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Teaching arrangements

Professor Fung implemented the methods of flipped classroom in a major course for freshmen, DSME1030 Economics for Business Studies I, in the first and second semesters of 2014-15.

Description

The flipped classroom approach, used in all weeks of teaching, was executed in the following manner.

Students were asked to view videos provided by the textbook publisher on difficult and important concepts before going to class. Class time was then devoted to two roughly equal-weight components: a quick recap of the main concepts with Q&A, and class-work time with students working on problems or case studies. A lot of discussion was generated during both components of class.



**Cases and Discussions in Class while Self-learning at Home
with Resources from the Publishers**



Students' feedback

To understand how the students felt about the teaching and learning innovations, two rounds of course evaluation were conducted in December 2014 and April 2015. Six focus-group interviews were held and 14 students participated in the interviews in total. According to their feedback, there were pros and cons to the methods. Some of the advantages and disadvantages are highlighted below.

Advantages

1

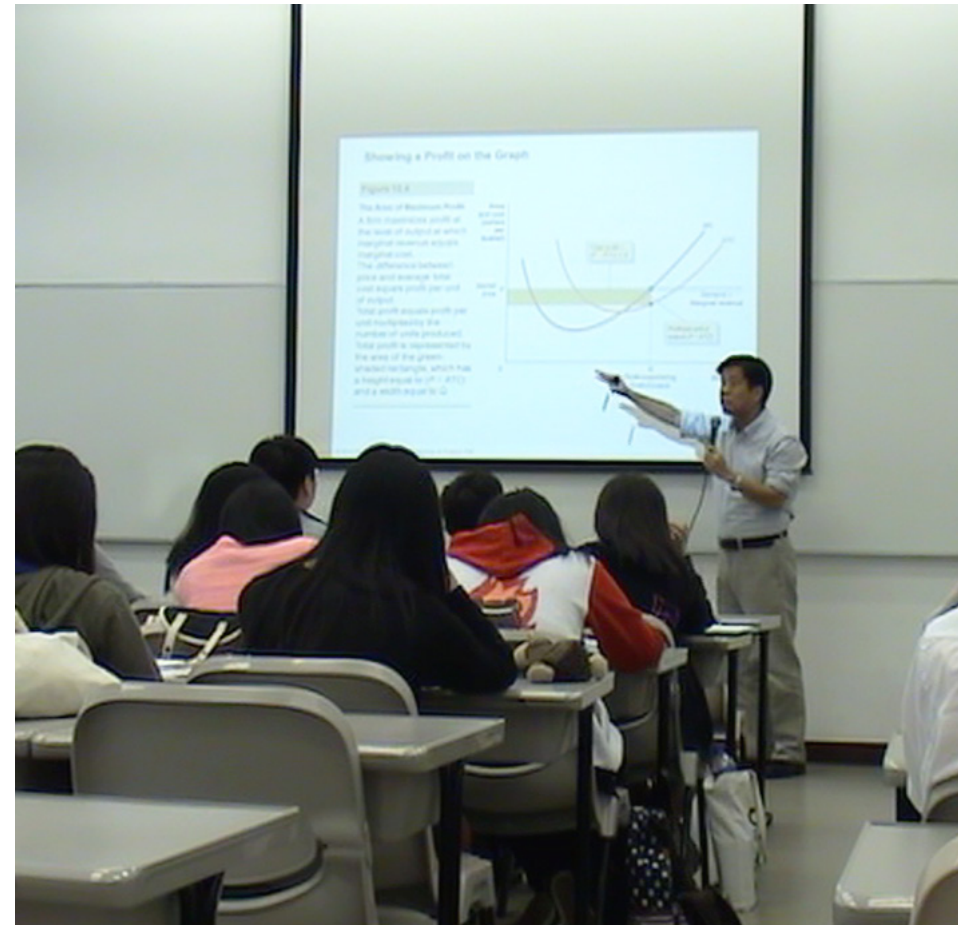
The majority of interviewees agreed that flipped classroom is a more sound approach than traditional teaching because they could expand their knowledge a) by learning before class, b) by participating more in discussion, and c) by greatly developing their ability to reflect on what they have learnt.

2

Interviewees found discussion helpful in three areas. Firstly, students found themselves inspired by other students' viewpoints. Secondly, students liked the chance to participate in the presentation. They thought that communication skills were crucial for business studies students hence they were happy to practice such skills in discussion sessions. Thirdly, some students said that they became more willing to participate in discussion after attending this course although they felt forced to do so at the beginning.

Disadvantages

- 1 Some of the students did not fulfill the requirements of this mode of teaching, that is, they did not watch the videos. Six students admitted they watched videos only in the first a few weeks but did not continue to do so for the rest of the weeks.
- 2 Two students thought the pre-lecture videos were too simple thus did not serve their learning needs.
- 3 According to students, it was difficult to have in-depth discussion in class because the course covered only basic concepts and their applications were usually straightforward and simple.
- 4 Many cases for the case analysis were from the US thus weakened students' understanding of the cases and the enthusiasm for discussion, students commented.



Improvements

Professor Fung realized that motivating students to complete the self-learning part before attending class was essential to the success of this innovative teaching and learning method. Therefore, strategies were implemented to ensure students understand the requirements and fulfill them. These strategies included explaining the rationale of this new approach more explicitly at the beginning of the term, refining the contents of the self-learning resources, as well as introducing more linkages between the home and classroom activities such that students felt the need to complete the former before attending class.