Activity Sheet: Group Identity. Do three or four of the suggested groups
   Possible Modification 1:
   Students are randomly assigned groups of two and separated into rooms. They are to spend 15
   seconds finding one interesting thing they both have in common. Repeat 3 or 4 times.
   Possible Modification 2:
   Students are broken into groups of 4 via collaborate and use a pre-formatted collaborate
   whiteboard to categorize all of the similarities between them. This would include some basic topics,
   space for additional topics, and instructions to use the whiteboard.

3. INTRODUCTION AND COURSE OVERVIEW (30 MIN)
   Teacher Based Instruction
   Go over the course outline and the weekly and major assignments. Use a power point.
   Show them what D2L looks like for the course.
   Reminder: Save as a word file and copy and paste web address into the URL
   Note: you will need to pick a partner by week 3 for your TED talk
   Save all activities/class worksheets in a portfolio binder or online
   Modifications:
   I’ll update the powerpoint as needed to make it web ready.
   Use a screen share impersonating a student in D2L to guide show students the website. I’ll create
   the various URL’s you need to share with the students and have ready.
   In terms of TED talks, either randomly assign, or I can create a forum for discussion and partner
   finding.

   Break (10 MIN)
   4. DECISION MAKING (30 MIN)
   Teacher Based Explanation
   Go through how the wheel works.
   Student Groups: Pairs or Threes
   WORKSHEET 1.2 Decision Making Wheel Activity
   Have them practice on the scenario
Debrief


Modification:

Random groups assigned via collaborate.

Option 1:

Pre-formatted whiteboard in collaborate that guides them towards answering the questions. Advantages of this are that there is no need to explain Google docs and sharing files, etc, in the time span. Disadvantages are that you probably won’t be saving their answers.

Option 2:

Read-only Google doc shared with students. This will include step-by-step instructions to share this document with their partner(s). If all goes according to plan, this is a very fast share, and it allows for you to save the answers. The obvious disadvantage is that it may require a bit of technical support if someone struggles with the instructions.

5. TEACHER BIOGRAPHIES (20 MIN)
Student Groups: Pairs
A Teacher Biography. Work in pairs.
Write a very short story about a teacher who made a difference. Why was she/he a good teacher?
Read your biographies to your partner.
Write down four or five attributes of a good teacher, and four or five of a bad teacher.
Class Debrief
Create a class “Wordle” for each?
Read as a poem

Modification:

Pre-formatted Google doc for groups to formulate ideas. Suggest they use any writing mechanism they like to create their own story. This Google doc will allow you to Wordle it later so that you don’t take the time during class.

Break (10 MIN)

6. WHY BECOME A TEACHER? (20 MIN)
Student Based
Cengage Video
Video Focus Questions:
Work singly, then debrief in pairs
What reasons did the teachers give for becoming a teacher?
What advice do the teachers give about becoming a teacher?

http://college.cengage.com/coursemate/education/shared/videocases/player.html?videocase=204

Modification:

Random pairs assigned via collaborate. Pre-formatted whiteboard to debrief. Do you want these answers “saved” in some way?

8. TRANSFORMATIONAL REFLECTION 1
Why do you want to be a teacher?
9. WEEKLY QUESTIONS 1: PERSONAL RELATIONS
The Power of Personal Relationships, Thomas Mawhinney and Laura Sagan
http://www.pdkmembers.org/members_online/publications/archive/pdf/k0702maw.pdf
Reprinted and distributed with permission of Phi Delta Kappa International, www.pdkintl.org. All rights reserved.

Focus Questions:
1. In what ways do the authors suggest are “ways of contacting students’ personal worlds”? Can you suggest any other ways?
2. List “teacher traits that engender affection and regard” from students.

Modification: To be put into a formatted page somewhere on the website.

LESSON 2: THE TEACHER PROFESSIONALISM
1. EDUCATIONAL QUOTE (5 MIN)
2. DEBRIEF LAST LESSON’S ASSIGNMENT (10 MIN)

Class Debrief
Suggested answers.

Modification:

Formatted whiteboard lesson

3. THE COURAGE TO TEACH (20 MIN)
Teacher Based Instruction
Teacher goes over a powerpoint summary of article, The Courage to Teach, Parker Palmer
Class Discussion
Question for class discussion: Why is it important to be aware of our inner self when teaching?
Students can refer to Worksheet 2.1 Summary of Parker Palmer Ideas

Modification:

Link available in the master link document, as well as on the website.

