

Flipped Classroom: Student & Teacher Attitudes

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Defining the Flipped Classroom Model

The concept of the flipped classroom represents a significant pedagogical shift, fundamentally inverting the traditional educational paradigm where lecture delivery occurs in class and homework or practice is completed outside of class. In the flipped model, direct instruction, typically delivered via recorded lectures, readings, or curated digital content, is shifted to the student's independent study time before class. This strategic inversion liberates valuable in-class time, transforming the classroom environment into a dynamic space dedicated to **active learning**, collaborative problem-solving, discussion, and practical application of the foundational knowledge acquired previously. Understanding attitudes toward this model necessitates recognizing that the flipped classroom is not merely about video consumption, but rather about the structured utilization of class time for higher-order cognitive tasks.

A well-implemented flipped classroom relies heavily on two interdependent phases. The pre-class phase demands student accountability for preparation, requiring them to engage critically with the assigned material to build a foundational understanding. Failure to complete this essential preparatory work often compromises the efficacy of the entire model, leading to negative student attitudes rooted in feelings of confusion or unpreparedness during the in-class activities. Conversely, the in-class phase mandates a corresponding shift in the instructor's role, transitioning from the central knowledge disseminator to a facilitator, mentor, and guide. This instructional shift allows for targeted interventions, personalized feedback, and the deployment of complex, engaging activities such as case studies, debates, and group projects that require immediate application of knowledge, thereby maximizing the cognitive benefits afforded by the synchronous learning environment.

The core psychological appeal of the flipped classroom lies in its alignment with constructivist learning theories, emphasizing that learners actively build knowledge rather than passively receiving it. This approach is intended to foster deeper conceptual understanding, improve retention, and enhance critical thinking skills, outcomes that are often difficult to achieve solely through traditional lecture formats. However, the success of the flip is highly contingent upon the attitudes of both students and instructors, which are shaped by perceptions of workload, technological competence, clarity of expectations, and the perceived usefulness of the in-class activities. Therefore, measuring and analyzing these attitudes provides crucial insight into the sustainability and effectiveness of the pedagogical innovation across various educational contexts and disciplines.

Theoretical Foundations of Flipped Learning Acceptance

Attitudes toward the flipped classroom model are not formed in a vacuum; rather, they are rooted in established psychological and educational theories concerning motivation and technology

acceptance. One highly relevant framework is the **Self-Determination Theory (SDT)**, which posits that intrinsic motivation and well-being are enhanced when three basic psychological needs are met: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. The flipped classroom model inherently attempts to boost autonomy by allowing students control over the pace and timing of their initial content consumption. When students perceive that the pre-class materials effectively prepare them for challenging in-class work, their sense of competence increases, leading to more positive affective responses toward the learning structure. Conversely, if the pre-class materials are confusing or the in-class tasks feel irrelevant, competence is undermined, resulting in frustration and negative attitudes.

Another critical lens through which to analyze attitudes is the **Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)**. Since the flipped classroom relies heavily on technology for content delivery (e.g., video platforms, learning management systems), student acceptance is strongly predicted by two key factors: perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEOU). Perceived usefulness refers to the student's belief that the flipped model enhances their learning performance and outcomes. If students feel the flexibility and personalized attention translate into better grades or deeper knowledge, their attitude toward the model improves significantly. Perceived ease of use relates to how simple and straightforward the technology and structure of the course are to navigate. Technical difficulties, poorly organized online resources, or confusing instructions can severely diminish PEOU, regardless of how useful the student might find the approach conceptually, leading to resistance and unfavorable attitudes.

Furthermore, attitudes are influenced by the degree of **cognitive load** imposed by the structure. While the flipped model aims to reduce extraneous cognitive load during class by moving foundational instruction outside, it often increases the preparatory load. Students who are accustomed to passive learning may initially perceive the increased responsibility for pre-class work as an overwhelming burden, manifesting as resistance or resentment toward the course design. Positive attitudes are fostered when instructors carefully manage the preparatory content, ensuring it is concise, focused, and directly relevant to the high-value activities performed during class time, thereby justifying the initial investment of student effort and demonstrating a clear return on their cognitive investment.

Positive Student Attitudes: Engagement and Autonomy

A significant body of research indicates that when implemented effectively, the flipped classroom fosters highly positive student attitudes, particularly concerning engagement and control over the learning process. Students frequently report enhanced engagement because the in-class time is dedicated to interactive, meaningful activities rather than passive listening. This shift satisfies the need for active participation and provides immediate relevance to the material, transforming abstract concepts into tangible problems. The opportunity to work collaboratively with peers and

receive immediate, targeted feedback from the instructor during the application phase is often cited as a major positive factor, leading to a perception that classroom time is utilized more efficiently and productively than in traditional settings.

The element of **autonomy** is a powerful driver of positive attitudes. Students appreciate the flexibility afforded by the pre-class delivery mechanism, allowing them to pause, rewind, or re-watch instructional videos according to their individual needs and preferred learning pace. This self-regulated learning environment caters to diverse learning styles and schedules, empowering the student to manage their own knowledge acquisition. For high-achieving students, this means they can accelerate through familiar content; for students requiring more time, it allows for necessary repetition without the social pressure associated with slowing down a live lecture. This perception of control over the learning flow contributes significantly to a sense of ownership and accountability, reinforcing positive psychological engagement with the course material and the pedagogical structure itself.

