LEARNING AND TEACHING ONLINE

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There are numerous definitions of online learning in the literature, definitions that reflect the diversity of practice and associated technologies. Carliner (1999) defines online learning as educational material that is presented on a computer. Khan (1997) defines online instruction as an innovative approach to delivering instruction to a remote audience, using the Web as the medium.

However, online learning involves more than just the presentation and distribution of the materials using the Web: the learner and the learning process should be the focus of online learning.

Teaching face-to-face and teaching online are both teaching, but they are qualitatively different. Online education starts when faculty moves from the traditional classroom to the online classroom. There are some things that the two have in common, but there are also plenty of differences.

1. The online teacher plays the role of guiding students through one or more online learning experiences. These experiences are every so often designed and

planned long before the course starts so that the teacher can devote more time to guiding the students and less time preparing lessons. Within this role, the teacher directs and redirects the attention of learners toward fundamental concepts and ideas.

2. Learning is hard work and studying online can sometimes feel isolated, confusing, or discouraging without the guide.

   As a result, the effective online teacher makes intentional efforts to communicate precise encouraging messages to individual learners and the group as a whole. Moreover, even when providing constructive feedback, the teacher as supporter finds a way to promote positive messages alongside the critiques. Encouragement and welcoming support are an important approach to maintaining an overall positive morale in the class. At times, learners may fall into negative comments about themselves, the class, or their classmates (even the instructor, on occasion). The coach makes every effort to find ways to listen, respect the learner's frustrations, but also to help them reframe the situation in a manner that students are more active and creative.

3. Many people focus on the role of the teacher as a role model, and that is valuable. However, the role of the coach is just as important, even more, important if we want learners to develop high levels of competence and confidence. The online teacher must move beyond just modeling a depth motivation for the subject and personal skill with the content. The mentor needs to find ways to hand the matter over to the students to do something with it. Applied projects and papers work well for this, and it gives the teacher an opportunity to be a coach and advisor.

4. Learners need some feedback about their work. How are they doing? Are they getting closer to meeting the learning objectives or not? The effective online teacher finds ways to give thoughtful feedback to individual learners and, when appropriate, groups of students.

5. Without intentional efforts to build a positive social environment, online learning can feel lonely and impersonal. As a result, the online teacher must serve as an encouraging host, facilitating introductions, using discussion starters to enable conversations among students, and taking the time to get to know students and referencing that knowledge in interactions with them.

6. The whole thing is documented in an online course. The teacher can tell when and how many times student logs in the course, what pages were viewed or not, how many discussions posts the student contributed, and much more. This data can be abused, but it can also be used to make adjustments and informed decisions by an online teacher. If a student is not logged in or failing to visit the pages in the course with the direct instructions, the coach points that out to the learners or reorganizes the content so that it is easier to find.

7. Online courses are rich with content and sometimes students can get lost in all that content. The teacher as a regulator intentionally releases content in chunks that are appropriate for educated people. Sometimes this comes in the course of

only publishing content one week at a time. Other times, the teacher releases it all at once but directs students only to focus on individual parts at a time. Another key is to break content into smaller segments. Rather than a twenty-page document of instructions, it is better to consider breaking it into ten two-page documents.

8. Good teachers are lifelong learners, and they can model that learning for their students in a variety of ways in the online classroom. The teacher can be active (but not too active or it will silence students) participant in online discussions, sharing what they are learning about the subject, and even complete all or fragments of some assignments, sharing their work with the students. The process goes a long way to making an exciting and dynamic online learning community where one and all in the community commits to exemplifying the qualities of a lifelong learner.

http://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/online-education/eight-roles-of-an-effective-onlineteacher/

What challenges are involved in learning online?

Perhaps one of the greatest challenges for teachers is to deliver a consistent experience to a large and varied general populations.

Instructors and scholars should not carry through device management. Their priorities should be placed on learning.

Technology is not the creator. Strong belief in innovation is less significant than the demands of scholars and instructors.