Option 1: Formatted whiteboard for students to discuss.
Option 2: Padlet (online location for post-it notes to be stored). Option 2 is nice because it can be later returned to, possibly modified, and is a tool that future teachers may appreciate. It’s quick and easy to use...

4. WHAT DOES A TEACHER DO? (25 MIN)
Students Groups of 3 or 4
In groups of 3 or 4, brainstorm what kind of different decisions teachers make.
Write on big sheets of paper.
Ask what types of Educational Decisions are there?
Gallery Walk – Categorize Educational Decisions
Class Debrief
Show the slides “Teacher makes 1500 decisions a day.”
How many did the class discover?
http://www.teachthought.com/teaching/teacher-makes-1500-decisions-a-day/

Modification:

Groups are randomly sent to breakout rooms to work on the whiteboard in each room. Gallery walk takes place by going from “room” to “room”.

10 minute break
5. PROFESSIONALISM (20 MIN)
Student groups of 3 (or 4)
Students research the different organizations connected to Education: BCTF, TRB, TQS. Each person researches one organization. What is its function?
Go to the Home Page for each organization, and summarize by listing the main links on the home page. Then teach the other members of the group what they have learned.


Modification:

Option 1: Pre-formatted whiteboard for each group to write their final notes and discuss with other members their chosen professional body. Individuals write their notes wherever they like.

Option 2: Individuals write their notes in a series of formatted Google docs and then share out using the whiteboard. The advantage to this is you can save the notes, the disadvantage is you’ll be pasting a bunch of links.

6. ETHICAL ISSUES: TRB STANDARDS CASE STUDIES (60 MIN)
Teacher Based Instruction
Teacher gives information on BCTF Code of Ethics, BC Teacher Regulation Branch Standards, VIU Professionalism Rubric
Teachers’ Ethical Behaviour: Discussion Standards 1, 2, and 4
Discipline Decisions: What happens if you breach the ethical standards.

http://bctf.ca/ProfessionalResponsibility.aspx?id=4292

Student Groups: Pairs or Threes
Students work in pairs or threes on Worksheet 2.1 TRB Standards, Ethical Decisions. Case studies on discipline
Use the Decision Making Wheel when appropriate.

References:
https://www.bcteacherregulation.ca/ProfessionalConduct/PublicHearings.aspx
https://www.bcteacherregulation.ca/ProfessionalConduct/DisciplineDecisions.aspx

Modification:

Option 1: Students will work on a pre-formatted whiteboard using a link to the document. By now students should be familiar with this process, and thus this will be a quick and familiar activity. Saving the work will be a challenge.

Option 2: Students will work on a pre-formatted Google doc that they will then save and share with you. This will allow the work to be saved for later...

MAJOR ASSIGNMENT 1: PROFESSIONALISM CASE STUDIES
Student Based Study
Start this assignment in class. Work in pairs or singly
Write about two case studies for ethical behaviour
Write about two case studies for disciplinary action
See assignment sheet

Modification:

Read-only Google doc with assignment description provided. Students make a copy and can then download their finished version to submit, or submit as a sharable link. Instructions in the doc. This will allow groups to have an easy to use shared solution...
7. TRANSFORMATIONAL REFLECTION
What new ideas did you learn in this class?
Identify aspects of your own “inner teacher”

8. WEEKLY QUESTIONS 2: SIR KEN ROBINSON VIEWING
Sir Ken Robinson Vimeo “Changing Paradigms”
http://vimeo.com/29485820
Question sheet for hand in

LESSON 3: 21st CENTURY EDUCATION VISIONS FOR THE FUTURE
1. EDUCATIONAL QUOTE (5 MIN)
2. MATCHING CARD ACTIVITY (10 MIN)
   Student Based Activity
   Use Review Card Set. There are pairs of cards, one with a statement, the other with a definition. The cards are randomly dealt to each student. Students have to walk around the room and find their matching card. The words and phrases cover the Big Ideas of the course so far.
   Modification:
   Formatted whiteboards in breakout rooms for students to mix and match the phrases.

