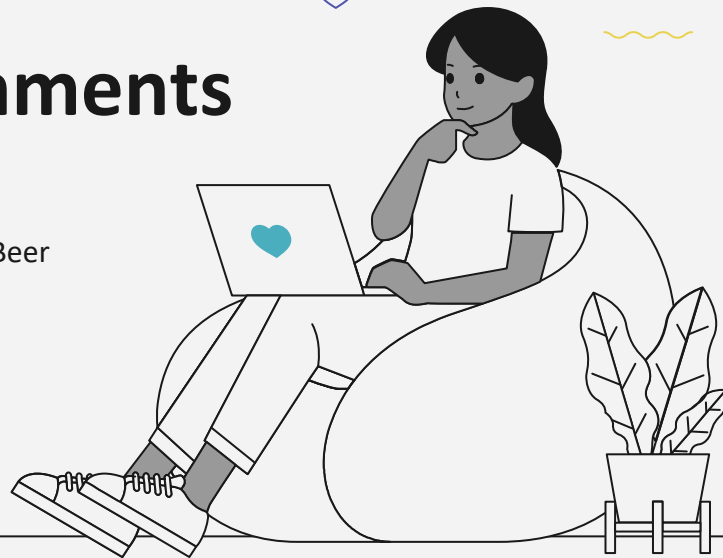# The Successful Implementation of a Credit-Bearing Readiness Activity Used to Enhance Personal Learning Environments

Robert Maribe Branch, Hyewon Lee, Aviann Morris, and Christelle de Beer

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F1RST

Generation University Student

Spoiler alert: I wasn't prepared

Problem

Lecturers at UGA often **consume valuable instructional time** at the beginning of a course or unit of study **explaining** the rules, expectations, and structure of the course, even before having an opportunity to introduce new content related to the subject matter.

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Reason

...Loading...

… because students are often **unprepared** with the necessary knowledge and skills that are prerequisites to be successful in the course or unit of study.

Goal

+ Introduce an asynchronous online learning activity that **prepares** students to effectively participate in a module of study **before** presenting new content.
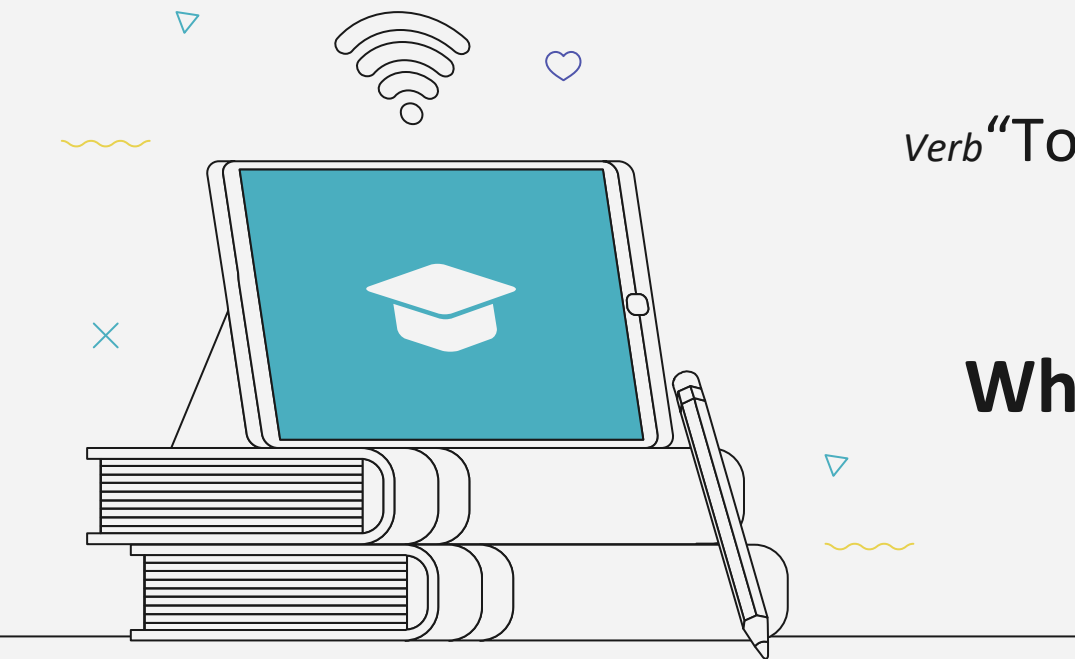
+ **Readiness Activity**
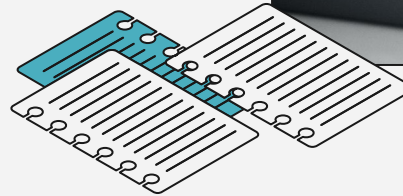
Adj. "To be in a suitable state for an action or situation"

Verb "To prepare someone for an activity on purpose"

What does 'ready' even mean?

