Faculty Development to Meet the Online/Blended Teaching Time and Effort Challenges

Kathryn Ley

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Faculty view additional time demands as a disincentive to teach online (Wolcott & Shattuck, 2007).

Faculty resist teaching online since they perceive web courses will take a disproportionate amount of time compared to traditional lecture courses (Zuckweiler, Schniederjans, & Ball, 2004).

Time commitment involved with online learning is number one challenge faced by online faculty - (Vaughan, 2007).
Online Faculty Development

- Faculty who reported their training had adequately prepared them to teach online were significantly more willing to teach online (Lee & Busch, 2005).
- Faculty development, framed in adult education principles, should address the online instructor’s problems, concerns, and issues (McQuiggan, 2007).
- Researchers, acknowledging online teaching time and effort problems have proposed general time management guidelines (Shi, Bonk, & Magjuka, 2006).
Literature: Online Communication

- Listening-speaking 2-3 times faster than reading-writing.
- Speaking ~180 words per minute (WPM; Colbert, 1988) typing ~50 WPM.
- Listening, 350-450 WPM maximum; reading, 185-300 WPM (Fulmer, 1976).
- 180-minute f2f class = 360 to 540 minutes online.
These online communications tools and features are based upon (extraneous) cognitive load and self-regulation (monitoring/evaluation) theory and research.

- Cognitive Load (Paas, Renkl, & Sweller, 2004; Van Merrienboer, & Ayres, 2005)
- Self-regulated Learning (SRL) The ability to plan, organize, monitor, and evaluate (POME) one’s cognitive processes. SR support in course design: less instructor time; more time for content learning; part-time students (Ley & Young, 2001)
Research Questions

Can one develop a print-based tool to replace faculty development for online policies and procedures?

Would faculty voluntarily adopt online communications policies and procedures presented during a peer-led training session?
Method

Instructional development research (Ritchey & Klein, 2007)

Design/develop online communications tools and features based on three criteria:

- reduce communications time
- support self-regulation
- reduce extraneous cognitive load
Method

Pilot test with faculty and formatively evaluate and revise the tools and features.

Train second group of faculty and solicit participation for interviews.

Continue train other faculty to further revise training materials.
Instructional Materials

1. Eleven-item challenge list on which faculty indicate which challenges they have.
2. Challenge-option-implementation matrix.
3. Example policies.
4. Audio feedback instructions.
Data Collection

Solicit research participants

Collect interview data at the beginning of semester after training and at the end of the same semester

Collect screen captures of courses taught by same faculty prior to training and at the end of the semester after training.
Faculty Development Outcomes

- All eight faculty used some form of instructor questions discussion board was the most commonly adopted feature and tool.
- All used a students helping students board.
- Faculty adopted audio feedback if they had the hardware, software, and had training.
Faculty Development Outcomes

- Faculty did not report disruptive messages as a problem.
- After training, faculty reported spending most time on evaluation/feedback but no more time than for face-to-face.
- Faculty listen and ask questions about asynchronous procedures and policies more efficiently in a synchronous training environment.
Faculty Development Implications

- Refer to challenges instead of problems.
- Any suggested online policies and procedures should include implementation guidelines.
- Development materials that suggests using policies or procedures should have electronic examples of the policies and procedures.
Faculty Development Implications

- Directing development at faculty-perceived needs encourages willing, voluntary participation.
- Faculty development invitations should explicitly identify the problem(s) which the development session will ameliorate.
- Faculty respond and listen to peers, other faculty who are teaching online.
Advantages
Communication Efficiency Policies & Procedures

1. Grounded in research and theory
2. Flexibly adapted regardless of content or web/blended/supported delivery.
3. Easily implemented; no development.
4. Promotes online learning community.
5. Reduces online time, a common faculty problem and barrier to online participation.
For more information

Kathryn Ley, PhD
Associate Professor
University of Houston - Clear Lake
Houston, TX, USA
Ley@uhcl.edu