



Flipped Instruction: Breakthroughs in Research and Practice

Information Resources Management Association, ed.
IGI Global, 2017

Book Review

Tags: flipped classrooms | flipped instruction | pedagogical strategies

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Date Reviewed: July 3, 2018

In many traditional classrooms, the teacher uses lectures to transmit course content to students. A “flipped” classroom is one in which a teacher presents lectures and delivers other course content outside of class (for example, via video- or audio-recorded and written instruction) and prioritizes activities, discussion, and higher-level analytical thinking during class time. *Flipped Instruction: Breakthroughs in Resource and Practice* offers readers the latest theories, strategies, and pedagogies on flipping classrooms. Bringing together thirty-seven contributors from seven countries, thirty-two colleges and universities, four high schools, and one institute, it presents “a comprehensive collection of research on the latest findings” on flipped teaching and learning in order to provide “researchers, practitioners, and all audiences with a complete understanding of the development of applications and concepts surrounding these critical issues.” (ix)

Each contributor operates under the assumption that flipping a classroom in a professional and pedagogically informed manner begets educational gains that far exceed the costs of time investment, technological learning curves, and pedagogical challenges. In chapter 4, David Starr-Glass makes a memorable statement about the benefits by explaining that a flipped classroom “changes a teacher-centered process to a student-centered one. The ‘sage on the stage’ becomes the ‘guide on the side,’ with a shift from *transmission* to learners to a *flow among and between* learners.” (51, emphasis in original).

This book addresses nearly every domain where flipped teaching has made significant inroads: K-12 education, higher education, online, ESL, and foreign language education. Its twenty-four chapters are organized into four main sections. Section 1 (Chapters 1-6) addresses course

design methodology and how the latest pedagogies impact flipped classrooms. Section 2 (Chapters 7-12) discusses the unique challenges and opportunities of flipping ESL and foreign language learning classrooms. Section 3 (Chapters 13-20) considers flipped instruction in higher education. Section 4 (Chapters 21-24) offers the latest curriculum developments in K-12 education.

Flipped Instruction accomplishes its goal of providing educators with a comprehensive resource on the latest research in theory and practice. It also strikes a nice balance between being academically-oriented and practitioner-oriented. Academics will enjoy the book's emphasis on new theories, pedagogies, and educational innovations, and practitioners will appreciate the takeaways from educational experiments, the rich repository of resources, and the activities to try in the classroom. That stated, the book would serve its readers better if it were more learner-friendly, an ironic weakness since it was written by expert teachers who value learner-centered education. Perhaps under the watchful eye of a single editor, it would exhibit stronger collaboration between authors, be better organized, and would avoid needless repetition (for example, an unusually high number of authors reviewed the history of flipped classrooms).

Teachers of theology and religion who appreciate flipped instruction or who practice it as a pedagogical strategy will appreciate the many resources that *Flipped Instruction* provides in course design, Internet and computer software ideas, and learning activities. However, the book is not a primer for the uninitiated in flipped teaching and learning. A different book would be a better introduction to the subject.

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