

**Paloff, R.M., and Pratt, K. (2011) *The excellent online instructor: Strategies for professional development*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.**

There is a myth that has existed in the world of online teaching since it began. The myth asserts that it is easy to teach online--all one needs to do is to move exactly what was being done in the face-to-face classroom into the online classroom. Technologies such as lecture capture video and PowerPoint have made it easy for an instructor to lecture online, and simply writing up and posting assignments by copying and pasting into the course management system in use is not difficult. But can this be considered good instruction online?

The growing popularity of online instruction has brought with it increasing recognition that teaching online differs from face-to-face teaching. As a result, more attention is being paid to what constitutes positive educational experiences online and the characteristics of good online instructors and courses....

Based on Weimer's (2002) work on learner-focused teaching, in order to achieve all of this, we note that several things need to happen:

- **the balance of power needs to change**--The instructor online acts as a learning facilitator, allowing students to take charge of their own learning process.
- **the function of content needs to change**--As noted by Carr-Chellman and Duchastel (2001), good online course design makes learning resources and instructional activities available to students rather than providing instruction in the form of lecture or other means.
- **The role of the instructor needs to change**--by establishing active and strong online presence...the instructor demonstrates his or her expertise and guides the students in their learning process.
- **The responsibility for learning needs to change**--with the instructor acting as a guide, resource, and facilitator, students need to take more responsibility for their own learning process.
- **The purpose and process of assessment and evaluation need to change**--traditional means of assessment, such as tests and quizzes, do not always meet the mark when it comes to this form of learning. Consequently, other forms of assessment, such as self-assessment and application activities, should be incorporated to assess student learning and evaluate areas for potential course improvement (Palloff & Pratt, 2003).

**Rhode, J., & Krishnamurthi, M. (2016). Preparing faculty to teach online: Recommendations for developing self-paced training. *International Journal of Information and Education Technology*, 6(5), 376-382. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.7763/IJET.2016.V6.717>**

**Before faculty can begin to hone their pedagogical and technical skills necessary to teach online, they need to possess foundational understanding of the tenets of online teaching and learning, including topics such as: overview of online teaching and learning, models of online course delivery, designing an online course, encouraging communication, technology tools for online teaching, and assessing student learning online [7], [8]. In addition, faculty need to be**

introduced to quality standards for online course design and delivery as well as available campus resources and services available in support of online instruction [9] (p. 376)

[7] Britto, M., Ford, C., & Wise, J. (2014). Three institutions, three approaches, one goal: Addressing quality assurance in online learning. *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*, 17(4), 11-24.

[8] Gregory, J., Salmon, G. (2013). Professional development for online university teaching. *Distance Education*34(3), 256-270.

[9] Higgins, K., Harreveld, E. R.(2013). Professional Development and the University Casual Academic: Integration and Support Strategies for Distance Education. *Distance Education*34(2), 189-200.

### **EDUCAUSE: Supporting E-Learning in Higher Education (2003)**

#### **Key E-Learning Issues (p. 9)**

As institutions adopt e-learning, some important new issues arise:

- Institutions must provide an adequate and reliable technical infrastructure to support e-learning activities.
- Instructors and students must possess the technical skills to use e-learning tools.
- Instructors must redesign their courses to incorporate e-learning effectively into their pedagogy.

### **NEA Guide to Teaching Online Courses (pp. 9-11)**

[O]nline teachers should be prepared to provide specific evidence to school leaders demonstrating that they:

- are prepared well to use modern information, communication, and learning tools
- are motivated self-starters who work well without constant supervision
- are student-centered and flexible, while maintaining high standards
- are able to promote online dialogue to deepen the learning experience
- foster community-building virtually and facilitate collaborative learning
- are able to collaborate with students and student support staff/ systems to further student participation and success in the online course
- specify learning objectives, and design activities and authentic assessments to measure mastery of the stated objectives
- are able to use adaptive technologies to meet individual student needs
- possess a sense of humor and are able to “project” their personality through developing an “online voice”
- exhibit mastery of the online environment(s) and the learning/content management system(s) to be used
- are effective in written communications
- have completed professional development specifically geared to teaching online

Professional development training should provide teachers with training and practice in the following areas:

- Appropriate communications. Online teachers must develop an appropriate online “voice” because students do not have the advantage of facial expressions or body language.
- Appropriate and timely feedback. Because online courses do not always have a “scheduled meeting time” that would allow teachers to address specific student concerns in a joint setting, teachers should reply promptly to student questions. Teachers should complete grading and give feedback on assignments in a timely manner, as well. Professional development should stress these requirements and provide teachers with the tools to meet them.
- Facilitated discussions. Teachers must be trained to be effective online facilitators and need to practice this skill while in training. In delivery, mentors need to monitor facilitation and provide feedback to the instructor.
- Facilitation of teamwork and multimedia projects. The barriers to effective group-work are multiplied by the distance barriers of online teaching. Therefore, teachers must develop effective strategies to use small group activities in their courses. For example, teachers need to develop timelines for group activities that acknowledge the challenges of working online across time zones. They need to provide students with ways of forming teams when proximity or friendship are no longer the criteria for selecting team members.
- Adaptation of curriculum and materials. So that online teachers will be fully prepared to meet students’ needs, they should be trained to adjust course materials and curricula in order to maximize effective learning.
- Adaptation of online tools to support effective instruction. In order to maximize the effectiveness of the online instructional environment, teachers should be proficient in the selection and use of a variety of online instructional tools, including synchronous and asynchronous communication methods, text-based and multimedia-rich documents and simulations and hands-on laboratories.

**Ray, J. (2009). Faculty perspective: Training and course development for the online classroom. *MERLOT: Journal of Online Learning and Teaching*. 5(2), 263-76.**

#### **Literature Survey (pp. 264-65)**

The online learning format is growing rapidly. Unfortunately, for various reasons, institutions continue to promote the implementation of online teaching “without necessarily having staff competent in all aspects of online pedagogy” (Sims, Dobbs, & Hand, 2002, p. 136). With the rapid rise of online courses, questions have been raised as to the capacity of faculty to successfully instruct in the online format.

Unlike teaching face-to-face where instructors may lack technical knowledge and still effectively teach students, in the arena of distance education, educators must possess a thorough understanding of technology as well as the subject matter expertise required in the traditional classroom (Darabi, Sikorski, & Harvey, 2006).

Aside from the obvious technical challenges associated with developing a course in the online medium, researchers indicate a need for additional faculty training specifically focusing on the different methods of instruction and pedagogy necessary to facilitate and instruct a successful online course (Diaz & Bontenbal, 2000; Arabasz, Pirani, & Fawcett, 2003; Okojie, Olinzock, & Okojie-Boulder, 2006). In contrast, research also indicates that instructors hold the perception that online instruction is similar in design and pedagogy, if not the same as traditional teaching (Diaz & Cartnell, 1999; Alexander & Boud, 2001; Arabasz, Pirani, & Fawcett, 2003). First time online instructors often believe that moving their lectures and their exams to the online format constitutes teaching online (Sieber, 2005). However, Sieber (2005) found that after teaching online, instructors state that **besides “mastering the technology,” they must also “master the art of guiding and motivating students” through the course (p. 338). This disconnect fuels the dichotomy of faculty training; that is, first-time instructors feel prepared from a pedagogical perspective to instruct online, even though research suggests that instructors require additional training to successfully conceptualize, design, and deliver an online course.**

### *Transitioning to the Online Environment*

Studies indicate that the majority of instructors utilize the same pedagogical tools in the online medium that they learned for face-to-face instruction (Zemsky & Massey, 2004; Conrad, 2004; Dolloph, 2007). **Although faculty tend to use the same pedagogical tools in the traditional and online classroom, trying to replicate all of the interaction, activities, and events that take place during a face-to-face classroom within the context of the online medium remains virtually impossible (Sugar, Martindale, & Crawley, 2007).** Those new to online instruction cite past experiences in the classroom as providing the means for which they handle online pedagogical issues (Conrad, 2004). However, emulating face-to-face instruction in the online classroom is unfeasible and impractical (Sugar, Martindale, & Crawley, 2007). **As a result, expecting “experienced face-to-face faculty to magically begin to function well in the online environment” is unreasonable due to the lack of pedagogical transferability from the traditional to the online classroom (Smith, 2005, p. 11).**

This magical understanding of proper instruction in the online format does not occur naturally. According to Gold (2001), an instructional technologist, “without proper pedagogical training and online experience, teachers will continue to replicate their best existing practices onto the online medium” (p. 36). If institutions expect faculty to successfully transition to the web-based classroom, instructors must be educated on best practices in online learning (Li, Lee, Bonk, Su, & Magjuka, 2005).

**Additionally, a Bates and Watson (2008) study further emphasized the need for pedagogical training by identifying specific skills that must be attained by instructors to ensure quality online instruction, including, appropriate design of courses, effective use of activities, and a thorough understanding of technology. Bates and Watson pronounced that to successfully instruct online, one cannot “make a physical move from standing in front of a class to typing on a keyboard, and keep everything else the same” (p. 40). In the conclusion of their study of two online instructors,**

the instructors acknowledged that virtual teaching, whether partially or totally online required a different set of teaching skills and methods.

Finally, a study focused on faculty perceptions of online learning surveyed the population of Penn State University's World Campus (Luck & McQuiggan, 2006). In this study, the participants provided suggestions to instructors moving into the web-based classroom for the first time. All of the suggestions related to instructor preparation, including viewing a course already in the online format, taking part in online learning as a student, discussing online instruction with someone familiar with taking courses online, becoming comfortable with the technology, and seeking assistance from a technical and design perspective.