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The ways to readiness

...>

Exploring

+ Reviewing the semester plan
+ Navigating the module site

...>

Learning

+ Reviewing the module content
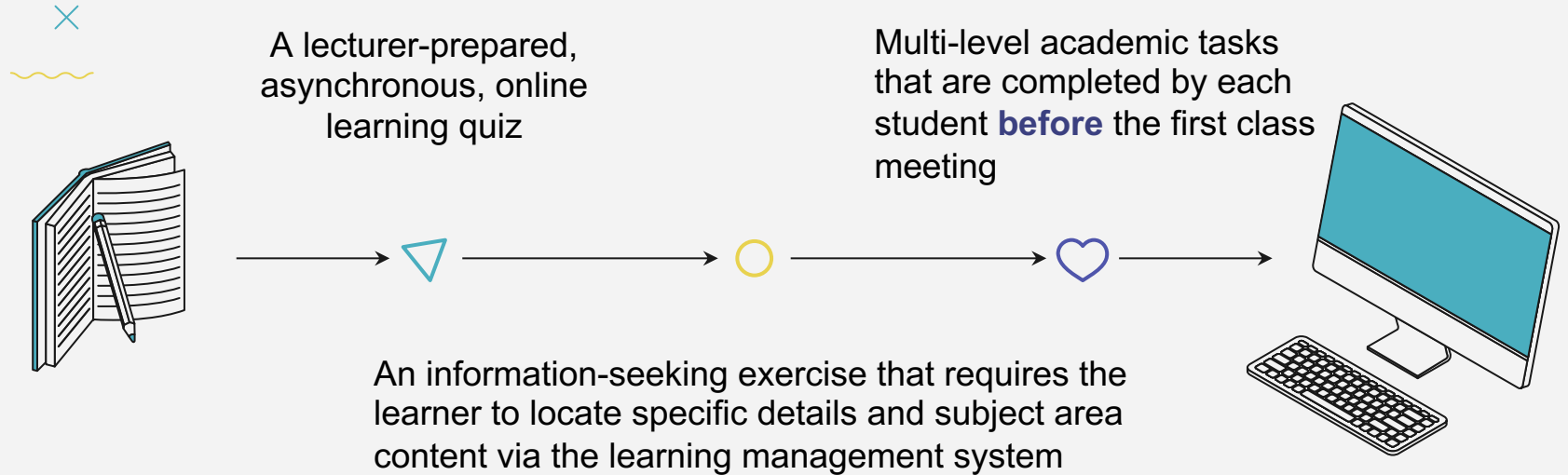+ Reviewing the required reading

...>

Doing

+ Practice the functions of the LMS
+ Reflecting on learning XP and goals

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What does the readiness activity look like?

A lecturer-prepared, asynchronous, online learning quiz

Multi-level academic tasks that are completed by each student **before** the first class meeting

An information-seeking exercise that requires the learner to locate specific details and subject area content via the learning management system

Preview of the readiness activity

PREVIEW EDITION

This is the Preview Edition of the *Readiness Activity*. **The purpose of this assignment is to survey your readiness for actively participating in this course. The items contained in this Preview Edition are exactly the same as the items in the actual** *Readiness Activity.* **Therefore, all items included in this Preview Edition will appear in the actual** *Readiness Activity.*

Readiness Activity: Part 1

Directions

The information required to complete this assignment is available from the:

1. Course syllabus
2. eLC course website

Note:

a. Part 1 contains 25 items.
b. Each item is worth 0.2 points.
c. You are allowed to repeat this *Readiness Activity* as many times as you desire **until the due date**.
d. Your highest score will be recorded in the course Gradebook.

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Sample – Multiple Choice

Which of the following is one of the goals of this course?

    a.   Synthesize a lesson plan for a class

    b.   Analyze the benefits of a student-centered environment

    c.   Apply an interactive planning process to the design of learning resources

    d.   Implement instructional design in an informal learning environment

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Sample – True Flase

According to Branch (2018a), which of the following is *True*?

a. Instruction is only one component of [the educational] system, and design must consider other parts of the system and how they affect variables related to student performance.

b. Instructional design for training programs is based on the fundamental assumption that the purpose of training is to move a trainee from being dependent on the instructor to becoming independent of the instructor.

c. Students are required to familiarize themselves with expectations for behavior in order to create supportive and thriving learning communities.

d. Regardless of how an instructional design process is represented, there are seven characteristics that are present in almost all instructional design efforts.

