What to Assess in Large Scale Web-based Instruction: Student Satisfaction versus Performance (Poster)

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Abstract

In many cases the success of course websites is measured in terms of student satisfaction (Lim & Karol, 2002; Reister, Lapointe, & Korcuska, 2007; Sahin & Shelley, 2008; Smart & Cappel, 2006). Many studies rely on the assumption that satisfaction enhances the motivation for learning, and that as a consequence, students’ ownership of the learning process increases (Lim & Karol, 2002; Smart & Cappel, 2006), which eventually, improves the effectiveness of the learning process. This research reports on the first stage of an instructional model (see basic version in action Table 1) designed to improve the learning in a large enrollment introductory Biology course at the Technion. It is conducted as a collaborative project between the Department of Education in Technology and Science and the Faculty of Biology. All three versions of this instructional model use an online tutorial, which was developed for this purpose (see Figure 1).

Keywords: on-line tutorial, large enrollment class, students’ satisfaction.

As can be seen in Table 1, in the basic version all course contents are taught via lectures, in the same manner the course was taught prior to the intervention. However, one important difference is that this version provides students with optional use of the online tutorial.
Observations indicated that although students were provided with the online tutorial, which included all course contents, they continued to physically attend course meetings. However, web-mining of the data on the tutorial’s server showed that there was a lot of activity in the course’s website (On average students entered about 5 pages per week).

With regard to satisfaction from the tutorial, interviews and surveys indicated that students’ satisfaction from the tutorial was very high. 78% of the 175 students who filled the survey wrote that the tutorial had a large impact on their learning process. In addition, 80% of free comments regarding the tutorial were positive (e.g. “The new website is a great tool for...
learning”). In addition, almost all interviewees indicated that they intend to take more advantage of the online tutorial before the exam. In spite of the above, we did not find any change in the students’ final exam scores compared with those achieved by students in the previous year (M=70, SD=15 vs. M=71, SD=14 in the previous year).

References
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