Successful Strategies: Collaborative Learning for Blended Courses

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Abstract:

What are the best ways to collaborate in a blended environment that includes both onsite and online components? Instructors at The Graduate Center of Marlboro College have found that combining constructivist and situated learning approaches leads to successful collaborations among their adult students, enrolled in internet-focused master’s degree programs. The instructors use role-plays, scenarios, story and case-based learning in both the onsite classroom and online. These situated learning approaches, when combined with constructivist methods such as team projects, virtual mentors, and peer review assignments, allow students of all learning styles and abilities to achieve stronger performance on their portfolio work. This paper will examine all of these approaches as they are applied in these environments, using a variety of synchronous and asynchronous technology tools, including FirstClass Conferencing, Instant Messaging, listservs, and WebBoards, among others.