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Sample – Short-answer

1. Did you have any familiarity with ADDIE prior to registering for this course?

2. Describe any prior formal online learning experiences.

3. What do you consider essential for any course to be effective?

4. What should be avoided in order to make any course effective?

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Sample – Short-answer

Did you have any familiarity with ADDIE prior to registering for this course?
• I learned a little bit about ADDIE in Foundations course in the past Fall.
• I attended the IDD conference in August, prior to being accepted at UGA, and was introduced, briefly, to ADDIE there.
• somewhat, yes. from other conferences and courses I have taken
• I heard the ADDIE a lot but I don't know exactly.
• I have learned ADDIE model in one of my undergraduate courses, but I am not sure that it is enough to say "I know ADDIE".
• Yes. Dr. Branch was invited to the Doctoral Seminar to give a lecture about his research, and he introduced ADDIE in his speech. I also got to know about ADDIE in the book of "Instructional Design Knowledge Base", which was a required textbook for the Foundations class.
• I believe we touched on it in Project Management (At least I hope we did since it was just last semester)
• A little bit.

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Implementation

Start
Required to complete the Readiness activity before the first class meeting
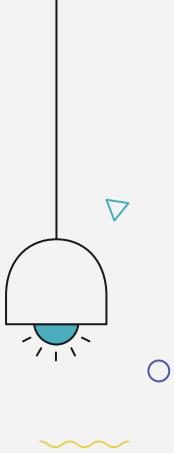
Repeat
Unlimited submissions

