

Bichronous Learning for Online Students: A Case Study and Future Directions

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Abstract

Oregon State University (OSU) Ecampus is widely considered one of the best providers of online education in the U.S. Asynchronous learning online removes obstacles blocking many people's access to a university degree. However, there are drawbacks, with the lack of personal interaction in the classroom and delayed feedback being two of the most commonly commented on and felt by students. This study focuses on Martin et al. (2020) designation of 'bichronous learning', as the blending of both asynchronous and synchronous online learning. We combined quantitative and qualitative data to compare if a bichronous delivery of a course to distant students generates better learning outcomes than an asynchronous delivery in four different school terms. The course seminar, called Anthropology Lecture Series, is a one-credit course that brings speakers from across campus and the globe to present their cutting-edge research and professional work. Overall, the data indicated very few differences between bichronous and asynchronous deliveries, especially regarding feedback for course parameters rating such as the whole course, lectures, speakers, course structure, and audio-visual material. Nevertheless, the results suggest effectiveness and potential learning benefits associated with the bichronous delivery of the course. A future study including a large sample could provide stronger insights when comparing the two delivery modalities.

Keywords: online education, asynchronous, anthropology, ecampus.