

Big Picture Presence: Bringing Teaching Presence to the Forefront

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Background

- Lacey Finley
 - Ph.D. – Curriculum & Instruction
 - Emphasis: Educational Computing, Design, and Online Learning
 - Master of Science in Business Education
 - MBA
- Teaching Focus:
 - Business Communication
 - Business Education
 - Professional Development
- Research Interests:
 - Passion for best practices in online education
 - Interested instructor-student interaction in the online learning environment
 - Interested in technology in the online learning environment
 - Driven by a desire to help students succeed

Background

- Online Learning Growth in Higher Education
- Online Degree and Program Growth at Four-Year Institutions
- Four-Year Institutions and Online Learning Opportunities
- Online Course Technology
 - Learning Management Systems (LMS)
 - Blackboard
- Teaching Online
 - Interaction through Learning Management Systems

Background

- Growth of online education
- Business student population
 - Largest portion of online undergraduate enrollment (Clinefelter & Aslanian, 2014)
- No research found on specific instructor attributes/practices of Teaching Presence from the perspective of online undergraduate Business students
- Lack of understanding in regard to what Business students perceive as good teaching in the online learning environment
 - Particularly in the area of Teaching Presence and the Teaching Presence Components
 - Design and Organization
 - Discourse Facilitation
 - Direct Instruction

Purpose

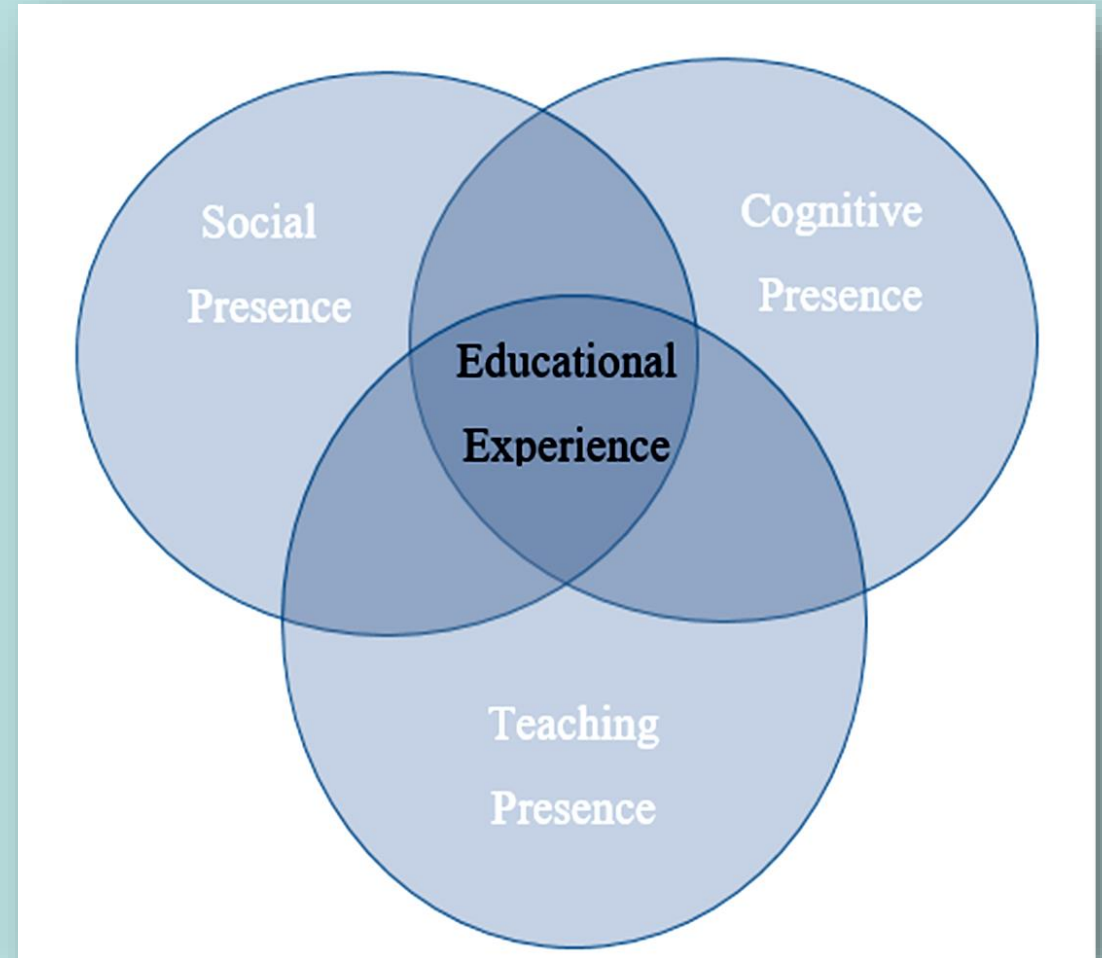
- Explore how undergraduate Business students perceive Teaching Presence in online Business courses
- Investigate what components of Teaching Presence undergraduate Business students find most valuable
- Understand how exemplary Teaching Presence is demonstrated

