Online Course Development Success: The Samoan Experience

41st Biennial Convention
STTI
October 30, 2011
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Learning Objectives

- The learner will be able to identify 3 technology challenges that nurse educators in Western Samoa face with online education.
- The learner will be able to identify how cultural and socio-economic issues impact the development and implementation of an online course?
We started with 21 students who were employed by the National Samoan University and the Ministry of Health

Introductions... and objects – A ball, a book, and a song
Qualifications for Online Learning

- The Pacific Open Learning Health Net (POLHN), sponsored by the World Health Organization (WHO)
- Provides eLearning opportunities throughout the Pacific region
- Collaboration between WHO/POLHN, Seward Incorporated, and Department of Nursing at Bemidji State University
Purpose

Produce more individuals capable of creating and teaching online courses offered via Moodle (course management system).
Goals

1. Workshop I: 5-Day Blended (face-to-face and online) Training Session
2. Off-site Participant Mentoring to Build Training
3. Workshop II: 5-Day Blended (face-to-face and online) Training Session
4. Off-site Participant Mentoring to Build and Conduct Training
Our Working Plan

- Make a plan with those requesting educational services
- Assess – Assess – Assess
  - Assess your environment (when on site)
- Adjusting your sails
- Support – Support – Support
- Develop – Develop – Develop
- Get ready for the new courses to go online
- Adjusting your sails as needed
- Enjoy the ride
First land-based visit was in March, 2009
* Computers, searching, typing, and electricity

Morning Tea was a requirement
* Students identified various opportunities to meet, greet, and be both learners and host
Challenges:

1. Computer access
2. High Speed (or sort of) connections
3. Electricity
4. Rain
5. “Not just another training”
   1. Required outcomes
   2. Reality of environment

Problem Addressed: Nurses in Samoa have no access to continuing education once they have their initial university education and are employed in the villages of Western Samoa.
We started with the basics

- Range of computer skills
Assess – Assess – Assess

- Assess your environment (when on site)
Adjusting your sails

Moving to an internet café
Considering how realistic all-online programming would be...
The few computers in the university library were covered with plastic sheets and students were not allowed to use them.... quarantined in the library.
## Specifications:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>CSL Computer Café Capabilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Computers</td>
<td>20-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computers</td>
<td>Dell PC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--Processor Speed</td>
<td>2.4 GHZ / 2.4 GHZ here</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--Computer Software Loaded</td>
<td>Microsoft Office – Word, PowerPoint, Excel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Microsoft Office Picture Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Microsoft Paint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adobe Acrobat Reader</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Specifications (continued):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>CSL Computer Café Capabilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>--Browser Software</td>
<td>IE version 7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--Browser includes Adobe Flash-player</td>
<td>Firefox version 3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet Connection Speed</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet Connection Bandwidth</td>
<td>Broadband</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of a Computer Projector and Screen</td>
<td>2 Mb / home 10 Mb / BSU 100 Mb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of a Whiteboard</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of Separate Classroom</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Develop – Develop – Develop

- First workshop focused on looking at what resources were available...
- Participant skills
- Areas of focus for skills
1. What are some of the textbooks and academic resources used to support learning in your teaching/learning environments (classroom, community, workplace)?

2. How do you encourage students and other learners to participate in discussions during educational sessions?

3. What are some adaptations to the online environment?
4. What are some methods you use to evaluate the effectiveness of your courses (online or F2F)?
5. What do you do with the feedback?
6. How do you obtain feedback from partner agencies/organizations?
7. What types of ways do you communicate to these agencies/organizations
   • How do you use their feedback and what adjustments were made?
Develop – Develop – Develop

- Face to face work was the most effective
- Focused time with students was highly productive
- Concern about how the students would access courses with limited computer/electricity availability
The reality

During the second workshop plans for mentoring students to complete their courses were disrupted by:

1. Country wide H1N1 outbreak and the schools being closed for over 2 weeks
2. Tsunami that wiped out much of the population on the south shore
Adjusting the sails as needed

- Moving from all online to a face-to-face with some mail-in options
- Decreasing the complexity of the course (size of pictures, use of u-tube)
- Connecting with local resources so more face-to-face can happen
  - Student from Australia invited to come back to Western Samoa and work with the faculty/nurses
  - Technology support from Figi came back for a number of 2-3 day instructional support dates.
Results

• Results from the workshop participants they indicated:
  • the course was "Excellent" (82%) or “Good” (23%).
  • workshop was challenging, the types of skills they were learning were valuable, especially in an increasingly technical society.
  • They appreciated this opportunity to broaden their knowledge.
  • Of the 22 original participants, 10 were to be ready to offer an online (or hybrid – online/face-to-face) course by January 2010.
Acknowledgements: This workshop would not have been possible without the welcoming spirit and willingness to collaborate from the Samoan participants, Fulisia Aiavao (Dean of Nursing at National University of Samoa), Nancy Hendrickson (Seward, Instructional Designer and Co-Instructor), Verlesh Singh (technology support), Seward Incorporated, and POLHN.
Questions?
Thank you for your time and attention....