3. BRAINSTORM USES FOR CELL PHONES IN EDUCATION (15 MIN)
   Class Activity
   Brainstorm the number of ways to use a cell phone educationally
   Modification:
   Option 1: Padlet (online post-it note site) where students can post their ideas. Pros - different activity, slightly better interface. Cons - have to leave Collaborate.
   Option 2: Formatted whiteboard

4. TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION (5 MIN)
   Teacher Based Instruction
   Show slide presentation
   A brief history of technology. Make the point that technology used to be all about presentation. Now it’s about access to communication and sharing information.
   Student Debrief
   What will the future look like? Any ideas?
   Modifications:
   Editing the slide deck to include some interactive slides.

5. TEACHING IN THE 21st CENTURY – WHAT DOES IT MEAN? (50 MIN)
   Teacher Based Instruction: The concept of a Big Idea
   Student Based Activity: Work in Pairs or Threes
   Watch the video in sections. Work with a partner or in threes. What are the Big Ideas of each section?
   Class Debrief
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OT1BDR4Dn2g
   Modification:
   Breakout rooms for student groups to annotate on the whiteboard. Formatted whiteboard for class debrief.

6. SIR KEN ROBINSON ON CREATIVITY (15 MIN)
   Student Based Work Individually
Think: What one idea really stuck out for you from this video? Each student says what appealed most for them.
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NFubmeHDtII

7. THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION: STUDENT CENTERED LEARNING  WHAT IF? (45 MIN)
Student Based: Work Individually or in Pairs
View the Videos
a) Project Based Learning
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LMCZvGesRz8&list=PL3AB72E35B3A5BDB0&index=3
b) Example of Student Centres Learning
The Big Idea Project
http://www.jff.org/blog/2014/08/25/big-idea-student-centered-learning-new-york-city-high-schools

c) View the video about Student Centered Learning (4 minutes)
http://vimeo.com/101506544
Work independently or in pairs to brainstorm:
What if you could have had the opportunity of creating a Big Idea Project?
What innovative project might you initiate if you had a choice about what you could have learned at high school?
What might this project entail? Write down your ideas in note form.
d) Abbotsford School Example Newspaper Report. Additional Resource
http://www.timescolonist.com/b-c-s-first-science-and-business-high-school-to-open-this-fall-1.1775300

Modifications: Breakout rooms available for students to work in.

8. WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER IN 21st CENTURY LEARNING?
Class Viewing
Teacher versus Educator You Tube
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jC3D7O-ByLE

9. TED TALK SCHEDULE (15 MIN)
Pick partners and choose dates for presenting (If time allows)

Modification: Breakout rooms available to meet partners.

10. TRANSFORMATIONAL REFLECTION
What are your views on 21st Century Learning? How did today’s lesson transform your thinking about education?

11. MAJOR ASSIGNMENT 5: CREATE AN ARTEFACT
Thinking ahead: Think about creating an artefact that expresses your transformation as an educator.
This can be a written piece, a painting, a sculpture, a video, a song, mixed media, etc.
You will show and tell this piece to the class in week 12.

Modification: Create a resource of online tools that could be used to create an artefact.

12. WEEKLY QUESTIONS 3: THE BC AND NEW BRUNSWICK EDUCATION PLANS VIDEOS
BC EDUCATION PLAN
Video http://www.bcedplan.ca/bcedplan_video.php
Complete the assignment sheet.
THE NEW BRUNSWICK ED PLAN
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EjJg9NfTXos
View the Video. Any Comments?
LESSON 4: 21st CENTURY LEARNING THE BC EDUCATION PLAN
1. EDUCATIONAL QUOTE (5 MIN)
2. BC EDUCATION PLAN VIDEO DEBRIEF (15 MIN)
Class Discussion
Students share thoughts on the video.
Positive aspects and negative aspects.

3. MAJOR ASSIGNMENT 2 WEB QUEST: THE BC EDUCATION PLAN AND BCTF VISION DOCUMENT (120 MIN CLASS TIME PLUS HOMEWORK TIME)

Student Based Learning


See MAJOR ASSIGNMENT 2 page in the Assignment Folder.

WEBSITES

The B.C. Education Plan:
Home page  
http://www.bcedplan.ca/welcome.php
Read the Plan  
http://www.bcedplan.ca/assets/pdf/bc_edu_plan.pdf
Curriculum  
https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/

The BCTF Better Schools for BC Document  
https://bctf.ca/uploadedFiles/Public/Publications/BetterSchoolsForBC.pdf

Modification: Major revamp to incorporate online tools and an updated bcedplan website.

