Chapter 3
Reaching Diverse Learners by Offering Different Course Delivery Methods

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ABSTRACT
Students possess various learning styles and do not respond equally to the same instructional methods. The purpose of this study was to determine if differences exist in learning styles between students who select a traditional course delivery method versus a technology-enhanced course delivery method. Participants included 113 males and 195 females who were enrolled in a College of Business Principles of Marketing course for non-business majors at the University of South Carolina. The students who were enrolled in the course completed an online questionnaire including the Grasha-Reichmann student learning style scale (GRSLSS) and demographic questions. The findings are relevant for a better understanding of why students select a course delivery method.

INTRODUCTION
Educational institutions may be failing to address the learning needs and styles of students (Blashki, Nichol, Jia & Prompramote, 2007); therefore, many students are feeling disenfranchised from education. Learners today have a variety of learning styles (Cameron & Pagnattaro, 2017) and diverse learning styles should be addressed through various instructional techniques (Cheng & Chau, 2016). Successful educational institutions are distinguished because their faculty understand how their students learn (Alumran, 2008). Chickering and Ehrmann (1996) noted how there are many paths to learning as students bring different talents and learning styles to institutions of higher education.

Learning environments are continuing to evolve with blended, flipped, technology-enhanced and synchronous and asynchronous online courses. Having a flexible approach to student learning styles and embracing technology in face-to-face and online courses is a necessity (McCormack, 2015). According to Lawrence (2015), life has changed for many students with the rise of technology. A plethora of educators attempt to use the same traditional course delivery format in which they were educated. Incorporating a variety of instructional methods in higher education environments help students succeed by connecting.

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prior learning, assisting with motivation and incorporating higher-level thinking skills within courses (Brown, Ernst, Clark, DeLuca, & Kelly, 2017). As noted by Crews, Stitt-Gohdes, and McCannon (2001),

“A lack of research in learning and instructional styles would attribute to the reason for a mismatch between the teacher’s instructional style and the student’s learning style” (p. 6).

Many undergraduate students today describe their current learning environment as boring and irrelevant (Swett, 2016). Therefore, it is essential to investigate the design of the learning process. As a result, instructional designers are redesigning more technology-enhanced and distance education courses (Oblinger & Oblinger, 2005). Distance education allows students who have different backgrounds, learning styles, abilities and interests to receive an education (Bayrak, Aydemir, & Karaman, 2017). According to Leahy, Gaughran and Seery (2009),

Investigating and identifying learning styles provides the opportunity for educators to match the design of instruction to the preferred style of learning of students, thus enriching the learning experience. (p. 31)

For this study, a technology-enhanced course delivery method is one where students access learning environments synchronously via Adobe Connect Professional or asynchronously through the Blackboard Learning Management System.

The objective of this chapter is to provide educators more insight about the different learning styles of students and if differences exist in the learning styles of students who select a traditional course delivery method versus a technology-enhanced course delivery method. The results of this study can assist instructional designers, curriculum designers, instructional technologists, faculty and administrators with the development of new curriculum, course offerings at the university level, planning of courses, recruitment of students, utilization of classroom space, and has the potential to boost faculty evaluations.

BACKGROUND

Instructional Design and Technology

Many educators in higher education have limited formal training on how to design effective learning environments and tend to model a more traditional classroom setting (Salter, Richards, & Carey, 2004; Gardner, 1999). According to Reighluth (1983), “Instructional design’s conception can be primarily attributed to John Dewey and Robert Thordike” (p. 27). Reigeluth (1983) suggested instructional designers assist with understanding, improving, and applying methods of instruction. Reigeluth (1983) also noted how instructional design is the process of deciding the best methods of instruction to bring desired change in student knowledge and skills. In the 21st century, instructional designers use instructional design models to enable real world applications and instructional design models help define activities that guide instruction (Khuana, Khuana, & Saniboon, 2017). The instructional design process includes the creation of a course, teaching modules, or the system that resources are made available to students (Pástor, Jiménez, Gómez, & Isotani, 2018). Dick, Carey, and Carey (2001) explained how instructional design models are based on many years of research on the learning process where each part of the model is based on theory and research demonstrating the effectiveness of the components. To reach the best possible instructional results, instructional designers attempt to select appropriate theoretical instructional strategies (Baturay, 2008).

Technology should offer opportunities for creating active and collaborative learning (Budd, 2002; Schneckenberg, 2009; Tsai, 2009; Palloff & Pratt, 2001) and enhance pedagogy (Lee, Morrone, & Sier
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