

THE 4 ROLES OF ONLINE PROFESSORS: PREPARING FACULTY TO TEACH ONLINE

Workshop Leader:

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Abstract

- Despite the growing popularity of distance education, there is much criticism regarding its ability to substitute for on-campus instruction. The criticism has long been misdirected at technology itself. One viable source for criticism lies with the faculty. Lack of or poor quality training leads to underprepared faculty. This presentation demonstrates how to use a research-driven framework to design training that prepares faculty to use and manage technology effectively to deliver high quality online instruction.

Workshop Objectives

- **Objective 1:** Attendees will learn the primary roles of an online faculty member as elucidated by current research into best practices for online teaching.
- **Objective 2:** Attendees will utilize a research-driven framework to prepare an outline for an online instructor professional development series.

Distance Education Defined

- *Distance education* – “Planned learning that normally occurs in a different place from teaching, requiring special course design and instruction techniques, communication through various technologies, and special organizational and administrative arrangements” ((Moore and Kearsley, 2005, p.2).

The History of Distance Ed...in a Nutshell

- Early 1700's - correspondence education.
- Early 1900's - introduction of audiovisual devices including: instructional films, radio, and television.
- Military was the predominant early users of distance education

The History of Distance Ed...Continued

- Late 1960's – early 1970's - higher education institutions begin to utilize distance education technologies to reach non-traditional students.

- Today
 - distance education occurs via online learning.
 - exponentially increasing numbers.
 - a means to reach *both* traditional and non-traditional students.

The Status of Online Education

- Enrollment in 1 + online courses increased from 1.6 million students in 2002 to 3.2 million in 2005 (Allen & Seaman, 2010).
- In 2009, enrollment hovered at 5.6 million students. This represents 30% of all college students! (Allen & Seaman, 2010).
- 2009 experienced a 21% growth rate for online course enrollment compared to less than 2% for overall growth in high education (Allen & Seaman, 2010).

The Irony of the Online Boom

- Not mentioned in the numbers is the reciprocal need for and growth of online instructors.
- Moreover, the source of much of the criticism of online learning actually lies with the instructors (U.S. Department of Education, 2010).
- Lack of or poor quality training and professional development is often the cause.

The Irony of the Online Boom

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The Status of Training Online Faculty

- 1/5 of institutions **do not** provide training (even informal mentoring) for the faculty teaching online courses (Allen & Seaman, 2009).
- Those institutions who do train often rely on untested assumptions about the activities that are most important (Taylor & McQuiggan, 2008).

Disparities in Training

Many higher education institutions may not know the best way to prepare their faculty for the role of an online instructor.

Preparing health education faculty to teach online should be left to neither an individual nor an institutional exercise of trial and error.

Sloan-C Effective Practices for Online Teaching



ADDIE Model for Online Course Development

- The ADDIE model is a process traditionally used to develop courses and training.
- **ADDIE** is an acronym for
 - **A**nalysis
 - **D**esign
 - **D**evelopment
 - **I**mplement
 - **E**valuate



Design of an Online Course: **Analysis**

Identifying Course Goals

- Just as you would when you are creating a new face-to-face (F2F) course, begin planning your online course by identifying the overall goal(s) and analyzing the purpose.
- A strong understanding of the needs of your learners and how your course can meet those needs is also important.
- Consider what you want your students “to walk away with” at the conclusion of their coursework.

Design of an Online Course Continued

- All your course objectives, instructional strategies, content, and assignments should facilitate learners' attainment of your course goal(s).
- Some questions to consider as you begin planning your course are:
 - What are your learners' characteristics?
 - What types of learning are involved?
 - What content and information is needed to facilitate learning?

Design of an Online Course Continued

- What tasks do learners need to master to achieve the overall course goal(s)?
- What sequence of content and activities is needed?
- What technologies are available and best suited to present the content to facilitate learning?
- What is the length of your course?
 - Traditional 15 week semester.
 - One 8 week course.
 - Two 8 week courses that are sequenced

Developing and Writing Learning Objectives

- Learning objectives are especially important in a distributed learning environment where the instructor and the student have little or no F2F time.
- Functioning as guideposts, learning objectives help students organize their efforts toward accomplishing the desired behaviors.
- Learning objectives also help the instructor identify whether students have gained the appropriate skills and knowledge.

Learning Objectives Continued

- **A learning objective is a statement....**
- Specifying in measurable terms what a learner will be able to do as a result of your instruction.
- Describing the intended outcome of the course rather than a description or summary of the content.
- Describing the intended results rather than the means of achieving the results.

Learning Objectives Continued

- Mager (1984) states each learning objective has three parts:
- **Performance** – describes what a learner is expected to be able to do.
- **Conditions** – describes the environment under which the performance occurs.
- **Criterion** – describes how well the learner must perform for it to be considered acceptable.

Designing Your Course

- Once you finish analyzing and writing your course goal(s) and learner-centered objectives, you are ready to begin designing your course.
- Design Concepts for Consideration:
 - Course design
 - Content sequencing
 - Instructional strategies
 - Course layout
 - Course management plan

Designing Your Course Continued

- Transitioning to an online environment is much more than simply creating electronic versions of hard copy content.
- Visual aspects of course design in online courses are as critical as the content for effective student learning.

Sequencing Your Content

- Content sequencing efficiently organizes the content of your course to facilitate achievement of the learning objectives.
- Learning objectives (cognitive, affective, psychomotor), as well as the delivery mode (face-to-face, “M,” or “W. “) chosen for your course content, can influence the content sequencing.

Instructional Strategies

- Instructional strategies are the learning events you design to accomplish your course objectives.
- The strategies you choose will be determined by the type of learner-centered objective (cognitive, affective, psychomotor) specified as well as the delivery mode (face-to-face, hybrid, online) chosen for your course content.

Layout of Your Course

- Does your university have a list of standard core components?
- Distance education research continues to support standardizing online course components.

What is Your Course Management Plan?

- As you analyze and design your online course, consider how different tasks will be performed and managed, as well as by whom. This is your overall course management plan.
- This plan should include training the facilitators (including Teaching Assistants – TAs and GTAs), preparing learners, enrollment cap, and organizing the learning environment.

Creating/**Developing** Your Course

- All of your decisions in the analysis and design phases help you to stay focused in the development phase.
- For many faculty teaching online, the development step is iterative: write and organize, teach, and re-write and re-organize based on formative and summative assessments.
- In many ways, this process may not vary from your face-to-face teaching experiences.

Creating/**Developing** Your Course

- A good axiom to follow when developing an online course is to begin with the end in mind.
- The course goal(s) and learning objectives you wrote and envisioned in the first two phases should guide your decisions as you develop the instructional events to help students successfully achieve the desired course outcomes.
- In general, developing an effective online course requires identifying and creating activities and core content.

Activities

- Although you can begin development by creating either the activities or content first, many faculty find developing the activities first helps them to more effectively construct the core content (e.g., what conditions, knowledge, and information the students will need to complete the activity successfully).
- Best practices in online teaching and learning promote activities which are **learner-centered, practical, and relevant.**

Activities

- Again, your course goal(s) and learning objectives help guide your design of instructional activities.
- Look at the learning objectives you drafted for your course.
- What type of activities would enable students to demonstrate mastery of learning objectives?

Activities

- Can you think of one activity which would enable students to demonstrate mastery of the course goal(s)?
- If so, such an activity may make an effective final course project.

Activities

- When employing a culminating activity, you may want to design other activities throughout the course to help students develop the knowledge and skills needed to complete this final project successfully.
- Remember to select the most effective tool to meet the learning objectives.

Core Content

- If you approached development of your online course by identifying the activities first, ask yourself:
 - What knowledge and skills do students need to successfully complete the activity? (The information you identify when addressing this question comprises the core content.)
- Core content can be written lectures, presentations, printed materials, secondary sources, as well as audio and video resources.

Core Content

- **Storytelling:** embed real-world situations into course concepts to help students understand the relevance of course information.
- **Short sentences:** compress your sentences into subject-verb-predicate to emphasize the content and make reading online easier.
- **Motivate:** use your content to inspire students to continue and complete the course.
- After developing your course, you are ready to deliver or implement it.

Implementation of Your Course

- Implementation is the step in the ADDIE model in which you deliver your course to the target audience.
- In other words, the effectiveness of your course design will be tested and confirmed.
- A solid groundwork is critical for a smooth and successful implementation of all instructional strategies.

Keys to Successful Implementation

- **Predictability**
- **Organization**
- **Preparedness**
- **Resourcefulness and planning**
- **Responsiveness**

Some Additional Ideas Following Implementation

- Hold regular online office hours.
- Encourage dialogue by building student contributions with examples of your own experiences or relating it to the core content.
- Reiterate critical information to clarify assignment instructions, course processes, and other important details.

Some Additional Ideas Following Implementation

- Model your expectations.
- Manage conflict between and among students.
- Create an interactive online classroom culture.
- Monitor all aspects of the online environment simultaneously (as much as possible).

Evaluation

- Evaluation is important to ensure learning objectives are met, as well as improve future offerings of your instruction.
- To insure continuous improvement of your course, perform both **formative** and **summative** evaluations.

Formative Evaluation

- Formative evaluations allow for adjustments during each step of the ADDIE process and throughout implementation of your course.
- In an online course, formative evaluations are especially important because the students have a learning curve inherent to technology.
- An example of this type of evaluation is an anonymous survey to collect periodic feedback from students.

Summative Evaluation

- Summative Evaluations (evaluations at the conclusion of a course) assist you to determine the effectiveness of your core content and activities in helping students attain the learning objectives.
- Course evaluations, final exams, and final projects are examples of summative evaluations.

Copyright Issues

- Faculty intellectual property rights of course materials need to be figured out on your own campus.

Copyright Issues Continued

- **What is copyrighted material?**
- Once a work is in a tangible form, it is considered copyrighted. The Copyright Act states that works of copyright ownership include the following:
- Literary works (eg):
 - Novels
 - Nonfiction prose
 - Poetry
 - Newspaper and newspaper articles
 - Magazine and magazine articles
 - Computer software
 - Software manuals
 - Training manuals
 - Manuals
 - Catalogs
 - Brochures,
 - Ads (text)
 - Compilations such as business directories

Fair Use

- If you want to use it, ask permission!
- When you include any content in an online course you are performing two actions:
 - Converting the material into a digital format, (creating a derivative work)
 - Distributing the digital derivative work via the Internet
- These two rights belong to the copyright owner only.

Do Not Assume that Students Know
How to be a Student in the Online
Classroom!

What are the Best Practices in Online Teaching?

Best Practices...

- Be present within the course site and make sure that you show up to teach!
- Just because the course has been developed in advance, does not mean it will teach itself!
- Be consistent in your availability.
- Develop a welcoming activity that immediately engages students within the course.
- Design using someone else's mind – peer review of your course material.

Best Practices

- Create a supportive online course community.
- Develop a set of explicit expectations for your learners and yourself as to how you will communicate and how much time students should be working on the course each week.
- Combine core concept learning with customized and personalized learning.

Best Practices

- Use a variety of large group, small group, and individual course work.
- Use synchronous and asynchronous activities.
- Communicate an appropriate pace for working through the course.
- Ask for informal feedback early in the term and then at the end of the course. And be prepared for really frank answers!

Best Practices

- Be consistent about navigation within a course, especially when you have the same students within different courses.
- Keep scheduling convenience a priority for your students.
- Be proactive within your course and make sure to:
 - Monitor the assignment submissions.
 - Communicating with and reminding students of missed and/or upcoming deadlines.
 - Have a no late course work policy and enforce it!

Best Practices

- Prepare discussion posts that invite responses, questions, discussions, and reflections.
- Search out and use content resources that are available in digital format if possible.
- Have due dates the same each week. Develop a schedule of due dates and have those due dates the same each week and **stick to it!**

Best Practices

- Discussion assignments must give students a specific item on which to comment.
- Create a “Coffee shop” forum for social interactions among students.
- Plan a good closing and wrap activity for the course.

Best Practices

- Be consistent about where to turn in assignments.
- Quality counts!
- Be careful in what and how you are writing in the discussion board, emails, etc.
- Make sure that you are concise and clear in your writing to avoid misunderstanding.
- Think before you write and hit the send button.

Best Practices

- Keep the course moving in a forward direction. Even though it is online does not mean that it will move the students forward by itself.
- Respond back to emails and other course related postings within 24 hours M-F.
- Do not tolerate text message short hand in emails or other course content like discussion boards, etc.

Best Practices

- Grade your student's course work within 5 days of the due date if the course is 15 weeks long, and within 3 days if the course is an 8 week course.
- Your students will be of a wider age range in the online classroom and familiarity with the adult learner is important.
- Just because the course is online does not mean that you have to work 7 days per week and establish that within the course and its syllabus.

Best Practices

- Have evaluation rubrics for all course assignments that are graded.
- <http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php>
- [http://www.rcampus.com/rubricshellc.cfm?mode=gallery& sms=publicrub](http://www.rcampus.com/rubricshellc.cfm?mode=gallery&sms=publicrub)

What Should Your Course Look Like?

- Announcements area
- Syllabus
- Discussion Board area
- Assignments area and Assignment Dropbox
- Readings area
- Learning Resources
- Exams/Quizzes (honor system or proctored exams?)
- Gradebook
- Course Calendar with Due Dates Highlighted
- Coffee Shop area
- Turn-It-In or SafeAssign Plagiarism Checking Software
- Messages/In course emails (different than other university email)
- **Honor Code!!!**
- Link to the Library!
- Link or telephone number to the university tech support division.

Let's Map Out Your Course...

How might you...

- Adjust a current F2F course into the online course management system?
- Might you create a hybrid course rather than an exclusively online course?
- What are important discussion questions that could serve as the weekly core of the discussion board?

Course Mapping Continued

- How do these questions enhance the course learning?
- How are these questions tied to the weekly content for learning?
- How do these questions apply to the CHES exam or NCATE accreditation or CEPH accreditation?
- How do these discussion board questions build upon the previous week and culminate in the entire learning throughout the course?

Course Mapping Continued

- What are some weekly assignments that you could have your students complete that are tied to the course content?
- What assignments are crucial and what are not as important?
- Are you going to have weekly quizzes? A midterm exam? A final exam? And why have you chosen this evaluative method?

Developing Discussion Questions

Through the use of online questioning strategies you can expect the following benefits:

- More productive in-class discussions.
- Deeper and more reflective student responses.
- Improved participation and accountability since everyone has an opportunity to participate and be heard.
- An easily accessible record of the discussion thought processes.
- Time for more personal student contact

Discussion Questions Continued

How do you ask a question to elicit the level of thinking/learning that you want?

- Using Bloom's Taxonomy your questions can:
 - Extract factual **knowledge**
 - Query a student's **comprehension**
 - Ask a learner to **apply** his/her knowledge and comprehension
 - Ask the learner to **analyze** information
 - Challenge the student to **synthesize** information
 - Have the learner **evaluate** and make judgments

More Considerations in Writing Discussion Questions...

- **Time factors for students and instructor**
- Remember that out-of-class assignments involve time commitments from you and your students.
- Therefore, it's a good idea to carefully consider who will be doing what and how long it will take.
- Some students tend to procrastinate, so make them aware of deadlines and grade dependence. For example, as part of an assignment, students could be required to make two responses a week.

More Considerations in Writing Discussion Questions...

- **Managing the discussion**
- Praise students for high quality responses via e-mail, to the discussion group, or directly to the student.
- Acknowledge students by name.
- Structure some assignments so that all students must be online during the same day-long or two-day time period (not necessarily asynchronous). This helps the discussion to remain current.

More Considerations in Writing Discussion Questions...

- Be sure to relate class work to online discussions and interactions.
- Make sure the discussion is essential to help learners achieve course goals.
- Build into your questions some guidelines to help formulate student responses (e.g., ask the learners to explain their reasoning or position and provide examples).

More Considerations in Writing Discussion Questions...

- **Differences between online discussions and face-to-face discussions:**
- Online discussions are primarily text-based.
- Discussions may lack immediate responses and significant points may be lost because of lack of vocal emphasis or body language.
- Allow time for reading and responding to discussion threads.
- Make clear the response or turnaround time for discussion and collaboration.

More Considerations in Writing Discussion Questions...

- **Knowledge of/learning the tool/technology**
- Make sure students have access to the tool before the assignment starts. This allows you to avoid problems after discussions have started.
- Allow for an easy, very basic introductory assignment to prepare the students for future discussions. This could be a simple introduction and/or posting.
- Have resources available for students who may like documentation/explanation of the tool.

More Considerations in Writing Discussion Questions...