4. TRANSFORMATIONAL REFLECTION

Briefly outline a position statement (One paragraph) regarding how your beliefs and values fit with the BC Education Plan.

You may wish to reflect upon what have been the changes from your recent school experiences and what is NOW being implemented.
(What was? What is? What will be)?

LESSON 5 TED TALKS ON EDUCATION

1. EDUCATIONAL QUOTE (5MIN)

2. VIEWING AND REVIEWING (25 MIN)

Student Based Instruction

View YouTube Rita Pierson Ted Talk (8 minutes)  
http://www.pbs.org/wnet/ted-talks-education/speaker/rita-pierson/

Groupings: Pair up

Review this video by answering the following questions:

a) What were the Big Ideas of the Video?
b) What details stood out for you?
c) How did this video change your outlook on education professionally and personally?
d) How might you incorporate some of the ideas from the video into your classroom?

Class Debrief

Modifications:

Randomized breakout rooms with formatted whiteboards

3. MAJOR ASSIGNMENT 3 THE TED TALK ASSIGNMENT

Teacher Led Instruction

Teacher describes the TED Talk Assignment

Gives deadlines, and answers questions

Part A TED Talk Review

Choose any TED Talk on Education that appeals to you.

Write a Review of the video using the questions and criteria discussed.

You will also be asked to evaluate one of your peer’s TED talks
Part B Create a TED Talk
Work in pairs to create a TED talk on Education.
This talk will be presented on your scheduled date.

**Modifications**: Write a few instructions for creating a good video. Will this be done “live” or can they complete it and then upload it?

4. **THE TED COMMANDMENTS**
Teacher Led Instruction
Teacher shows slide of “The TED Commandments” based on the webpage
The TED Commandments [http://www.timlonghurst.com/blog/2008/05/16/the-ted-commandments-rules-every-speaker-needs-to-know/](http://www.timlonghurst.com/blog/2008/05/16/the-ted-commandments-rules-every-speaker-needs-to-know/)
Class Discussion: What makes a TED Talk effective? Refer to the Rita Pierson Ted Talk

5. **EVALUATING THE STUDENT TED TALKS**
Teacher Led Instruction
Teacher explains how the TED Talk Assignment will be evaluated:
Each student will be evaluated by three students plus the instructor. They will use the Ted Talk Rubric.
Every student will write “Two Stars and a Wish” after each presentation. The students who are presenting will be able to read them later.
Each presenting student will write a self-assessment and upload it into the drop box

**Modification**: Are these peer feedback forms anonymous?

Create student information sheet where they can create their own “two stars and a wish” form that they can share for others to fill out.

7. **TIME TO WORK ON YOUR TED TALK ASSIGNMENT**
Student Based Instruction
Class time provided for partner work

LESSON 6 TEACHING AND LEARNING
1. **EDUCATIONAL QUOTE (5 MIN)**
2. **WHAT IS LEARNING? BLOOM’S TAXONOMY (15 MIN)**
   Teacher Led Instruction
   Teacher led Power Point presentation on Bloom’s Taxonomy

**Modification**: Change slides to include any interactive portions as required.

3. **DISCOVERING BLOOM (20 MIN)**
   Student Based Instruction
   Worksheet 6.1
   Work in Pairs: Match the sentence starts with the list of Bloom Categories.
   Create new sentence starts for each Bloom Category
   Class Debrief

**Modification**:

Create read-only Google Drawing for students to make a copy of and work through by dragging and dropping the question stems into the correct place. Randomized breakout rooms.

4. **TEACHING STRATEGIES: PRAISE (20 MIN)**
   Video Viewing
   “A Study on Praise and Mindsets”
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NWv1VdDeoRY

Class Debrief
What is the Big Idea in this video?
How might this reflect your practice in the classroom?

5. CONSTRUCTIVISM ACTIVITY – The Geometry of Circles (15 MIN)
Student Based Activity – Hands on
Folding a paper circle to discover various chord properties
Teacher Summary
Teacher Led vs Student Centred Learning

Modification: I have a well designed lesson for the area of a circle that is “constructivist” based. It will probably take longer than 15 minutes, but could be helpful. Otherwise, I can modify this one.