Theoretical Framework

Teaching Presence within the
Community of Inquiry Model

- Social Presence
- Cognitive Presence
- Teaching Presence

Intersect to develop the
educational experience



Adapted from Anderson, Rourke, Garrison, and Archer (2001)

Theoretical Framework

Teaching Presence:

- Virtual “visibility” of the instructor as perceived by students
(Baker, 2012; Arbaugh & Hwang, 2006)
- “The design, facilitation and direction of cognitive and social processes for the purpose of realizing personally meaningful and educationally worthwhile learning outcomes”
(Anderson et al., 2001, p. 5).

Teaching Presence Model

Design & Organization

Discourse Facilitation

Direct Instruction

Theoretical Framework

Teaching Presence Model

Design & Organization

- Setting curriculum
- Establishing time parameters
- Utilizing medium effectively
- Establishing netiquette
- Designing methods

Direct Instruction

- Present content/questions
- Focus the discussion on specific issues
- Confirm understanding
- Diagnose misconceptions
- Inject knowledge from diverse sources

Discourse Facilitation

- Identifying areas of agreement/disagreement
- Reinforce student contributions
- Setting climate for learning
- Drawing in participants, prompting discussion
- Assessing the efficacy of the process
- Seeking to reach consensus

Research Questions

1. How do undergraduate Business students perceive Teaching Presence in online courses?
2. What Teaching Presence components (design and organization, discourse facilitation and direct instruction) do undergraduate Business students find valuable in online courses?
3. How do exemplary undergraduate Business course faculty demonstrate Teaching Presence in online instruction?

Design

Case Study

- Capture student voices through in-depth interviews
- Provide a meaningful understanding of the nature and attributes of Teaching Presence through student-nominated faculty interviews, observations, and documentation

Data Collection

Data gathered from multiple sources:

- Semi-structured interviews
 - Interview protocols were used for student & faculty interviews
 - Based certain interview questions on the Teaching Presence Scale

Documents

- Course Content
- Course Materials
- Teaching Evaluations (Student Survey Responses)

Observation

- Discussion posts
- Announcements
- Recordings

Research Setting

University:

- Four-year university in the Midwest
 - 4284 full-time students
 - 1518 part-time students
- 58 percent females and 42 percent males
- 15 online degree options
- Fall 2014 - 2,344 students enrolled in at least one online course

Research Setting

Business Department:

- Faculty:
 - 25 Full-Time Faculty
 - 21 Adjunct Faculty
 - 32 Faculty members teach at least one online course each semester
- Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA)
 - The study focused on students pursuing a BSBA
 - Approximately 24% of the total student population was pursuing a BSBA degree
- Blackboard Learn - LMS

Research Setting

Business Department:

Total School of Business Student Population	
Total Enrollment	905
Freshman	175
Sophomore	160
Junior	260
Senior	310

- About 40% of students take at least one online course per semester:
 - 70 Freshman
 - 64 Sophomores
 - 105 Juniors
 - 125 Seniors

Participants

Business Students:

- Twenty Business students
 - Enrolled in at least one online Business course during the Fall 2015 semester
 - For-credit three-hour course
 - Pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration
 - Both male and female students
 - All academic levels – proportional sampling
 - 3 Freshman
 - 3 Sophomores
 - 6 Juniors
 - 8 Seniors

Participants

Business Faculty:

- Student Nomination of Exemplary Online Undergraduate Business Faculty
- Faculty most often nominated by students as demonstrating effective methods of Teaching Presence
- Researcher identified three most-named faculty
- Conducted in-depth interviews with student-nominated exemplary faculty
 - Faculty M (Instructor 1)
 - Faculty Y (Instructor 2)
 - Faculty G (Instructor 3)

