

This is Digital Learning

When I started teaching sociology, my students were failing, they were failing my class. So I was pretty desperate and that was pretty disheartening for me. I kind of went through my own kind of crisis like am I a bad professor? Why aren't my students doing very well? I've noticed over the last two decades of teaching that outside of the classroom students seem to be doing less and less work. If I hand them a textbook, (:30) a standard textbook that might be 400 pages, this is a daunting task. A chief complaint that we have, and you can talk to any professor and they'll say this is getting students to do their reading. We can't give them all the information, they have to seek. "We are going to be covering psychologic units today". Students would say things like "I like coming to your class, I understand it when you explain it but I don't really understand it in the book." My class used to be an intro to intro sociology, because they weren't reading, I had to start page one (1:00) and try to give them all the information I could in 75 minutes. You could be the most interesting teacher in the world but if their mind is somewhere else, than they're not going to learn anything. The traditional way of learning is you go to class, you listen to a lecture, you take notes and then somehow you study those notes and you're able to answer questions. That isn't the best form of learning especially in this day and age where we have so much technology and things are fast. My students are more comfortable dealing with (1:30) things that they read digitally. So they're reading on their phone, they're reading on their computers or tablets all the time. Those of us who grew up in an environment where, you know, you read books from cover to cover. We might say, now that's the best way to learn, but it may turn out to be actually not the best way for many, many students. The one thing that is clearest, is that we need to do a better job of reaching students. The four years their in colleges and universities is precious years. So to squander that time with activities that they're only halfway engaged with, you know, it's not fair to them and it's not fair to us as a society. (2:15)