ABSTRACT

The rapidly evolving paradigm of online education has increased the number of faculty teaching online at the School of Nursing at the University of Pittsburgh. This needs assessment focused on the unique teaching and learning needs of graduate faculty who teach Pitt Online courses. Findings from the survey guide faculty development sessions and lay a foundation for scholarship in teaching and learning.

METHODS

The survey was developed based on a review of scholarly literature and input from faculty who were both inexperienced and experienced online instructors. The Qualtrics survey was announced in a School of Nursing faculty meeting and emailed to faculty for completion. Faculty were DNP or PhD prepared (n=27). The survey was conducted in spring 2017.

RESULTS

Do you use a mobile device in your teaching?

| YES: 14.8% | NO: 85.2% |

What tools would you like to learn more about?

- Learning Analytics: 29.6%
- Wikis: 25.9%
- Games: 22.2%
- Social Networking: 22.2%
- Peer Review: 18.5%
- Online Surveys: 18.5%
- Simulations: 14.8%
- Web Conferencing: 14.8%
- Groups: 14.8%
- Online Discussions: 14.8%

BACKGROUND

The School of Nursing began offering Pitt Online programs in 2009. In order to gain a better understanding of the faculty needs related to online instruction, it was imperative to survey all faculty who are currently or will be responsible for developing and teaching courses. According to Elliott, Rhoades, Jackson, Kearney, and Mandernach (2015), flexibility and diversity in faculty development programs is essential in order to accommodate the disparate needs of faculty. They recommended a needs assessment to help guide faculty development and support online teaching.

OBJECTIVES

The goals of the needs assessment include the following:

1. To examine School of Nursing faculty’s confidence and perceptions associated with integrating technologies into their online teaching practice.
2. To assess faculty’s level of knowledge and skills using instructional technologies commonly used in online courses.
3. To identify priorities for future professional development opportunities for School of Nursing faculty.

FACULTY COMMENTS

1. “I think that the Pitt SON is doing a great job in meeting the needs of our online students.”
2. “Students frequently tell me that they enjoy the feedback in my courses...but that it has not been their experience in all courses where the faculty member can appear to be ‘absent’ or in ‘name only.’”
3. “There should be formal training and certification available for online education.”
4. “Would appreciate some formal process for incorporating on-line technologies either into hybrid course or to convert a course to online (beyond using voice-over PowerPoints or video of lecture (Panopto).”

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the needs assessment results, the School of Nursing is offering three faculty workshops in Spring 2018:
- Peer Review Tools and Guidelines
- Grading and Feedback
- Synchronous Sessions with GoToMeeting

In addition, an informational handout was developed and distributed to faculty: “Using Your SmartPhone in Online Teaching.”

The next step is an administrative planning meeting with School of Nursing faculty and Pitt Online staff.