Instructors deliver a well-defined responsibility with implementing, and identifying, the best combination of digital learning tools for each scholar.

Different approaches to learning, such as project-based learning, progressive education, game-based learning, and more, is a part of the personalized, blended learning model. Accordingly, such innovations will call for demonstration how their package improves learning outcomes.

Most challenges have to do with the procedures, but they have nothing to do with the teaching itself. To make it simple, if you know how to teach, all you need to do is learn about the elementary online tools available for online teaching, and begin using them.

As cited earlier, teaching an online class can be time-consuming. As well, building up an online course can be overpowering. Finding out and becoming proficient using an LMS takes time, and uploading materials to the online environment is also demanding and needs much time. Once you know how to use the LMS, you require getting to teach students through it.

The time necessary to generate a new class can be a problem with developing online classes.

The instructor should be able to take care of the subject matter rather than spend

Countless times is managing difficulties connected with the technology.

One of the most recommended ways to cope with the additional time required for teaching online classes is to decrease the class size.

Students also regularly run into technological problems and they need support with technology issues.

Retrieved from http://www.apa.org/ed/precollege/undergrad/ptacc/online-teaching.pdf

Also, from my perspective, a successful teaching and learning online involve

- Understanding and easiness in the use of technology.
- Rethinking, and reexamining course objectives, activities, and assessments.
- Creating a community of learners.

- Supporting discussions.

Improving good skills in the use of technology.

- Understanding that the learning management system and other Web technologies function enable coaches to create and provide detailed instruction.

- Planning and creating course goals, activities, and assessments can take substantial time and free energy. Such redesign can be especially successful when started well in advance of the course start date.

Building a community of learners is a challenge.

- The necessity to keep in regular contact with students and comprehend various kinds of dialogue as well as different goals.
- Setting up content-specific discussions to provide problem-solving and establish growing proficiency in course outcomes.
- Designating areas for practical questions that reduce frustration, and gives an opportunity to help each other
- Arranging discussions that deliver a social channel for students increases a learning community by creating interconnection among learners.

It is also important to note that sending private and frequent initial e-mails that encourage/praise the stellar work or express concern in an online student absenteeism shows students that you are online and monitoring all activity. Such deliberate attempts at contact are especially important in demonstrating active instructor presence in the online environment.

Facilitating discussions online is not as easy as it may seem. Posting a question and expecting learners to generate responses that resemble an integrated, face-to-face dialogue rarely happens. Setting expectations for how discussions should proceed is the first step in creating in-depth, integrated responses and meaningful exchanges. In any setting, content-specific dialogue can cause disagreements or require clarifications. In a face-to-face class, instructors interject if a discussion is heading in the wrong direction or praise and emphasize well-thought out responses. The online facilitator should expect to do the same. Students need to feel comfortable in challenging each other's discussion contributions in tactful, constructive ways or asking the peers to support their claims with research. As facilitators, instructors need to demonstrate how this can happen in the online environment.
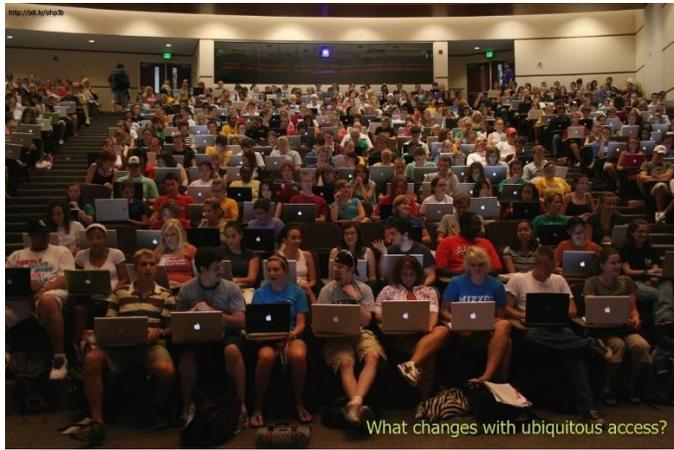
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