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A Case Study: Using Blackboard Tools to Measure Correlations Between Student Engagement and Student Achievement

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Using Blackboard Tools to Measure Correlations Between Student Engagement and Student Achievement

• THRT 385: Theatre History and Literature I
• Three tools at play here
  • Student perceptions gathered from course evaluations
  • Student perceptions gathered on a study log
  • Student traffic recorded on Blackboard

• CAVEAT
  • small data pool
  • Will aggregate data over time
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• Final Achievement in the Course:
  • 62% earned grade of A/A-
  • 10% earned grade of B/B+
  • 28% earned grade of C/C+

• GPA for the entire class of students was 3.39

• Abnormally high achievement for this course historically
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• Student perceptions on the course evaluation

  • 77% of students completed the online survey
  • 42% said they never missed a class (instructor records show 35%)
  • 58% said they were absent within parameters allowed in the attendance policy (instructor records show 52%)
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• Student perceptions on the course evaluation

  • 70% said they gave their best effort
  • 30% said they gave a moderate effort
  • 0% said they gave minimal effort

  • 43% said they studied 2-4 hours/week
  • 43% said they studied 5-6 hours/week
  • 14% said they studied 9+ hours/week

  • It would be interesting to know a student’s definition of “best effort” . . .
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• Study Log
  • Extra credit activity
  • Instructor set it up as a tool in Blackboard
  • Students entered study hours every week
  • 61% of students chose to complete the study log
  • This study will analyze the results of
    • 8 students who earned A/A-
    • 3 students who earned C/C+
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• Study Log
  • Students recorded the hours they studied every week on:
    • Reading textbooks,
    • reading dramas,
    • completing examinations,
    • completing quizzes,
    • researching and writing two essays,
    • preparing the final oral presentation
    • Total hours of study (mathematically counted)
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• Study Log
  • Hours of study were all over the map, regardless of final grade in the course
    • Highest number for a C/C+ student=231
    • Lowest number for a C/C+ student=59.8

    • Highest number for an A/A- student=224
    • Lowest number for an A/A- student=61

  • The AVERAGE number of hours studied on each kind of task did not differ much between C/C+ (117.9) and A/A- (119.6) students because of the wild variations among individual students, regardless of final grade.
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• Study Log
  • Some statistical massaging can work wonders.......  
    • Drop the students whose total study hours were the highest and lowest in each group and you get.....
      • C/C+ students=63
      • A/A- students=119.6

• A/A- students reported that they studied almost TWICE AS MUCH as C/C+ students.
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• User Activity in Blackboard
  • Instructor enabled statistics tracking feature to gather data on:
    • Number of hours students spent on Blackboard
    • Number of times each student visited each content area (hits)
  • Content Areas Tracked were:
    • Computer settings, calendar, discussion questions, drama texts, essay assignment instructions, final oral presentation instructions, instructor information, instructor’s in-class presentations, key terms, quizzes/exams/surveys, syllabus, useful resources
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• User Activity in Blackboard

  • A/A- students averaged 37.8 hours on Blackboard
  • C/C+ students averaged 23.8 hours on Blackboard

  • A/A- students averaged 335.8 hits on Blackboard
  • C/C+ students averaged 197 hits on Blackboard
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• Tentative Conclusions:

  • Higher achieving students study more

  • Higher achieving students use Blackboard tools more
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