6. LEARNING THEORIES JIGSAW GROUP WORK (75 MIN)
Student Based Learning
Jigsaw Learning and Teaching Activity
Website http://college.cengage.com/education/cooper/class/8e/students/video_cases/index.html
Grouping: Four people in each “expert” group.
Students study the same theory in expert groups.
They then split into “jigsaw groups” with four different experts in each group.
Each expert has a copy of the notes made in the expert group. Each person teaches what they have learned to the others in the group.
Class Debrief
Class discussion on “Jigsaw Grouping Strategy”. How effective was it for you? How effective for students and at what age might it be effective? Any other thoughts?

Modification:

Google doc created for each “expert” group to use to write notes in. Within their individual breakout rooms this doc could then be accessed when they jigsaw into additional rooms.

7. TRANSFORMATIONAL REFLECTION
What teaching and learning theories did you find out about this lesson?
How did this lesson change your thoughts on Education?

8. WEEKLY QUESTIONS 4: INTERVIEW
Interview a student about school. Find top three things they like and top three they don’t like. Take notes. Record your findings.

LESSON 7 THE STUDENT
1. EDUCATIONAL QUOTATION (5 MIN)
2. THREE STUDENT TED TALKS (60 MIN)
3. WHY I HATE SCHOOLS BUT LOVE EDUCATION (10 MIN)
Video Viewing
Video http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=45p1FRXMoF4
Class Debrief: Any thoughts?

4. STUDENTS THOUGHTS ON SCHOOL? (30 MIN)
Class Debrief
Anecdotal results of interviews of a child (done as last week’s assignment) Class debrief.
Class/Group Brainstorming
What can you add to the list from your experience at school?
Express results as words or short phrases

5. WHY DON’T STUDENTS LIKE SCHOOL? PART 2 SCIENTIFIC STUDY (60 MIN)
Student Based
Video viewing in groups
Grouping: 10 groups of students (in pairs or threes) view videos 1 – 10
Debriefing: Each group summarizes their findings on a BIG piece of poster paper with words or short phrases.
They put up the poster paper with the title, “Why Don’t Students Like School”
They present their poster to the class.
Students take photos of each poster.
Modification:

Randomized breakout groups.

Option 1: Students utilize Google drawings to create their “poster”, making it a sharable artifact for everyone. These links can then be pasted into the main chat area for everyone to view.

Option 2: Students utilize the whiteboard on Collaborate to record their thoughts. Students then move from “room” to “room” looking at and commenting on the posters. An option to save the whiteboard is available.

Note: Written summary https://sites.google.com/site/brittneytrahanedutech/book-summary-why-don-t-students-like-school

6. TRUE COLOURS (5 MIN)
Video Viewing
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SosPuPj3W4
Give out the lyrics to the song True Colours for students to read while they listen to the song.

7. TRANSFORMATIONAL REFLECTION
What major aspects of your school years did you like? What did you dislike?
How might you apply what you learned in Lesson 7 to your own teaching practice?

LESSON 8 CHALLENGES IN EDUCATION: SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS (ONLINE LESSON)

MAJOR ASSIGNMENT 4 : SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS
Student Based Learning
Students work from home to do this online lesson
1. SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS
Special Needs Syndromes/Disorders Home Page
Web site http://www.teachspeced.ca/teaching-strategies-students-special-needs
Read the information and instructions on the Home Page.
Click on the Blue Pen, Diagnosed Medical/Psychological Conditions to choose a syndrome to study.
You may select one from the list of suggestions below (or you may choose one not on the list)
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder ADHD
Asperger’s Syndrome
Autistic Disorder
Cerebral Palsy
Down Syndrome
Foetal Alcohol Syndrome
Mild Intellectual Disability (MID)
Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD)
Tourette Syndrome
Create an information pamphlet or hand out on your choice on a special needs syndrome – be prepared to talk about it for about 5 minutes in groups next week.

PLEASE PRINT THREE COPIES OF YOUR HAND OUT TO GIVE TO YOUR GROUP MEMBERS NEXT WEEK
Try to include information on the following aspects:
What are the symptoms/characteristics?
Describe any known causes.
List the student needs associated with the condition.
Describe teaching/management strategies for three of the “student needs” listed.
Include any other information you feel is important.

Modification:

Some online tools will be made available to students with basic instructions.

2. INCLUSION
Use the internet to answer the questions:
What is Inclusive Education?
What are the benefits of Inclusive Education?

