Mar 27th, 11:00 AM - 11:45 AM

Identifying Effective Methods of Faculty Training and Support in the Design, Instruction, and Management of Blended Courses

Roseanna J. Wright  
*Holy Family University, rwright@holyfamily.edu*

Claire A. Sullivan  
*Holy Family University, csullivan@holyfamily.edu*

Maria Agnew  
*Holy Family University, magnew@holyfamily.edu*

Brian Berry  
*Holy Family University, bberry@holyfamily.edu*

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**Recommended Citation**

Wright, Roseanna J.; Sullivan, Claire A.; Agnew, Maria; and Berry, Brian, "Identifying Effective Methods of Faculty Training and Support in the Design, Instruction, and Management of Blended Courses" (2014). *SoTL Commons Conference*. 78.  
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IDENTIFYING EFFECTIVE METHODS OF FACULTY TRAINING AND SUPPORT IN THE DESIGN, INSTRUCTION, AND MANAGEMENT OF BLENDED COURSES

Holy Family University
Roseanna J. Wright, Ph.D.  Maria Agnew, Ph.D.
Claire Ann Sullivan, Ed.D.  Brian Berry, Ph.D.

Definitions

Traditional Course 100% FTF
Web Enhanced Up to 30% Online
Blended (Hybrid) 33% to 80% Online
Online More than 80% Online

Definitions

Traditional Course 100% FTF
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Presentation Overview

- History of Blended Course Development at Holy Family University
- Professional Development Projects:
  - Co-Teaching the Blended Course
  - Putting into Practice Student Feedback
  - Pilot Policy and Procedures with Mentoring
- Discussion
  - Merits of each approach
  - Other faculty development options

Holy Family University

- A four-year university based in Philadelphia.
- About 3,500 students
- Undergraduate and graduate programs
- Four schools
  - Education
  - Business
  - Nursing and Allied Health Professionals
  - Arts and Sciences

History

- 2009 – QM Training
- 2011 – SOE first blended courses offered
- 2012-2014
  - Pilot Policy and Procedures
  - Growth in offerings from 2 in SOE to 18 university wide
  - By December 2014 will be 11 more
Concerns

Course Quality → Professional Development

Three Studies…

- Co-Teaching the Blended Course
- Putting into Practice Student Feedback
- Pilot Policy & Procedures with Mentoring

Study 1

Co-Teaching the Blended Course
Study 2

Putting into Practice
Student Feedback

Previous Study

- Explored challenges to participation in blended courses for students with and without disabilities in terms of:
  - access to the online environment
  - completion of online academic tasks
  - using the Learning Management System - Blackboard

Method
- Instructor journal
- Interviews with students currently in blended courses at Holy Family
- Survey of all students at Holy Family

Student Feedback

- Students appreciate increased availability of the instructor via the face to face classes and through email
- Students report that the face to face classes are crucial in mastering the material introduced in the online modules and allow them to clarify future module instructions
- Students value the convenience of the online module in terms of time and travel
- Students identified the increased variety of learning materials as an important factor in their success in the course
- Students appreciate the organization of a consistent course template
Professional Development

- Faculty Workshop
  - Specific student feedback from earlier study
  - Specific ideas on how to integrate into course design and management
  - Blended course template based on Quality Matters rubric
- Monthly check in
- Availability of help as needed

Putting Feedback into Practice

- Organize class materials in a consistent manner with active links, minimize clutter and bundle online activities
- Provide information for "what" and "how to" in both the online and face to face classes
- Minimize online collaboration requirements and reduce discussion board confusion
- Consider accessibility for all students, implement the principles of universal design in the online modules as well as the face to face classes
- Be consistent and timely with feedback during the online module

Instructor Tasks

- Integrate course management/course design ideas into their course
- Keep a journal
  - Student questions/challenges
  - Your questions
  - Your ideas
Faculty Feedback

- "Bundling the online as well as face to face classes has helped organize the course not only for the student but for myself."
- "The ability to use a consistent template helps in my development of other blended courses and provides consistency for students across courses."
- "This experience has made me a fan of the blended course model."
- "I was apprehensive about an online course and never meeting my students face to face, but the blended module is the best of both worlds."
- **Concern:** "Would have liked more meetings/training."

Study 3

Pilot Policy & Procedures with Mentoring

The Process...
Pilot

- Training Requirements
  - Mentors
  - Faculty Developers
- Preliminary Review Checklist
- Course runs once
- Internal QM full peer review

Mentor/Faculty Developer Feedback

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provides Framework</td>
<td>Increase mentor visibility/accessibility within schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QM Training Requirements</td>
<td>More training for mentors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preliminary Review Checklist</td>
<td>More mentors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Review</td>
<td>Voluntary nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Developers feel supported</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student Outcome Measures

- Resurvey of all students in participating courses:
  - Benefits/challenges
  - Academic Tasks
  - Online Environment
  - Learning Management System
Merits of each approach...

- **Co-Teaching**
- **Policy & Procedures**
- **Putting into Practice**
- **Mentoring**

**Co-Teaching**
- Provides support for FD
- Provides framework

**Policy & Procedures**
- Provides support for FD
- Provides expectations

**Putting into Practice**
- FD confidence/skill
- FD comfort with online
- More needed

**Mentoring**
- Provides support for FD
- Mentoring/Support
- Volunteering
- Need more mentors