Best Practices in Distance Education

Using the Tools of Technology to Increase Access to Doctoral Education
Faculty Disclosure

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<tr>
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About Us

• Jeffrey A. Willey, PhD, CNS, CLNC, RN
  ▪ Chair, Department of Nursing

• Lisa A Seldomridge, PhD, RN
  ▪ Director of Graduate and Second Degree Programs
  ▪ PI, $1.07 M grant from Maryland Higher Education Commission
Objectives

- Discuss best practices in distance education
- Describe technologies used to engage DNP students
- Share lessons learned in delivery of a distance accessible curriculum
Our DNP Program

• First doctoral program at the university
  – Only DNP in region
  – One of three DNP programs in Maryland

• Two entry options
  – Post Master’s started in Fall 2012
    • Leadership focus 38 credits
    • FNP focus 68 credits
  – Post Bachelor’s started in Fall 2014
    • FNP focus 80 credits
Course Development

• Multi-professional team
  – Faculty from nursing, health sciences, pharmacy, business, math
  – Instructional designer

• Project goals
  – Deliver DNP curriculum in distance accessible format
  – Create courses that adhere to Quality Matters™ standards
Alignment of Quality Matters™ Standards

- Learning Objectives
- Instructional Materials
- Course Technology
- Assessment & Measurement
- Course Activities & Learner Interaction

Achievement of Learning Outcomes
Best Practices (1)

• Create a teaching presence
  – Design and facilitate experiences that promote “personally meaningful and educationally worthwhile learning outcomes” (Anderson et al., 2001)

• Promote active learning
  - Formal and informal socializing facilitate group cohesion and networking (Reed, 2013)
  - Students share responsibility for learning and participate in activities (Billings, Connors, & Skiba, 2001)
Best Practices (2)

• Establish cognitive presence
  – Engagement with content
  – Extent to which learners are able to construct and confirm meaning through sustained reflection and discourse (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2001)

• Focus on pedagogy not technology
  – The purpose of an assignment drives the choice of technology
  – Technology is only a tool to help learning occur (Reed, 2013)
Best Practices (3)

• Facilitate social presence
  – Feeling part of the virtual group, communicating in a trusting environment, developing relationships, “projecting individual personality (Garrison, 2009)
Best Practices (4)

- Collect feedback early and often
- Use games and other immersion activities to foster cognitive engagement
- Design courses to have a similar look and navigation
- Consider accessibility and inclusivity
- Provide ample tech support
Asynchronous Technologies

• **Video Recording**
  Captures computer screens, audio and/or video for later playback in a course through an LMS

• **Advantages**
  – Easy to use; available 24/7
  – Can be played in small chunks, replayed, edited for re-use
  – Downloadable for mobile devices
  – Able to “see” and “hear” others

• **Disadvantages**
  – Limited interaction
Asynchronous Technologies (2)

Discussion Boards

• **Advantages**
  – Easy to use; available 24/7
  – Encourages full exploration of topic
  – Free within LMS

• **Disadvantages**
  – Some monopolize with excessive posts
  – Time consuming for faculty to monitor
  – Unable to “see” one another
  – Text only communication
Asynchronous Technologies (3)

Voice Recording
Adds voice annotation to a document, image, video, presentation; allows community feedback via microphone, webcam, keyboard or phone

• **Advantages**
  • Available 24/7; easy to use
  • Allows participants to “see” one another
  • Free

• **Disadvantages**
  • Quality of internet service affects functionality
Asynchronous Technologies (4)

Animated Presentations

• **Advantages**
  - Uses avatars, videos, and other graphics along with content
  - Highly interactive and engaging
  - Features drag and drop, click and reveal, quizzing, brainteasers

• **Disadvantages**
  - Time intensive to create
  - Cost
Avatar Use
Uses speaking avatar to present situations and events

- **Advantages**
  - Easy to set up and use
  - Uses personalized voice
  - Free service

- **Disadvantages**
  - Restrictions on free service
Synchronous Technologies

Virtual Meeting Space
Allows attendees to share computer screens or files, chat, broadcast audio and video

- **Advantages**
  - Participants see/hear one another; may also participate via text
  - Easy to use; may be recorded and posted

- **Disadvantages**
  - Speed of internet service affects functionality
  - Participants must be available at precise time
  - Cost
Synchronous Technologies (2)

Chat within LMS

• **Advantages**
  – Easy to use; may be recorded and posted
  – Free

• **Disadvantages**
  – Participants must be available at precise time
  – Some participants may dominate “chat”
  – Text-only communication
Lessons Learned

• Faculty
  – Comfort level and knowledge
  – Development activities
  – Ongoing support-instructional designer
  – Time

• Students
  – Comfort level and knowledge
  – Learning style
  – Availability and quality of Internet
  – Orientation to distance learning

• Technology
  – Match with learning course objectives (not just a cool tool)
  – Technical requirements
  – Library and tech support
Selected References


Selected References (2)