Moreover, positive attitudes are often correlated with the perception of improved **competence and mastery**. Because the in-class sessions are structured around complex problem-solving, students feel they are actively applying and testing their knowledge under supportive guidance. The instructor is readily available to address misconceptions instantly, preventing students from practicing errors--a common pitfall of traditional homework. This immediate feedback loop builds confidence and reduces anxiety related to difficult subjects. When students successfully navigate challenging application tasks, they attribute their success, in part, to the enabling structure of the flipped classroom, thus solidifying a favorable disposition toward the model as an effective mechanism for deep learning and skill development.

Challenges and Negative Student Perceptions

Despite the documented benefits, the flipped classroom model is frequently met with resistance and negative attitudes, particularly during initial implementation. The primary source of student dissatisfaction often revolves around the perception of an **increased workload** and the blurring of boundaries between class time and homework time. Students accustomed to traditional formats may view the required pre-class preparation--which effectively replaces the lecture--as mandatory homework that was previously unnecessary, leading to the belief that the course demands significantly more time investment than conventionally structured courses of similar credit value. This perception of excessive demand can generate stress and resentment, particularly if the pre-class content is lengthy, poorly segmented, or not directly aligned with the in-class activities.

Another critical challenge stems from the issue of **student preparedness and accountability**. If a significant number of students fail to complete the required preparatory work, the in-class activities cannot proceed as planned. This lack of preparation creates a ripple effect: unprepared students

feel confused and frustrated during the application phase, while prepared students feel penalized by having to wait for remedial explanations or by participating in activities that fail to challenge them sufficiently. This disparity in preparedness generates negative attitudes among both groups, often leading to a general critique that the flipped model is disorganized or inefficient. Addressing this requires robust accountability measures, such as mandatory pre-class quizzes or integrated readiness checks, to ensure baseline knowledge acquisition before synchronous learning begins.

Furthermore, negative attitudes can arise from technical difficulties or resistance to the core instructional shift. Students may express frustration with the quality or accessibility of the technology used, ranging from poor video production quality to unreliable Learning Management System (LMS) navigation. More fundamentally, some students simply prefer the passive role of listening to a live lecture, finding the constant demand for active engagement stressful or tiring. They may perceive the shift from lecture to facilitator as a reduction in direct instruction, leading to the belief that the instructor is performing less teaching, thereby undermining the perceived value of the course tuition. Overcoming this resistance requires clear communication about the pedagogical rationale and demonstrating that the instructor's role has merely transformed, not diminished, focusing now on high-value, individualized guidance.

Instructor Attitudes and Pedagogical Shifts

Instructor attitudes are equally decisive in the success and sustainability of the flipped classroom model. Initial attitudes among faculty are often characterized by a mix of apprehension and cautious optimism. The apprehension typically stems from the substantial **initial investment of time and resources** required to redesign the course structure, create high-quality video content, and develop engaging, application-based in-class activities. This preparatory phase is significantly more demanding than updating traditional lecture notes, often leading to feelings of burnout or resistance among faculty already facing heavy teaching loads. Instructors must also overcome the psychological barrier of relinquishing the traditional central role of the lecturer, which can be linked to professional identity.

However, as instructors gain experience, their attitudes generally transition toward strong satisfaction, particularly when they witness improved student engagement and learning outcomes. The primary psychological reward for the instructor is the transformation of the classroom dynamic. Faculty report greater job satisfaction derived from spending class time interacting meaningfully with students, addressing individual learning gaps, and facilitating complex conceptual discussions, rather than simply delivering information. This shift allows the instructor to act as a subject matter expert in a coaching capacity, fostering stronger professional relationships with students and providing a deeper sense of pedagogical purpose. This positive feedback loop--seeing tangible evidence of deeper student learning--reinforces the instructor's commitment to the flipped model.

Successful long-term adoption requires instructors to develop new competencies, moving beyond content delivery to become expert designers of active learning experiences. Positive instructor attitudes are closely tied to the perception of control over the new environment and confidence in their ability to manage the dynamic, unpredictable nature of application-based class sessions. Faculty development programs are crucial in fostering these positive attitudes, not only by providing technical training for video production but, more importantly, by offering pedagogical training focused on facilitating collaborative work, managing group dynamics, and developing effective formative assessment strategies that are appropriate for the active learning environment. Without institutional support for this professional transformation, instructor attitudes are likely to remain strained due to the perceived increase in workload without commensurate support or recognition.

The Role of Technology and Preparation in Attitude Formation

The technological infrastructure supporting the flipped classroom model plays an undeniable and crucial role in shaping both student and instructor attitudes. For students, the usability, reliability, and quality of the technology directly impact the perceived ease of use (PEOU). If instructional videos are poorly produced (e.g., low audio quality, confusing visual aids) or if the Learning Management System (LMS) is difficult to navigate, the resulting frustration erodes positive attitudes toward the entire course structure. High-quality, professionally produced, and easily accessible digital resources are prerequisites for a positive experience, ensuring that students focus their cognitive energy on the content itself rather than on overcoming technological hurdles.

