Dreamweaver web design Workshop
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Rationale

Workshop Overview:

This workshop is given in a two week period excluding weekends so ten days overall. Every day there are three hours of instruction. The size of the class is fairly small. The workshop is designed around a project and students will gain knowledge from hands on experience in developing the project. There will also be guided class discussions. The instructor will act as a facilitator to the learning by providing resources and worksheets and by mentoring the students on their projects. At the beginning of each class, the instructor will give step by step instructions and students should follow on their machines. Students are given a lot of freedom in the planning and design of their web site projects.

The core of this workshop is to learn how to plan, design, develop and maintain a website. The learning method applied in this workshop is "learning by doing" or Project Based Learning. To teach the students how to develop a website the instructor will start each class by giving them a short step by step tutorial on a smartboard to guide the students through the software and make them more familiar with it. Students will be working on their own monitors and creating their projects and will be accumulating the knowledge and skills as they go along developing their sites.

What is Project Based Learning?
Project- based learning is a new dynamic way of teaching in which students learn by exploring and working on real-life issues and challenges. This type of active learning motivates students to learn more and obtain deeper knowledge of the subjects being studied (Thomas, 2000).

This enquiry based learning method engages students in applying, questioning and analyzing knowledge. At the same time, developing students skills in critical thinking, communication, collaboration, reasoning, synthesis and resilience (Barron & Darling-Hammond, 2008)

Rationale for Method of Instruction
The reason the PBL method was chosen to instruct this workshop is because it has been proven to be more effective than traditional instruction (Strobel and van Barneveld, 2009). Studies comparing the learning outcomes of Project-based learning and traditional instruction revealed that PBL is a more effective method of teaching when implemented well. PBL was found to increase long-term retention of content, improve problem solving and collaboration skills as well as

motivate students and increase their interest in learning(Walker and Leary, 2009).

Other comparative studies, have discovered many advantages to PBL. One study showed an increase in the students' ability to define problems (Gallagher, Stepien, Rosenthal, 1992). Another study showed an increase in students' ability to support their judgments and reasoning with clear concise arguments (Stepien, Gallagher, & Workman, 1993). A study presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association as cited by (Schwartz, Vye, & Moore, 1998) found an increase in sixth graders ability to plan a project after working on a problem-based challenge.

In addition to designing and creating a project, the workshop includes structured class discussions. This is a form of cooperative learning which is highly encouraged as it is known to provide room for presenting ideas and explanations and eliminating misconceptions that can be addressed mid-project (Barron & Darling-Hammond, 2008). This workshop also incorporates peer evaluation. This is another form of cooperative learning and is described as an opportunity for students to show their work in progress and get feedback from their peers as well as the instructor (Barron & Darling-Hammond, 2008).

The rubric provided gives the students detailed specifications of what to consider on their work products. Students should understand the rubric and use it as a tool for them to use and revisit throughout the project to review their work, evaluate and assess it.

In the future, my intention is to make the workshop available online. The step by step instructions will be videotaped and provided as online video tutorials. This will allow students to work on their own pace at their own time.

In this proposal, the workshop is face to face with lab-based work. This is because I would like to test the materials and the sources of the workshop and to see if the students can follow instructions easily or not. This is a very intense workshop with many instruction hours and it produces a large project in a short time. I would like to make sure students can follow along at such a fast pace and to get the students feedback on the course before making it available online. Another reason this is provided face to face is because some students especially adult students prefer in class instruction.

 Conclusion:

Project based learning is growing in popularity and is considered by some researchers as an effective model for nationwide school reform (Newman, 1995). The model is now widely applied in the medical profession around the world. Other subjects and majors are also adopting the new learning and teaching method.

In this workshop the students gain knowledge while working on a project. They also have class discussions which provides a venue for sharing ideas and views with their peers. This method of instruction has many advantages over traditional instruction. Some of the benefits of this method include an increase in students ability to define problems, support their reasoning, plan projects and increase students interest in learning.

References

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