

MICRO CASE STUDIES

Conduct Students' Weekly Readings



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I am teaching **synchronous online** classes. I share **15-20 minute short podcasts (recordings)** on a weekly basis since students complain about the connection issues whilst watching videos. This allows them to listen to my classes wherever they would like to - even when they walk along the beach-

I also share the weekly presentations and readings on LMS. I ask my students to listen to the weekly podcast, go through the presentations and complete their readings; however, **the majority of them do not fulfill these weekly requirements**. Since they come to classes not having read the assigned articles, their engagement in the class discussions is quite low. The ones having read the class materials can go into in-depth discussions, whereas the ones not having read them either remain silent or do not participate and engage sufficiently.

How can I ensure that my students come to the classes having completed their weekly readings?

Approach to Solve the Problem

Upon the request of our instructor, voice recordings, presentations and readings shared via LMS were analyzed by our Instructional Design Consultants. Possible solutions (especially in terms of readings) were suggested and shared with the Instructor of this particular course.

Solution Suggestions



You may consider assigning a manageable amount of reading load to students. It may not be possible for students to read various sources (i.e. presentations, podcasts and different readings) all at the same time since they probably have different reading assignments for other classes as well. That's why it is of paramount importance to ensure that students are given a manageable amount of reading materials. For instance, you may try assigning 1 or 2 reading materials instead of 3-4. It may also be a good idea to consider the page numbers of these particular readings.



You may ask your students to come to the classes having created 1 or 2 questions on analysis and synthesis levels. You may consider having a class discussion on these questions or start a threaded discussion on LMS. This task will not only make students read the assigned materials but also keep them motivated as their points are being discussed in classes. If you are going to initiate a discussion on LMS, it may be a good idea to be occasionally present there.



You may ask students to prepare a half page summary/reflection based on the assigned readings. "What do you understand from this excerpt?", "What is the gist of this article?" or "How does this topic relate to real life?". Such questions can be raised in discussion forums or classes in a design depending on the number of students you have in this particular class.



Weekly assignments could be a part of the formative evaluation, or the readings may be awarded a small percentage.



You may consider highlighting important parts in readings (especially the long ones). Students may benefit from them even if they only read the highlighted parts.



You may consider giving instructions for weekly assigned readings. Instructions such as “Pay close attention to these parts”, “I am wondering about your opinions on this part”, or “You can skip this part”. Such instructions may direct students as they complete their readings making the reading process much more smooth for them.



You may consider creating a design starting with readings continuing in the discussion forums. You may consider having forum discussions by raising questions on the core ideas of the assigned readings. These questions may be personalized ones, helping students integrate the target topics with their lives. This helps enhance learner-learner and learner-content interaction. This also helps to integrate the asynchronous part with the rest of the course.



Feedback from the Instructor

“I have followed some of these suggestions this academic term. I have asked my students to upload mini-summaries on the forum and send me questions. There have been some minor issues so far; however, I will announce it again this week. I hope we will fix these, gradually. I would like to thank you once again for your suggestions. I will be applying these in my Spring Term Classes as well.”