Furthermore, the effectiveness of the pre-class preparation is intrinsically linked to attitude formation. A common negative attitude arises when students feel that the pre-class videos are excessively long or that they simply replicate traditional lectures without leveraging the benefits of the medium (e.g., interactivity, visual demonstrations). Effective preparation material must be chunked into manageable segments, clearly articulate learning objectives, and contain embedded activities or checks for understanding to ensure active engagement. When students perceive the preparatory work as efficient, relevant, and directly supportive of the high-value in-class activities, their attitude shifts from viewing preparation as a burden to seeing it as an essential, valuable component of their learning trajectory.

For instructors, technology attitude is often related to perceived efficiency and support. While the initial technical burden of content creation is high, positive attitudes emerge when technology streamlines the ongoing management of the course. Tools that automate grading of readiness checks, track student progress on pre-class materials, and facilitate communication can mitigate the increased administrative workload inherent in managing a more complex course structure. Institutional provision of reliable video hosting, editing software, and technical support staff significantly buffers the instructor against frustration, allowing them to focus on pedagogical design

rather than technical troubleshooting, thereby reinforcing a positive disposition toward the flipped model as a sustainable teaching practice.

Institutional Support and Environmental Factors

The broader institutional environment acts as a powerful moderator of attitudes toward the flipped classroom for both students and faculty. Institutional support, manifested through explicit policies and resource allocation, signals the value placed on pedagogical innovation. When universities provide adequate funding for faculty professional development, specifically targeting training in active learning strategies and technology utilization, instructor confidence and enthusiasm significantly increase. This support must extend beyond initial training to include ongoing communities of practice where faculty can share effective strategies and troubleshoot challenges, mitigating the sense of isolation often experienced by early adopters.

Environmental factors, such as classroom design and class size, also impact attitudes. Flipped learning is optimized in environments conducive to collaboration and movement, such as rooms with flexible seating and accessible technology. Trying to implement a highly interactive flipped model in a rigid, fixed-seating lecture hall can severely limit the types of activities possible, leading to frustration among students and instructors who perceive the structural constraints as undermining the model's intent. Similarly, extremely large class sizes pose a significant challenge to the core premise of the flip--personalized attention and immediate feedback--making it difficult for instructors to transition effectively from lecturer to facilitator, thereby negatively impacting both instructor efficacy and student satisfaction with the level of guidance provided.

Finally, institutional communication regarding the purpose and benefits of the flipped classroom is essential for shaping positive student attitudes. If students encounter the model without clear justification, they are more likely to interpret the demanding structure negatively. Institutions that proactively explain the pedagogical rationale--highlighting the shift toward deeper learning, critical thinking, and enhanced interaction--help frame the model as an improvement rather than simply an increased workload. When the administration publicly recognizes and rewards faculty who successfully adopt and innovate within the flipped framework, it validates the effort involved and fosters a culture receptive to ongoing pedagogical evolution.

Measuring and Improving Attitudes Toward Flipped Learning

To ensure the long-term success of the flipped classroom, educators must systematically measure and monitor attitudes, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative assessment often involves validated psychometric instruments designed to gauge student perceptions of usefulness, ease of use, satisfaction, and motivation within the flipped environment. These surveys typically employ Likert scales to measure the intensity of agreement or disagreement across various

dimensions, providing measurable benchmarks for comparison across semesters or different course sections. Key areas for measurement include student self-reported preparedness, perception of in-class time efficiency, and belief in the model's contribution to their overall learning outcomes.

Qualitative data, gathered through focus groups, open-ended survey questions, and reflective journals, provides the necessary depth to understand the underlying reasons for observed attitudes. For instance, while a survey might reveal a low score for "perceived ease of use," a focus group can pinpoint the precise source of difficulty--such as a specific platform interface or poor video organization--allowing for targeted instructional improvements. Collecting detailed feedback allows instructors to identify potential disconnects between their pedagogical intentions and the students' lived experience, facilitating necessary adjustments to content delivery, pacing, and activity design to better align the course structure with student preferences and needs.

Strategies for improving attitudes often focus on enhancing the student experience and demonstrating the value proposition clearly. This includes:

Enhancing Accountability: Implementing low-stakes, mandatory pre-class quizzes that ensure preparation while signaling the importance of the preparatory phase.

Optimizing Content: Ensuring all pre-class videos are concise, highly engaging, and directly linked to the application tasks performed in class.

Justifying the Flip: Explicitly dedicating the first few class sessions to explaining the pedagogical rationale, demonstrating how the flipped time is used for activities that cannot be achieved in a traditional lecture, thereby validating the increased preparation effort.

Providing Support: Offering clear technical support channels and ensuring instructors are highly visible and available during in-class activities to provide immediate, personalized guidance.

By continuously measuring attitudes and responding adaptively to feedback, educational institutions can ensure that the implementation of the flipped classroom is optimized for positive affective and cognitive outcomes, transforming initial resistance into enthusiastic engagement.