

A community of flippers: building a community of practice in a higher education environment



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Abstract

Although many of the principles of flipped learning are widely known (Gilboy et al, 2015), some educators remain hesitant to implement it. Many educators would benefit from drawing upon the practical experiences and resources developed by a community of practice (CoP) focused around the issues commonly encountered with flipped learning. To create a CoP where best practices are shared and knowledge is co-created through shared problem solving (Hoadley, 2012), we followed three key principles. First, we organized the group around regular meetings of a book club. Second, we invited a small number of core advocates of flipped learning to provide leadership, practical experience and expertise. Third, we included two faculty members from each of several faculties to form the initial CoP. A key finding from our CoP is that flipped learning is a signature pedagogy -- its implementation varies widely among different disciplines. Creating pooled ways of implementing flipped learning opens the doors to more instructors.

Bien que plusieurs des principes de l'apprentissage inversé sont connus (Gilboy et al, 2015), certains éducateurs sont réticents à l'adopter. De nombreux éducateurs profiteraient de l'expérience pratique et des ressources développées par une communauté de pratique (CoP) axée sur les questions fréquemment rencontrées avec l'apprentissage inversé. Pour créer un CoP où les meilleures pratiques sont partagées et la connaissance est co-crée par la résolution de problèmes partagés (Hoadley, 2012), nous avons suivi trois principes clés. Tout d'abord, nous avons organisé le groupe autour de réunions régulières d'un club de lecture. Deuxièmement, nous avons invité un petit nombre de défenseurs fondamentaux de l'apprentissage inversé à fournir un leadership, une expérience pratique et une expertise. Troisièmement, nous avons inclus deux membres du corps professoral de chacune des facultés pour former le premier CoP. Une des principales conclusions de notre CoP est que l'apprentissage inversé est une signature pédagogique - sa mise en œuvre varie largement entre différentes disciplines. La création d'une mise en œuvre en commun de l'apprentissage inversé ouvre les portes à plus d'éducateurs.

Visioning: 3 key principles

1. Started with a book club format to incite discussion about using flipped learning
2. Strategically invited advocates on campus to act as leaders in flipped learning
3. Limited size to two key advocates per Faculty on campus

Planning

- Received Taylor Institute Seeding SoTL grant.
- Selected book *Flipping the College Classroom: Practical Advice from Faculty* for book club
- Identified and invited potential members from each faculty



What makes a good CoP?

Discussions & Key Learnings

1. Introductions and format of CoP

- Important to engage members in decisions on structure CoP.
- Members wanted in depth discussions based on each book chapter

2. Getting started with Flipped Learning (Ch.1)

- How to choose what to flip
- There is no 1 way to flip a lesson/course.
- Disciplines have their own look and feel to flipped learning

3. Supporting students (Ch. 2)

- Engage and support students in the learning process
- Spend time early in semester to explain why using flipped learning

4. Connecting with students (Ch. 3)

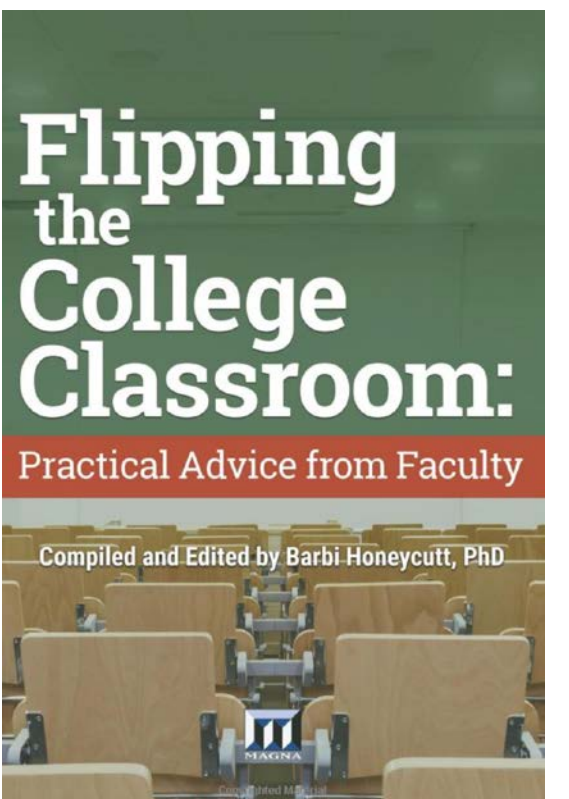
- Include all students and engaging students in a large classroom.
- Have realistic expectations, not all students will engage all the time.

5. Assessment of learning (Ch. 4)

- Assessment needs to align with outcomes
- Can keep to a traditional assessment method when outcomes are supported

6. Integrating technology (Ch. 5)

- Technology is not the focus
- When creating podcast focus on clear and concise content, make it accessible to students, and not worry too much about perfection.
- Use material others have created and use imperfections as learning moments



Showcasing

flipped.ucalgaryblogs.ca



"I was excited about the case study and problem based learning component of the flipped class. I love to see what students do when you let them apply their knowledge and experience to a classroom activity."

"My biggest take-away from the flipped learning experience was that it will make a difference to way that your students engage with the material and with you. Once I allowed the students to drive more of the class and let go of the Power Point, at least some of the time, the connections and insights they made were inspiring."

"I was motivated to examine flipped learning through a community of practice as I wanted to implement it and see its impact on student engagement. Once in the community, I was pleased to learn that my personal very narrow view of flipped learning had both similarities and differences to others. I also found that I was already implementing many of the common flipped learning strategies."

Acknowledgments

This community of practice would not have been possible without the support of the Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning Seeding SoTL grant and the enthusiastic participation of our members.

Conclusions

- Flipped learning is flexible and adaptable to different courses and disciplines.
- Students need to be included and supported in the learning process
- Clear learning outcomes help focus a flipped lesson

Next Steps

- Expand CoP and continue to build website
- Start a teaching-squares or mentoring initiative

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