Marks
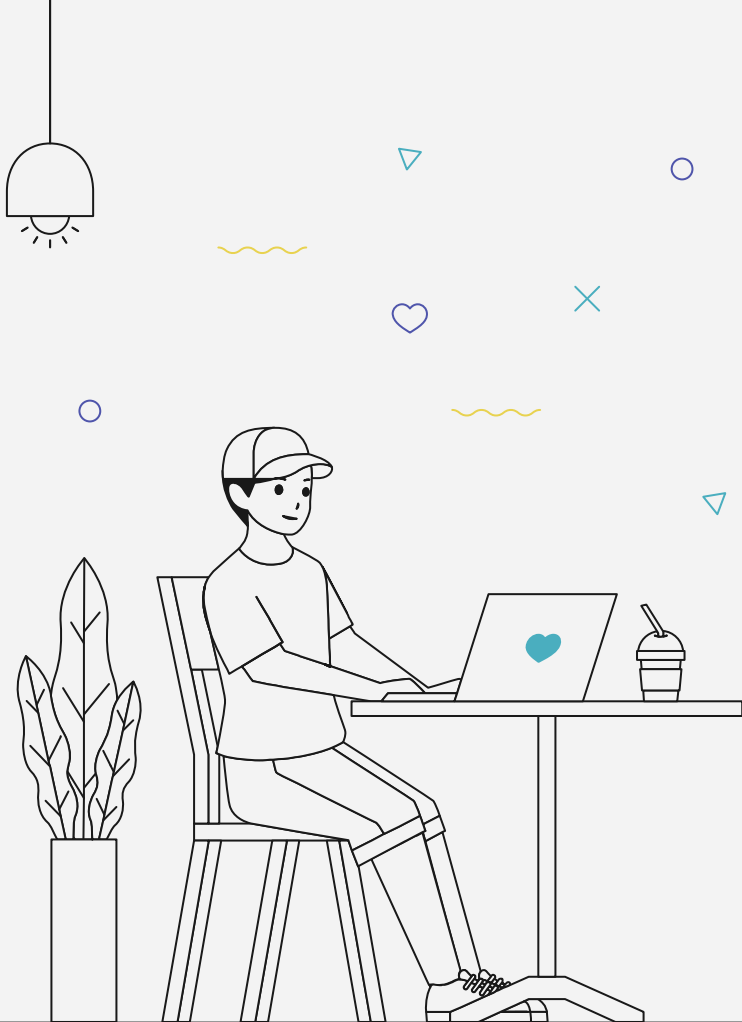Highest score among all attempts

Instructions
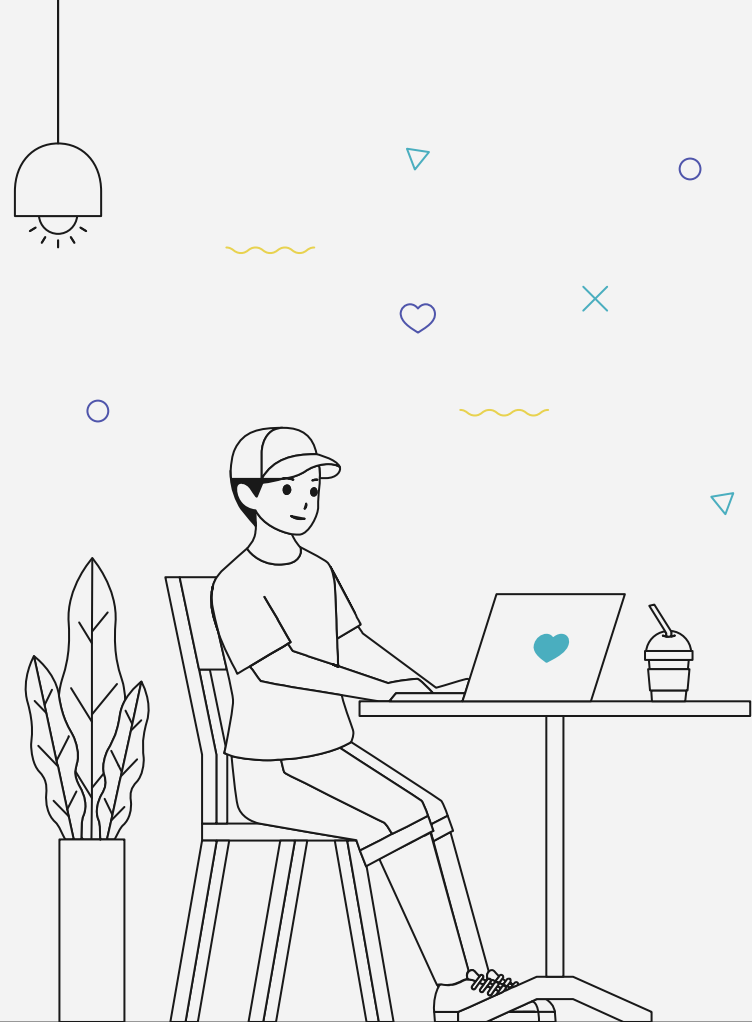Students were directed to review the preview edition

It works

But... don't take my word for it, let's look at the data

The study

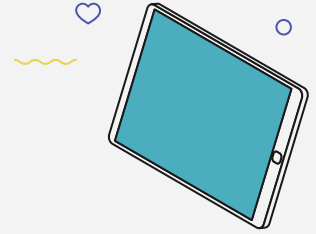Master's students enrolled at a large public university in the southeastern United States.

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The study

Data collected from 6 semesters (N = 111)

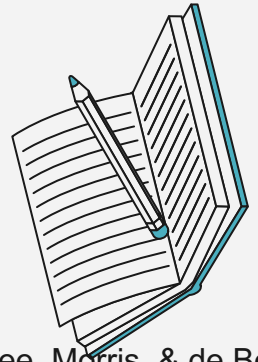| Asynchronous course #1	Spring 2021	N = 23
	Fall 2021	N = 20
	Spring 2022	N = 15
	Fall 2022	N = 23
Asynchronous course #2	Summer 2021	N = 13
	Summer 2022	N = 17

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Data collection

Readiness activity score
The final score of all attempts

Final grades for the course
Final grade of the module

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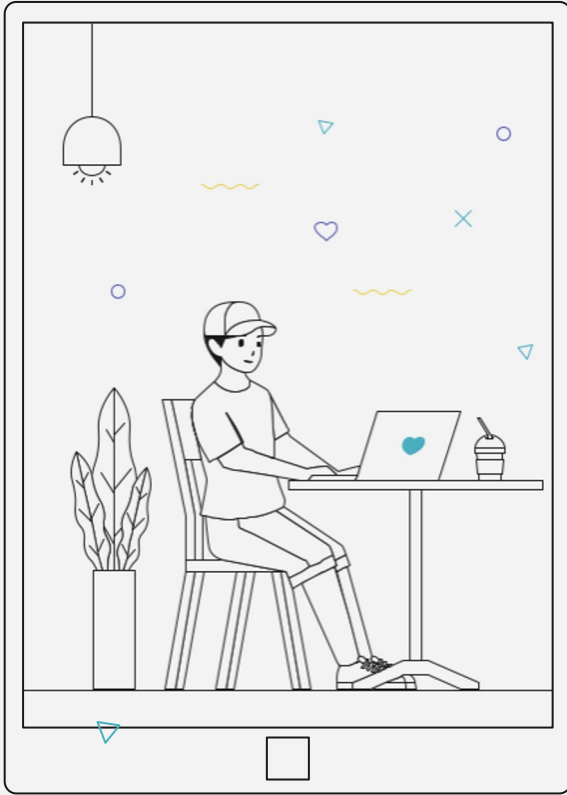
What were the results?

+ The student's Readiness Activity were found to have moderate positive correlations with their final grades *(r = .57, p < .001)*

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Suggestions

+ Design modules in a way that helps all students, especially first-year students, to become more **prepared**.

+ Experiment with the readiness activity to help orientate the student and be more prepared

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