

BBA 303 – FOUR SEMESTERS OF COURSE TRANSFORMATIONS

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Background

BBA 303, Organizational Behavior, is an introduction to the study of individual and group behavior within an organization, particularly in a for-profit enterprise. It is a core class in the BBA program and generally taken early in student's experience at the KU Edwards campus.

BBA 303's transformation began in a blended format during the Spring 2020 semester. Transformations included OER textbooks, live diversity exercises, real-time polling, and online group discussions. BBA 303 Organizational Behavior averaged 18 students throughout the four semesters surveyed for this poster.

Issues to address

Before COVID-19, few BBA or business courses had been delivered online outside of a blended format. Course delivery was not flexible to meet the needs of adult and non-traditional students at the KU Edwards Campus. **The primary challenge of this course transformation was to retain student's engagement with the course topics while using a 100% virtual format.** Subsequently, the course was later retooled for a blended format using Canvas.

Crucial parts of this transformation included flipping the course exercises online, digitizing lectures, increasing group work and the use of case studies, building engagement through interactive case study discussion forums, and creating online flash cards. Following the initial shift to an online format, changes continued to be made to increase student engagement in the virtual format.

Implementation

Many of the changes to the course involved not just moving online, but also utilizing a variety of tools and strategies to engage students and build a sense of classroom community (between student and teacher, as well as among students) in a digital environment. The course utilized the following tools to increase student engagement:

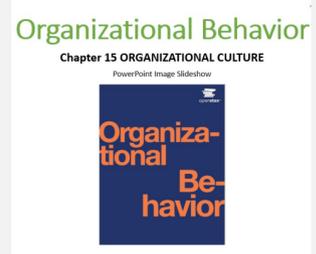
- Implementation of online discussions (Spring 2020)
- Use of Blackboard reflection assignments (Summer 2020)
- Creation of "update" videos for class touchpoints in an online environment. Videos were recorded using Zoom and posted to Blackboard using MediaHub (Summer 2020)
- Pilot of Microsoft Teams for discussions and "professor's office" (Fall 2020)
- Use of class cohorts for social distancing (Fall 2020)
- Delivery in multiple formats: online only, blended, Zoom, and face-to-face (Fall 2020)
- Harvard Business simulations (Spring 2021)
- Digital flash cards (Spring 2021)
- Participation and attendance incentive points (Spring 2021)

Other changes included:

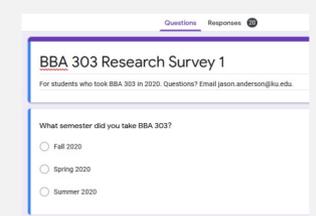
- Digital lectures using Zoom and Kaltura Media (completed Spring 2020)
- Online course expectations video (Summer 2021)
- Integration of online textbook into Blackboard using OpenStax (Summer 2021)
- Restructure of curriculum for 8-week format (Summer 2021)
- Split case study into four separate assignments (Summer 2020)
- CliftonStrengths online workshop (Summer 2020)
- Transfer from Blackboard to Canvas (Spring 2021)

What are Harvard Business Simulations?

Harvard Business Simulations are online, interactive exercises that simulate the real world and encourage students to apply models and knowledge learned in the classroom.



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Student learning

- Spring 2020 feedback surveys showed positive reviews of online course content including recorded lectures and online discussions. Overall, students indicated that breaking down case studies into smaller assignments, extra videos outside of lectures, online discussions, and cohort models that allowed for smaller discussions were most successful.
- An additional student survey for 2020 course sections showed students preferred the following transformations: breaking down the case study into smaller assignments (40%), journal assignments (45%), digital/online lectures (45%), and extra videos outside of lectures (40%).
- A student survey for 2021 course sections showed students preferred the use of cohorts for face-to-face learning (83.3%), and Canvas (100%) was the preferred technology tool to keep in touch with the professor and classmates.
- Final grade statistics show a slight decrease in the mean grade across semesters that transformations were implemented. However, the course transformed to a completely online course earlier than expected due to COVID-19.
- Preliminary student feedback in Spring 2021 shows that students find value in Harvard Business Simulations and that the exercises increase understanding of the week's learning topic. However, many students do not see the simulation as worth the additional course fee.

Reflections

Student feedback encouraged the continued use of breaking down larger assignments into more manageable pieces (especially during COVID-19 when stress levels were high), increasing access to digital lectures and similar recorded messages to students, and the migration to Canvas as the preferred LMS across my courses. Also, face-to-face interactions remained important to my students, even during a pandemic. I found Microsoft Teams to be the least helpful transformation (and the students agreed); I discontinued its use after the Summer 2020 term in favor of keeping everything within Canvas. I am encouraged by the preliminary course feedback regarding Harvard Business Simulations, although I understand students don't want to spend more money on course materials. My hope is this will be offset by the implementation of free OER textbooks across all my undergraduate courses.