

Online Education vs. Face to Face Classrooms

Over these past few years the question has remained up for debate whether an online education is better than face to face classrooms and vice versa. Would it be reasonable to say that online education has beneficial qualities that can't be provided by face to face classrooms? Face to face classrooms provide students with a great experience. Online education does not discriminate against those of different skin color, minority status/class etc. in that There is more than one way to go about the issue at hand. Face to face classrooms arguably are the best form of being able to receive a college education and degree.

In the CSU Stanislaus annual forum, guest speaker Dr. John Riggs states, "Students have a better experience in a face to face classroom setting versus taking an online course." He argues that while online education has some benefits it still has its flaws. I agree with this because it's true that online education has its flaws, some of which may make you question the validity of it overall. In short, would you judge the credibility of a person's online degree or knowledge based on the reasoning that they could have easily cheated on their course work or tests? In theory the same could be said for a classroom setting, but at the very least when in a classroom students are monitored by their instructors whereas in an online course setting, essentially students can't be monitored when they are taking a test.

In an online article titled "Online teaching's disconnect", the author John Villasenor writes, "A course is also made effective by the unscripted interactions that occur as students gather before and after the class, and by the simple fact that the physical act of getting to class requires at least some

investment of time and energy”(Villasenor 1). I think that what Villasenor is trying to say is that students are more engaged when in a classroom setting, thus greater efforts are made by the students overall. Being able to see your friends before and after class is another factor that plays a key role in face to face classrooms. The reason for this is simply because of the competitiveness feel that is present in a classroom. Students will strive for better grades if they see that their friends are doing better than they are in class. The same can't be said for online courses where students really don't put an effort in their work since they have a small amount of motivation.

Shenila Momin writes, “Online instruction is a form of distance education that is delivered over the Internet”(Momin 1). What the author is stating here is that students taking an online course could not possibly experience the same things that other students would in a classroom. Meaning, when taking an online course students are somewhat distanced from their instructors which could take a toll on students who are more familiar with being able to interact with their instructor in person. Having the ability to see your instructor in person and ask questions as well could alone be a good enough reason to choose face to face classrooms rather than online courses.

There will be people who argue that online courses are what enabled them to receive a higher education than what they originally had to begin with and would not have otherwise. Yes this is true; there is a small list of benefits that go along with receiving an education online. One of these benefits and perhaps the most notable would be the cost of commuting would no longer be an issue. You would no longer have to pay for gas for every day that you commute to your college. Another benefit would be that you wouldn't be discriminated against whether it be for your skin color or whether it be your social rank (lower, middle, higher class).

Ellen Baker writes, “In many studies comparing outcomes for undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in traditional versus online classes, the quality for both formats is similar”(Baker 2). Different studies have been made regarding traditional versus online classes and similarly different conclusions have been drawn from these studies. Traditional classes used to be the norm, but now online classes have changed that. I believe part of the reason that people prefer traditional classes over online classes is that some people just aren’t ready to change what they have been used to doing for over a decade. Which is go to a classroom and receive instruction from a teacher in person.

W. Sean Chamberlin writes, “Formative assessments provide opportunities for immediate feedback on student learning and learning styles, and they allow an instructor to modify the approach to achieving learning outcomes”(Chamberlin 2). In an online course, students may or may not be able to focus on their assignments. This means that even if instructors could modify their approaches to achieving learning outcomes it would do little in helping the students. When taking an online class, students can easily be distracted from their work since they are at their computer. This of course presents a problem in the system of learning from online courses. Also, it doesn’t seem like a problem that can easily be fixed. Students that are in a classroom are typically told by their instructors to focus on the task at hand when they are not paying attention to the lecture, but no one can tell a student who is staring at a screen to pay attention.

Ultimately, the benefits from online education do not outweigh the negatives that go along with it. Similarly, those benefits do not outweigh the positives from a traditional classroom setting.

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