LESSON 9 SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS GROUP TEACHING AND POVERTY

1. EDUCATIONAL QUOTATION (5 MIN)
2. THREE STUDENT TED TALK PRESENTATIONS (60 MIN)
3. SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS JIGSAW DEBRIEFING (30 MIN)

Grouping: Groups of four. Try to arrange the groups so that students in each group have chosen different special needs special needs/syndromes.

Each student presents to the other three in turn using the handout they have created. (5 minutes each).
Each student should make 3 photocopies of their handout.
[The handouts from all students in the class will be collected so as to provide a “Special Needs Handbook” which will be available for all the class. Or alternatively they will post their work online]

Modification

Breakout rooms for students into groups. Links to their online creations are shared with others, discussions occur.

4. VIDEO OF AUTISTIC STUDENT (20 MIN)

Video Viewing
“Carly’s Café”
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KmDGvquzn2k
“My Defining Moment”

Class Debrief: Any comments and thoughts

5. INTRODUCTION TO POVERTY (40 MIN)

Student Based Learning

Reading 2014 Child Poverty Report Card

Grouping: Split into 10 groups.

Each group is assigned a “Fact Sheet” to study. (pages 7 – 36)

On a piece of poster paper, make notes on three or four main ideas that you learned from the “Fact Sheet”. Put the posters up around the room.

“Gallery Walk” - students walk around the room viewing the posters.

Modification

Breakout rooms for students to discuss and take notes on the whiteboard. Return to main room and rotate groups through various breakout rooms to view work of other groups.

6. Student Activity (Time Permitting)
Use the internet to find a quote about Child Poverty which appeals to you. Write it down on a piece of paper. Post your quotation on the classroom notice board.

Modification

Same, except quotations are pasted on the main whiteboard.

7. TRANSFORMATIONAL REFLECTION
Reflect on what you learned about poverty, in Lessons 9 and 10, especially as it relates to your classroom. What can you do as a teacher to help?

LESSON 10 POVERTY PART 2
1. EDUCATIONAL QUOTE (5 MIN)
2. POVERTY AWARENESS (5 MIN)
Read quotes from children on what it is like to be poor. Do it in a dim light with a flashlight just on the speakers’ faces.
See Worksheet L 10.1
http://bctf.ca/publications/NoteFromTeachers.aspx?id=14584
3. ONE IN FIVE POVERTY AWARENESS ACTIVITY (20 MIN)
http://www.povertyusa.org/poverty-resources/education-center/grades-k-5/#Activity_1_One_in_Five
See Worksheet L 10.2
4. YOUTUBE HOMELESSNESS
http://youtu.be/YD1VT7YRJ5I

4. RUBY PAYNE HIDDEN RULES (45 MIN)
Worksheet L 10.3
Complete the three questionnaires.
http://www.asanet.org/introtosociology/Documents/Hidden%20Rules%20of%20Social%20Classes.htm
Get class totals for each of poverty, middle class, wealth. Debrief with class
Modification: Google spreadsheet and form to auto-summarize data.

Hidden Rules and their implications Summarize
Implications in the Classroom: Behavioural Analysis. Students read and mark their top three or four new learnings.
5. POVERTY - IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION (45 MIN)
Taken from BCTF Workshop
Complete the worksheet “What’s Going On?” See Worksheet L 10.4
Brainstorm in groups of 4 what can be done as teachers, in our classrooms, in our schools, and in the community to help children in poverty.
Modification: Randomized breakout rooms available.

6. INTERACTIVE BUDGET (15 MIN)
Complete the on-line poverty budget activity
http://tvo.org/whypoverty/interactive/budget
Modification: This tool was removed. Play “Spent” - http://playspent.org/

7. THE COST OF POVERTY (5 MIN)
http://bcpovertyreduction.ca/learn-more/videos/
8. WEEKLY QUESTIONS 6: ABORIGINAL LANGUAGES
View the video: “First Voices Language Archive”
What are the Big Ideas? What details appealed to you? What are the educational implications?
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J8hAAkJ1B-M

10. TRANSFORMATIONAL REFLECTION
Reflect on what you already knew, and what you learned about poverty, in Lessons 9 and 10, especially as it relates to your classroom. What can you do as a teacher to help?

