

Assignment 7 Discussion - Integration Strategies

Describe a key integration strategy for the use of technology in a curriculum of your choice. Include in your description an example of software or web resources that can carry out the strategy. Why do you consider this strategy to be effective?

Teaching remedial math courses at the college level is a challenging (and sometimes daunting) experience since involves re-teaching concepts and skills that students should have learned in their schooling years. From my experience, the paradox of teaching these courses is the instructor cannot use similar instructional methods that students were exposed during their schooling years since it did not work (otherwise, students will not be taking remedial courses!); either, the instructor cannot teach these courses as rigorous as the college level math courses since they lack foundation skills to succeed. Students often complain they already learned the course content; however, they do not show a minimum mastery level during the placement examination. In these courses, an instructor typically deals with students who lack motivation, experience math anxieties, and have poor study skills, which cause a low success rate course completion.

For such reasons, I decided to redesign the remedial math courses where instructional time is spent less on lectures and more on learning by doing. The goal of the new course design is maximizing classroom instructional time by taking into account students' previous experience with the course content, and by giving them control of the course' pace under the guidance of the instructor. Students will have access to a wealth of resources including the instructor, tutors, websites, video lectures, Power Point presentations, and much more. The classroom will become a learning center where students will have every opportunity and motivation to succeed.

To accomplish the goals of the new course design, I will be integrating two mathematics strategies mentioned by Roblyer (2006): (1) Reasoning and skill-building software to increase students' fluency with pre-requisite skills while developing logic and comprehension (i.e. ALEKS), and (2) The use of the Internet to locate useful math-related information (i.e. Blackboard course shell). ALEKS is a web-based math program that uses artificial intelligence to assess and provide instruction to students constantly. This program will tailor a student's instruction based on what they already know or mastered and it will provide immediate feedback on their performance. Students can supplement ALEK's instruction by visiting and using the additional resources that I will placed in the course's Blackboard shell, which will contain multimedia presentations, instructor-made handouts, math links (e.g. Webmath.com, Purplemath.com, Algebra.com, etc.), old tests, etc.

In summary, I expect with the technology integration strategies and the dedicated assistance of tutors and the instructor, students will get an individualized learning experience that should motivate them to complete satisfactorily the remedial courses. No more excuses that they cannot do math!

References

Roblyer, M.D. (2006). *Integrating Educational Technology into Teaching*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc.