Creating Significant Learning Environments - Pedro Beltran

Education has become a system where we try to replicate any successful structure, or we are trying to standardized learning with assessments and a repeated cycle every year. Changing our approach is essential to adjust to this new era of social networks, Technology, COVID, and all possible elements that can come along soon. Now students and adults are just looking to give the instructor what he wants instead of looking for Authentic Learning (TEDx Talks, 2012). During my journey at Lamar University-Digital Learning and Leading, I was inspired by Dr. Harapnuik to develop an Innovation Proposal based on Blended learning that we will be built around the Choice, Ownership, Voice, and Authentic Learning approach (COVA), which is directly connected with Creating Significant Learning Environment (CSLE) to inspire and prepare our learners to lead organizational change using technology innovations as a catalyst for enhancing learning (Harapnuik, 2017).

As Dr. Tony Bates said, " learning environment is the total context on which students are working" (ChangSchool, 2015). This is a different approach where we need to focus on HOW we are facilitating instruction and needs to be combined with Douglas Thomas's statement "Learning is easy "(TEDx Talks, 2012). As the person leading the initiative of an Engineering Class using the blended model, I will focus on making Passion, Imagination, and Constraints to be the basic component of the projects that we will develop with Engineering teachers, so they can replicate this process with their students as I am doing it creating/discovering along with my classmates what is an ePortfolio.

The main challenge we will encounter is making teachers feel comfortable providing, Choice, Ownership, and Voice to their students, as most schools have a blueprint that they want to follow and make the teachers the center of the instruction. We will address this situation by making teachers go through the COVA approach to develop their Engineering courses; this will not just be a way to make them feel comfortable, allowing students to explore, but also it will develop a growth mindset among themselves.

Creating Significant Learning Environments will impact my school in a positive way as this past school year, everything was done through the computers (Canvas) to the point that even the teachers were stationary at their desks leading the instruction, and every student was completing the checklist for the day to avoid interactions in the classroom; The stamina was significantly low and it was an environment of compliance and uncertainty. I have foreseen maintaining a healthy space, incorporating different stations and a more student-led environment, which will increase the stamina, engagement, and growth of our students. Our Engineering teachers will primarily adopt this and share it with the rest of our staff members to identify the influencers who can start working with our pilot program.

Adopting a clear focus of what we want to achieve with our students will be our new culture of learning. It is up to us to change the approach we have with the learning by modeling how to become facilitators instead of the center of expertise. All of these must happen for students to find learning natural and effortless, where they will be able to create in the face of obstacles (TEDx Talks, 2012)

My perspective has changed significantly in the past 3 months on my approach to learning, the work of my teachers, and the environment that should reign in our classrooms, which is something that I have not realize in the past 10 years in education (as we stick with our own ways until someone proves you wrong or not so effective). I am personally developing my own significant learning environments with Lamar colleagues, and we have the opportunity to use the COVA approach and the ideas in "A New Culture of Learning" to become an agent of change for my school. I know that my desire to change education is still strong as it was 10 years ago, but the difference is that now, I do know where and how to start.

References

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