11. ADDITIONAL REFERENCES ON POVERTY (NON COMPULSORY)
“Teachers who Heal” Gary Phillips, Christopher Wagner
http://www.mssaa.org/gen/mssaa_generated_bin/documents/basic_module/TeachersWhoHeal.pdf
BCTF Papers on Poverty
http://www.bctf.ca/uploadedFiles/Public/Publications/ResearchReports/2012-EI-01.pdf
http://bctf.ca/publications/NoteFromTeachers.aspx?id=14584
Infographics on Poverty
Create the poster and post it in the classroom
Donna Beagle: Poverty 101
http://combarriers.com/poverty_101_workshop

LESSON 11 ABORIGINAL EDUCATION: LANGUAGE AND WAYS OF KNOWING AND LEARNING
1. EDUCATIONAL QUOTATION (5 MIN)
2. STUDENT TED TALK PRESENTATIONS (60 MIN)
3. FIRST PEOPLES’ LANGUAGES (20 MIN)
A: Worksheet 11.1 What do you know? What did you learn? First People’s Languages Facts and Figures.
1. What First Nations Tribes are there on Vancouver Island?
2. Estimate how many First Nations Tribes there are in B.C.?
   Which ones did you already know?
3. What First People’s languages are spoken on Vancouver Island?
4. Estimate how many different First People’s languages there are in BC?
Use the reference: First Nations B.C. Index http://maps.fphlcc.ca/first_nation_index

Modification:

Breakout rooms available for groups to complete the Google doc. Read-Only to start, individual in each group to copy and share new link with partners.
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1J8PkNDSFTXTacDgD1k9uOYsuNizGN-k2mlTgevil2pY/edit?usp=sharing

B. First Nations Language Technology (10 MIN)
On Line Games to Try Out
Concentration
Play “Concentration” in Hul’q’umi’num’ on the First Voices Language Website. Learn some new words.
Pick a theme. Learn three new words
4. ABORIGINAL WAYS OF KNOWING (5 MIN)
A: The BC ED Plan
Aboriginal Ways of Knowing
B: Rediscovery Video and Questions (60 MIN)
View the Video, “The Eagle’s Gift”
Worksheet 11.2 Discussion Questions
Modification: Digitize worksheet to complete in pairs on Google Docs

LESSON 12  ABORIGINAL EDUCATION AND TRANSFORMATIONAL CREATIONS
1. EDUCATIONAL QUOTATION (5 MIN)
2. THREE STUDENT TED TALK PRESENTATIONS (50 MIN)
3. INUIT CULTURE EDUCATION (40 MIN)
A: Guest Speaker Testifies  
B: Students learn about Inuit Games
4. SHOW AND TELL ABOUT YOUR TRANSFORMATIONAL CREATION (30 MIN)
Appendix B (Survey)

EDUC 202 Online/_face to face Conversion
Feedback submitted on this form is provided anonymously and comments will be used to inform Chapter IV of my MEDL690 process paper. Constructive comments may be used to improve further edits of the course website.
Thank you for your time and consideration in supplying your much valued feedback.
Graeme Campbell, MEDL graduate candidate.

EDUC202 Revamp Ideas
Based on initial lesson plans from Prof. Suffrin I have made modifications to activities based on the online and face-to-face nature of the course. This section is based on these modifications, found here: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1DjaT3Tz7MEd9rvRw5DNIlfR72CRa-Aet_7Ux0DvFbc/edit?usp=sharing

Appropriateness
Are the modifications made appropriate to the environment?

Tool Selection
Are the tools selected appropriate to the task?

Final Thoughts
Thanks for taking the time to consider my project and provide feedback. Do you have any additional thoughts?

Closing Thoughts?

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Appendix C (Condensed Summary of Activity Changes)

Thanks for taking the time to consider these conversions. Various activities were present in the face-to-face course that needed to have appropriate conversions to a blended environment where students would access these in a fully synchronous online environment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Activity</th>
<th>Conversion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily Quotations</td>
<td>Students paste to Google Doc for later Wordle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Get to know you”</td>
<td>Pre-formatted whiteboard in collaborate breakout rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Think-Pair-Share activities</td>
<td>Collaborate breakout rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group activities</td>
<td>Formatted whiteboard in collaborate breakout rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group activities where information needs</td>
<td>Formatted Google docs students will copy and share with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to be saved or handed in</td>
<td>others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gallery Walk activities</td>
<td>Multiple breakout rooms with whiteboards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group contribution activities (brainstorming)</td>
<td>Padlet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create an Artefact activity</td>
<td>Online creation tools such as Glogster, Powtoon,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveys or Quizzes</td>
<td>Formatted Google Forms with attached spreadsheet.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>