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Preparing New E-Learning Faculty for Online Instruction

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Preparing New E-Learning Faculty for Online Instruction

Online Teaching, Design and Development (OTDD)

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Kansas State University
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The Office of Mediated Education

- Three instructional designers
- Graphic artist
- Technologists
- K-State Online / Axio Learning LMS
- Support service to faculty, staff and administrators
Some **Challenges** for Faculty

- Acclimating to e-learning
- Educational technologies
- Pedagogical strategies
- Laws and policies affecting e-learning
- The creation of e-learning objects, assignments, and other elements
Comprehensive eLearning Course Build
Early Course Objectives

- eLearning knowledge base
- Axio™ Learning Management System (LMS) understandings and familiarization
- eLearning curricular development
- Course development documentation /project management
- Online interactivity and community building
- Research and locating of digital materials
- Building self (and group) support as instructors
- Retaining online learners
- eLearning educational quality control
- Latest theories and applied practices (and where the two meld)
Advanced Course Objectives

- Uses of third-party authoring tools for the building of digital learning objects (Tegrity™, Wimba™, SoftChalk Lesson Builder™, Captivate™, Mediator 8™, Audacity™ or others)
- The uses of open and Creative Commons-copyrighted materials in situations of academic “inheritance” and localization
- Test for academic rigor in the learning
- Put in place a course update plan
- Build courses for identity, marketing and branding
Advanced Course Objectives (cont.)

• **Optional Add-Ons:** Eportfolio assessments, teaching case studies, pedagogical agentry, mental model building, and employing educational games and simulations for learning, automated learning
Below-the-Surface Goals

- Connect with faculty as instructional designers and strengthen instructional design in online learning
- Create an online LMS infrastructure for training educators in teaching online and lowering “fear factor” re: educational technologies
- Update knowledge about eLearning strategies, laws and campus policies
- Bring educational administrators along in their knowledge base of eLearning
- Broaden senses of how their LMS is used / can be used for learning
- Collecting materials for future learners from the present crop
Showcasing the Axio™ LMS
Some **Pedagogical Strategies**

- “Week 0” or Pre-Week acclimation to the online space
- Rubrics for broad swath of educational fields, embedding of quality standards (with flexibility for individuation)
- Multiple delivery methods for online lectures and slideshows (accessibility and experiential learning)
- Embodiment of multimedia build concepts of Clark and Mayer (*ELearning and the Science of Instruction*)
- Open deadlines and some self-pacing for learners
- Co-learning and co-critique of learners (in cohorts)
Pedagogical Strategies (cont.)

- Unique course-based focus for each learner (actual building of digital learning objects and course policies, plans, and materials during the course)
- Experiential synchronous chat and Wimba™ experience
- “Shadow parallel Axio™ course shell” for learner builds and digital delivery (gallery concept for peer critique)
- Commitment to an Axio™ courseware shell at the end of the course
- Downloadables for more learning to enhance the effect of the course
Soliciting critique of the course as it is in progress, real-time changes based on expressed learner needs

Co-instructing and eLearning Modeling: shared participant emails (for most), shared course builds, mutual support and critique, equal participation (ideal)

No extra technologies beyond access to the WWW and Internet, PowerPoint reader, Microsoft Word and browser plug-ins for multimedia

All assignments linked to the individual instructor’s course builds or co-developed course builds
Dual-Track Design: K12 and University Tracks

**DIFFERENCES:** These tracks differed based on...
- Resource references
- Textbooks
- Uses of eLearning
- Learner planning

**SIMILARITIES:** These were similar based on...
- Shared course digital materials
- Quality of interactions
- Similar assignments (with flexibility to adjust to the local settings)
Textbook Selections

- **K-12**: Mark and Cindy Grabe’s *Integrating Technology for Meaningful Learning*
- **University**: Drs. Ruth Colvin Clark and Richard E. Mayer’s *e-Learning and the Science of Instruction*
- **Suggested Text for Both Tracks**: Rena M. Palloff and Keith Pratt’s *The Virtual Student: A Profile and Guide to Working with Online Learners*

* The course could run purely on the digital educational contents, so the textbooks could be seen as value-added vs. absolutely necessary.
The **5-Week Course** Schedule

- **Pre-week** Learning and Review
- **Week 1:** Making the Change
- **Week 2:** Learning Curricular Issues
- **Week 3:** Technology Issues
- **Week 4:** Building Community and Launching Virtual Teams
- **Week 5:** Launching the Course
- **Post-Week** for Stragglers

* A 10-week version was offered at the request of one college.
High Interactivity
High Interactivity (cont.)

