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Teaching for Student Success: Digital Technology: A Hybrid Classroom Environment

In an era when the student population is always plugged into a digital device; day and night, higher education visual communication faculty must rise to meet the digital technology world. Meeting the technological advances of society helps the students and faculty become more engaged, motivated and addresses the trends of the current student population. Students look up to faculty in all components of education and practicality for all fields of studies. As a student, you do not want to be taught something that is obsolete by the time you get out of school or even worse, something that is already obsolete. It is almost guaranteed that all graduates of college will use some type of technology in the workplace. Helping the students feel comfortable with technology in the classroom will make the transition to the digital workplace easier.

Digital technology offers other advantages that go beyond the transition of a digital workplace environment. With a hybrid or completely online learning environment student populations can use a uniquely different set of learning devices and evaluations. In a traditional learning environment, personality characteristics and unique learning devices can help or hinder a student's knowledge and retention of a subject matter. Some students may feel embarrassed discussing reading assignments or lecture topics in front of a class filled full of students. Students should be offered a wide range of expressive commentary in the classroom. With the hybrid learning model, students who are reluctant to speak in class, might feel more comfortable or open in a digital discussion via an online format of discussions, creative work evaluations, or personal opinions.

The hybrid-learning environment also has benefits to the instructor. There are a variety of resources for a course instructor, the abilities to track, understand and develop students, as learners are uniquely different from the traditional classroom techniques. With the hybrid-teaching model there are variety of ways to understand students and their learning characteristics that you do observe or understand in a traditional classroom setting.

I would like to share my experience using a hybrid-learning environment, with the faculty and other participants at the International Conference on Critical Literacy. Currently, all

of my visual communication classes are taught in a hybrid model. In my presentation, I will include screen capture images of an active online learning environment and I will discuss my hybrid learning environment and objectives. I will use case studies to discuss and evaluate students in comparison with a traditional and online learning environment. I will also show how to use the hybrid technology as a way to reach out, create more balance, achieve a higher retention of course materials, objectives and preparation for the visual communication digital workplace environment.