Analysis of 21st Century Learning Methods

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"21st Century Skills are the set of skills students need to succeed in learning, work and life in this century" (Trilling, & Fadel, 2009). "To cope with the demands of the 21st century, people need to know more than core subjects. They need to know how to use their knowledge and skills" (Sahin, 2009, p. 1465). "These learning skills can be summarized under three main subtitles: information and communication skills, thinking and problem-solving skills, interpersonal and self-directional skills" (Sahin, 2009, p. 1464). When the P21 framework is implemented, "students are more engaged in the learning process and graduate better prepared to thrive in today's digitally and globally interconnected world" (Partnership for 21st Century Learning, 2016). The objectives of this paper are to consider the 21st century learning model, its connection to other learning orientations, Agile learning, and the application of 21st century learning methods in instructional design.

The 21st century learning approach is not a new way of learning but is an updated and relevant approach which incorporates many of the tenets of humanism, social cognition, and constructivism. Included in the P21 framework are learning and innovation skills which "focus on creativity, critical thinking, communication and collaboration" (Partnership for 21st Century Learning, 2015). The P21 framework also focuses on life and career skills which include "flexibility, adaptability, initiative, self-direction, social and cross-cultural skills, productivity, accountability, leadership, and responsibility" (Partnership for 21st Century Learning, 2015).

Young (2018) states, "21st century learning represents creating the learning environment and supporting framework that allows individual learners to discover what they need to know and why it's important to them." According to Partnership for 21st Century Learning (2015), these learning environments "support professional learning communities that enable educators to

collaborate, share best practices and integrate 21st century skills into classroom practice and enable students to learn in relevant, real world 21st century contexts (e.g., through project-based or other applied work)."

One of the approaches to 21st century learning is Agile learning. "At its core, Agile is all about innovation… Agile is not a methodology; it's a way of behaving, it's a culture, it's a mindset" (Prieto, 2016). "The beauty of Agile being a culture is that you can apply it to any organization, and to any aspect of work…We are applying Agile values and principles to education" (Prieto, 2016). Agile education incorporates the following essential components: "Iterative- *Visible cycles of learning*; Culture- *Learning starts with why … it's the big story;* Visible Feedback & Reflection- *Nurturing the love of lifelong learning;* Trust- *Valuing the freedom of discovery;* and Collaboration- *The power of shared learning"* ("Agile in Education Compass," 2016). Hope High School, which serves at-risk students in Phoenix, Arizona employs 21st century and Agile learning approaches. "At the beginning of 2014/15 school year, we began the journey to Agile Classrooms… Students began feeling more respected and felt their voice was heard. The learning environment began to evoke flow versus distraction" (Miller, 2015).

The virtual school is an example of instructional design incorporating 21st century learning methods. "The virtual school provides access to online, collaborative and self-paced learning environments – settings that can facilitate 21st Century skills. Today's students must be able to combine these skills with the effective use of technology to succeed in current and future jobs." (North American Council for Online Learning & Partnership for 21st Century Learning, 2006).

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