

Against “Flexibility”: Tightening the Cage of Academic Rigor with Instructors’ Responsibility and Rationality

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Abstract

The end of the COVID-19 pandemic is in sight, but it brought tremendous challenges and opportunities to academia. Through the lens of the approach-avoidance framework, this paper analyzes the equilibrium between teaching laxity and strictness and corresponding outcomes. On one side, instructors are likely to allow flexibility in course policies and procedures, given the difficulties learners experienced during the pandemic. However, this intention could lead to a lack of control in class and eventually jeopardize academic integrity and rigor. In this study, we tend to explicate the motivation mechanism and the adverse effects of teaching laxity. A portfolio of teaching methods and mapping based on psychological distance and behavioral control theories is presented. This research contributes to a further understanding of pedagogical innovations in the Information Systems (IS) domains in the unprecedented crisis.

Keywords: COVID-19, IS Education, Laxity and Strictness, Academic Integrity and Rigor, Approach-Avoidance

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