

Adjustments Made in Students Delivery of Project Results in Undergraduate and Graduate Courses Due to Covid-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

In spring 2020, this instructor was teaching an upper division undergraduate thermodynamic course with high enrollment and a graduate course in the same subject with much lower enrolment. Typically, team projects had been assigned in both courses in the past. In the undergraduate course, students were assigned a complex design problem and were asked to work together in teams of four or five students to complete the projects. In the graduate course, teams of two or three students were formed to work on research projects. During the spring break, in March 2020, the university decided to switch from face to face instruction to virtual instruction due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. The spring break was extended for one week in order for the faculty prepare for on-line instruction, and a few days were added to the end of semester. Social distancing was encouraged to prevent the spread of virus. This made it much more difficult for students to work together on team projects. Therefore, adjustments had to be made to the projects assigned in each course and the method of the delivery of the result by students. This paper describes the adjustment made to the assigned projects and the disadvantages it caused to the students' educational experience. The paper will describe the lessons learned and recommends on how to make improvements for the future.