

## EXAMINING THE EFFECT OF DIFFERENT CURRICULUM DELIVERY METHODS ON ACADEMIC SUCCESS AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN AN INTRODUCTORY ANIMAL SCIENCE COURSE

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Feeling as if you belong in any university course is an important component to a student's academic success (Glass and Westmont, 2014). Introductory courses in specific majors often set the tone for first-year students and are important tools to be used to get students involved, comfortable with their university, and bought in to their major. Students from marginalized populations are not common in animal science departments and it is easy for these students to feel isolated in introductory animal science classes where students are transitioning from home to the university setting. Animal science courses have not kept up with more modern teaching practices and often remain lecture-based (Erickson, et al., 2020). Traditional lecture formats in post-secondary courses are teacher-centered and do little to encourage and develop student to student interaction. This lack of interaction may lead to isolation and lack of connection to other students and the university, especially when you come from a marginalized population. Active learning techniques require student involvement in the learning process and often involve student collaboration. When active learning strategies are implemented, students in various disciplines have typically felt more engaged in their class and with their classmates (Ishiyama, 2013). Thirty-two students took part in an introductory animal science course in which the first four-week unit (Unit 1) was taught in the traditional lecture format and the second four-week unit (Unit 2) was taught using active learning strategies and activities. The students were then surveyed to determine how they felt after each unit in terms of academic preparation, course engagement, their sense of belonging, their connections with classmates, and their connections with their professor. After the second unit was completed, students were surveyed to determine which method of curriculum delivery allowed them to best learn the material, engage the most, develop a sense of belonging, and make connections with their classmates and professor. Students felt they learned the material best through traditional lecture but felt that active learning was as effective or better when considering engagement, developing a stronger sense of belonging, and making stronger connections with classmates and their professor.