- **Student teams**
- Establish teams and allow students to work together to post a final revised response. This results in fewer messages for you to read.
- Consider size and number of teams. Try to have no more than seven students on a team.
- Create clear guidelines for collaborating online and working in teams.

More Considerations in Writing Discussion Questions...

Contact among class members

- Online discussions allow for various types of contact:
 - Professor to students
 - Students to students
 - Students to professor

More Considerations in Writing Discussion Questions...

Responding to and Facilitating the Query Process

- Actively engaging students in critical thinking is at the heart of the questioning process. To foster this process, we must guide and support the learners' critical thinking.
- There are two basic types of critical thinking strategies:
 1. those that enhance the focusing of ideas.
 2. those that extend patterns of thought.

Additional Discussion Ideas

- **Use students to lead the discussion:**
- Have students synthesize the prior week's responses.
- Have students generate discussion or review questions. Students can submit one question to you via e-mail or an drop box.
- Select a few questions and post them to your discussion area.
- You could even have the students who submitted the question be the moderator for that question.

Additional Discussion Ideas

- Assign a group to be the experts on a topic or section.
- Have them post a question for that week's discussion and lead the discussion.
- Toward the end of the class discussion, have the discussion leaders summarize and combine points for their classmates.
- Have a student start the discussion on a topic or chapter.

Discussion Board Best Practices

- Show a presence in the DB at least 4 days per week.
- Read all new posts everyday.
- An active DB show that the students and professor are both participating in the course.
- 15-20% of DB posts should be by the professor.

Teaching Ideas in the Online Classroom

- Use class polls.
- Use Google + conferencing for live seminars, office hours, group assignments, defense of dissertations, etc.
- Use Survey Monkey® or a similar program to conduct class surveys during a unit.
- Course Long Project/Session Long Project (CLP/SLP) where each project builds upon the previous week's project.
 - HP 2020

Characteristics of an Online Faculty Member

VOCAL

- **V**= visible
- **O**=organized
- **C**=compassionate
- **A**=analytical
- **L**=lead by example

Faculty Concerns

- Teaching online involves a level of teaching in isolation from the rest of your fellow faculty members.
- Universities and high schools with online courses need to have faculty meetings/workshops that bring the online educators together to talk about their challenges, best practices, etc.
- You are not on call 24/7/365 for your students even though they work at all hours of the day and night....you do not and should not!

What are the 4 Roles of Online Faculty?

4 Roles of Online Faculty

- Pedagogical role
- Social role
- Managerial role
- Technical role

Pedagogical Role

- Professor acts as an educational facilitator, using questions and probes to steer students in a way that helps them to focus on critical components, principles, and skills.
- Examples:

Social Role

- Online professor creates a friendly, social environment that promotes human relationships, group cohesiveness, and collaborative learning.
- Examples:

Managerial Role

- Online professor sets the agenda for the course, objectives for instruction, the timetable, procedural rules, and managing interactions.
- Examples

Technical Role

- Online professor assures that learners are comfortable with the technology of the LMS (or other) with the goal of making the technology transparent to the user.
- The closer to reaching this goal, the more the learner can focus on the learning goals and objectives.
- Examples:

From Theory to Practice

- These 4 roles could be flushed out into 4 unique learning modules each offered as a singular professional development workshops, or as part of a multi-module training.

**WHAT WOULD
THESE LOOK LIKE?**

FROM 4 ROLES TO 4 MODULES

Module 1: Social Role

For example, the social role could be subdivided into:

- A. designing assignments that foster collaborative learning.
- B. creating and supporting group cohesiveness at a distance.
- C. developing online discussion boards that build communities of learners.

Module 2: Managerial Role

The managerial role could be subdivided into:

- A. writing the syllabus for an online course.
- B. managing your time as an instructor.
- C. supporting student's development of self-regulated learning behaviors.
- D. identifying and writing essential policies and procedures, etc.

Module 3: Pedagogical Role

- Your Turn! How would you design this module?

Module 4: Technical Role

- Your Turn! How would you design this module?

Share and Swap

- Share your ideas with each other....

References

- See the 3 page handout of current literature that includes over 100 peer reviewed citations.

Questions?

Thank You for Attending this Workshop!

All 90+ PPT slides will be uploaded to the AAHPERD convention website.

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