

Student engagement in a university LMS amid campus closure: A comparative analysis

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Universities across the globe responded to the declaration of COVID-19 as a global pandemic by closing their campuses. Oftentimes universities already used an established learning management system (LMS), which had supported blended learning (a combination of face-to-face and online learning), to facilitate online learning during campus closure. LMSs are routinely able to capture student engagement (SE) data by using a range of quantitative metrics. Shifting students from blended learning to online-only learning would presumably see an increase in SE within LMSs, but this assumption remains untested. This study compares SE within the LMS of consenting and deidentified undergraduate students (n = 479) at the University of Adelaide across both semesters of 2020. The campus of the University of Adelaide was closed for most of semester 1 and open for most of semester 2 of 2020, so this study juxtaposes SE in blended learning to SE in online learning. Quantitative data collected includes time spent on the LMS, number of discussion board contributions, assignment submission status, assignment grades and quiz scores, all associated to participant demographic data. Implications about the importance and characteristics of SE in online contexts are discussed.