

The Impact of Technology-Based Instruction in Undergraduate Tax Courses

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ABSTRACT

Mobile technology-savvy, techno-hungry post-millennial students' needs for a different approach to learning, and the positive impact of technology-based instruction have been extensively discussed in academic literature over a number of years. Classroom response systems (CRS), presentation software, and tax return preparation software are positively regarded by students and instructors alike, dependent upon the mode of use. Accordingly, this study examines the impact of combining these systems of technology-based instruction in an undergraduate taxation course. Results in this paper report students' enthusiasm for the use of technology and indicate successful learning attainments, especially in the use of tax return preparation software. In this longitudinal study, instructor prepared slide decks and a CRS system in combination with two different, interchanged tax preparation software products were used over three different semesters. Students indicate that each of the chosen tax preparation software products was sufficiently detailed to permit the successful achievement of the course' planned learning outcomes. Frequency of software use, clear learning tasks, and internal tutorial pop-ups were deemed important to students for achieving the designated learning outcomes, while merely practicing on tax preparation software as a delivery medium was inadequate for learning theoretical and conceptual material. In summary, this paper documents gains in student learning through utilizing questions in a CRS format, and found that instructor explanations were critical to maximizing student learning when using this combination of technology based instruction. Implications are strong that the strategic and standardized use of these modes of technology in a series of accounting courses addresses the learning propensities of post-millennials, fosters higher levels of student performance and could lead to higher accounting student retention and recruitment results in attracting Generation –Z.

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