- Asynchronous interactivity (message boards)
- Cohort model encouraged
- Co-developed course development projects
- Multi-field, multi-domain interactions for co-learning; high use of multimedia
- Opportunity for synchronous interactivity (real-time live classrooms using Wimba™)
- High online instructor presence
Learner Recruitment and Outreach

- A cohort from a college launching an online graduate degree program
- Individuals from K12 introduced at a conference
- Clients of the instructional designers from various projects
- Administrators from several campus units
- A new college coming online with e-learning
- Publicity through *DCE Connections*, *Tell Tuesday*, and other on-campus communications organs
Critical Housekeeping Supports

- Pre-course emails, continuing course emails and announcements, post-course emails
- Telephone calls
- Registration
- Early handholding: telephone, in-person and online
- Pre-launch critiques of course and revisions
- Management of expectations
Welcome Page
Retention Strategies

- Administrator inclusion for leadership and motivation
- OME administrators’ “lurking” for learning about the various uses of the LMS
- Cohort-based learning model (learning with peers and peer feedback)
- Open and general curriculum for a number of academic fields
- Continual supportive engagement
- Designing for learner courses and needs (no extraneous assessments or work)
Modeling of eLearning Instruction

- Ready and substantive responses and feedback (in class, via email and in F2F meetings at learner request)
- Friendly interactivity
- Instructor telepresence
- Transparency re: the instructional build, policies, course structure
- Research citations for all digital resources
- Protection of learner privacy
- Strategies for encouraging social engagement and “delurking”
Built-in Course Critique and Debriefing

- Strategies to improve the course from pre-launch, during launch, and post-launch (critique)
- Email debriefing of course (with questions)
- Continual feedback and interactions regarding the issues
- Campus mail debriefing for anonymity (if preferred)
- One individual participant F2F course critique and debriefing
- Future use of K-state Survey System for anonymous feedback
**Discoveries from Going Live**

- Faculty are busy and need solid motives to complete an online course. (A half dozen never even started the course early on.)
- Course development deadlines were not met by instructional designers, and all but one dropped out of this endeavor in the first semester of going live.
- Co-teaching doesn’t work without some equal background in eLearning, without some rewards structure and without some constructive pressure.
Learner Motivations: No Grading, No Credit, No Cost ... No Pressure?
Updates and Revisions: 2006 - 2008

- Content add-ons (games and simulations, automated learning, and authoring tools)
- Slideshow updates (with pagination, branding, a new logo, credits page, the new gating feature, and content infusions)
- Accessibility module add-on with a faculty tip sheet on creating accessible online courses
- User feedback
The Future

- **Varying Course Lengths:** Longer scheduled course length
- **Other Modes:** Possible Automation / Open-Entry, Open-Exit / Hybrid?
- **Selective Assignments:** More selective assignments (but fewer)
- **Texts:** Possibly more eLearning-focused textbooks (Dr. Shirley Waterhouse; Drs. Simonson, Smaldino, Albright and Zvacek, and / or others)
- **Cost Mitigation:** Tuition costs?
The **Future** (cont.)

- **Versioning:** Graduate credit? Free offerings for Axio™ User Community partners? Free on completion but tuition if left incomplete?
- **Instructor Change?** Change in instructors (possibly from faculty ranks, possibly with one instructional designer, possibly with a mix of faculty and instructional designer)
- **Critical Mass of Learners:** Larger incoming class for momentum? Smaller incoming class for more personal attention? Inclusion of graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) and student multimedia specialists in future courses?
The Future (cont.)

- **Value-Added F2F Workshops**: Ongoing workshops through the Instructional Design Technology Roundtables (IDTRT)
- **The Latest Research**: Updates for the latest research
- **Responsiveness to Learners’ Perceived Needs**: Updates based on learners’ perceived needs
- **Continuing Course Revisions**: Revisions based on administrative and instructional feedback
Contact and Conclusion

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Instructional Design Open Studio (IDOS) Blog

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