Creating Quality, Collaborative & Engaging Online Psychology Courses

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Myths/Concerns of Online Learning
1. Online classes are easier than face to face.
2. Teaching online is more work.
3. Online courses are not as high in quality as face to face courses.
4. I just need to post my PowerPoint slides to make a face to face course into an online course.

Philosophy of Online Learning
- “Anyone can now learn anything from anyone at any time,” Curtis J. Bonk, author of The World is Open: How Web Technology is Revolutionizing Education
- Community redefined
  - Professor more of a "facilitator"
  - Universities are in transition
  - Connecting is a basic human need
  - Online classroom should be active, collaborative, and constructivist

The Online Student
- More motivated, higher expectations
- More self-disciplined
- Tends to be older than average
- Serious attitude toward courses
- Introverts may become outspoken

Off to a good start
- Design of Blackboard site (or other course management program)
  - Clear
  - All important information easy to find
  - How to contact you
- Offer “instructor expectations”
- Learning curve for technology

Create an Effective Syllabus
Curriculum Stays Same
- Create Objectives
- Use broad topic headings
- Assessment
- Grading
- Required tools
Guidelines for Online Course Success

- Course guidelines
  - *Online Course Guidelines: How to do well in this class*
  - *Abnormal Psychology* PST 330
  - Professor Richard Clark
  - Northern Kentucky University
  - Your basic goal in this course is to expand your knowledge of abnormal psychology. The course will require you to spend time reading the text, evaluating the information, and then work with your professor and other students. The following suggestions are offered for completion of the course:
    - Assignments will be posted online on our course Blackboard site. The assignments folders will be used for archiving, viewing, and exiting requirements. This folder will

Instructor Guidelines

- Include “netiquette”
- Participation requirements
- Software/Hardware requirements
- How to study/how to ask for help

Course Management

- Construct your online site
- Welcome Area (Start Here)
- Café
- Assignments

Blackboard “Before”

- *My Blackboard @ NKU*
- *Abnormal Psychology*
- *Professor Clark"

Blackboard “After”

- *My Blackboard @ NKU*
- *Abnormal Psychology*
- *Professor Clark"

Best Practices/Begin Teaching!

- Quality Matters
- Check your university
- Participation buy-in *before* moving to content
  - Begin by posting introductions
  - Spend first week only on intros
The Value of Introductions

Let Students Get to Know You
- Consider creating a welcome video OR
- Create an overview of the syllabus with slideshow and voice-over (Screencast.com)
- During the introduction period, be sure to introduce yourself

One more...

Make your course high QUALITY
- Challenging tasks
  - Workload should be reasonable
- Sample cases
- Praise for quality work
  - Follow learning outcomes provided by your department

Make your course COLLABORATIVE
- Instructor presence
- Active learning
- Equality of participant-facilitator interactions and vice versa
- Promote reflection and critical thinking
- Provide feedback

Make your course ENGAGING
- Human Contact
- Connectedness
- Participation
- Outside content
Administrative Issues

- Size of Class
- Technology
- 24/7 Issue

Be Sure to...

- Develop course specifically for online learning
- Make expectations clear
- Remember your students!

Technology Tips

- Use voice feature rather than type
- Create a "shell" course if you intend to teach course again
- Check with university – technology training
- Be prepared; access course at home, office, anywhere

FREE Tools!

The End