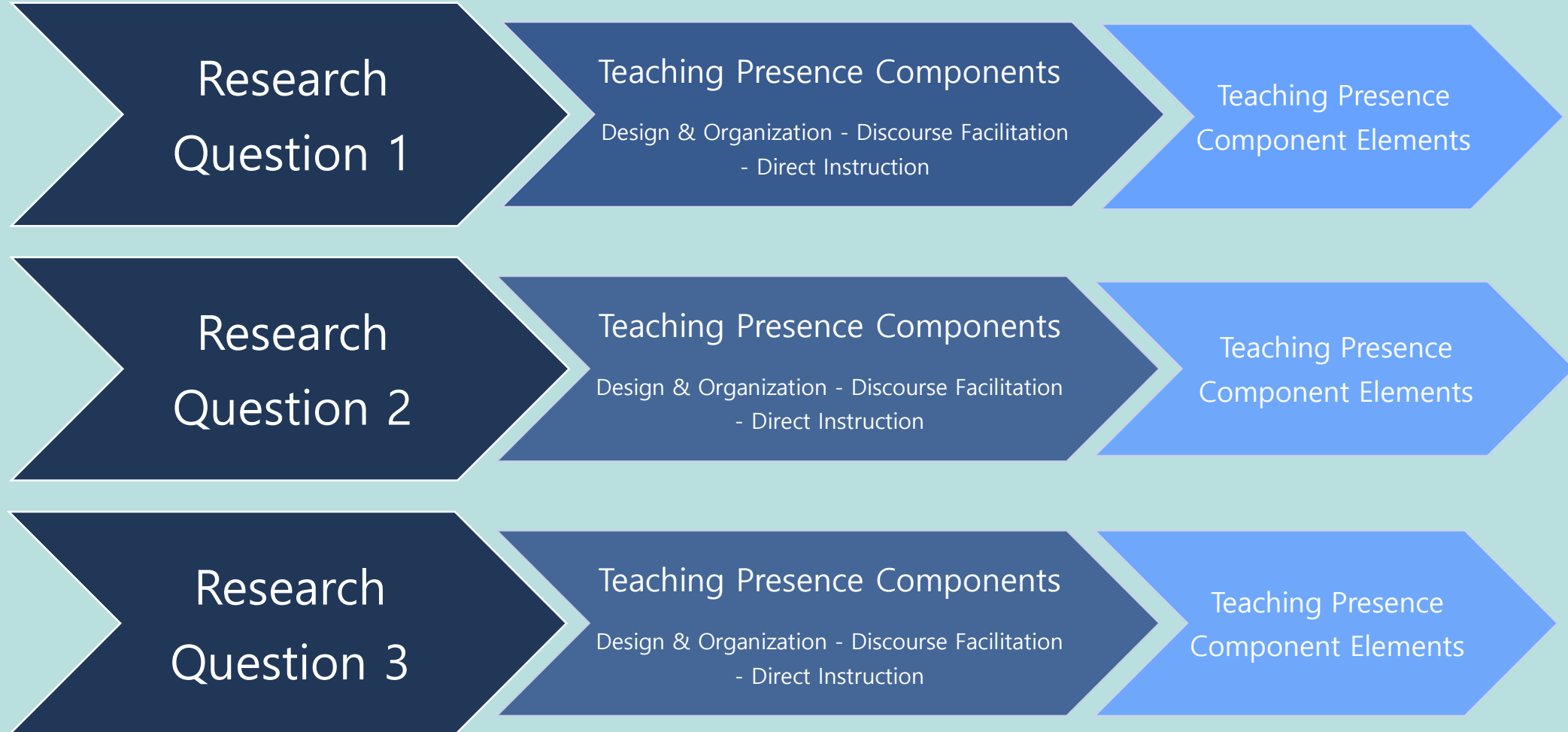
Data Analysis

Coding:

- NVivo 10 Software
- Interviews coded by question within NVivo
 - Meticulously focused on the purpose of the study, paying special attention to tying all information back to the research questions
- Themes and categories were broken into “Nodes”
 - Matching comments were coded by Node
- Pattern Coding
- Documents and Observations were organized as “Memos” in NVivo

Data Analysis

Patterns and Themes:



Trustworthiness

- Dependability
- Credibility
- Transferability
- Confirmability

Results

Question 1:

How do undergraduate Business students perceive Teaching Presence in online courses?

101 Total Units
3 Themes
12 Categories

Question 2:

What Teaching Presence components do undergraduate Business students find valuable in online courses?

245 total units
3 Themes
16 Categories

Question 3:

How do exemplary undergraduate online Business course faculty demonstrate Teaching Presence in online instruction?

81 total units
3 Themes
12 Categories

- Teaching Presence components were used as the themes
 - (Design and Organization, Discourse Facilitation, and Direct Instruction)
- Teaching Presence Model component elements (sub-components) were used as categories

Conclusions

Q1: How do undergraduate Business students perceive Teaching Presence in online courses?

- Direct Instruction
 - Confirm Understanding
 - Students needed to know that their instructor was present and available
 - Instructor reassurance through interaction influenced student perceptions of Teaching Presence
 - Instructor-driven communication prompted Teaching Presence
 - Students valued specific assignment feedback

Conclusions

Q1: How do undergraduate Business students perceive Teaching Presence in online courses?

- Discourse Facilitation
 - Drawing in Participants, Prompting Discussion
 - Teaching Presence was apparent through instructor participation in course discussions
 - Extra support and guidance was provided by instructors in discussion forums
- Design and Organization
 - Designing Methods
 - Student perceptions of Teaching Presence were influenced by the level of detail and effectiveness of communication provided by online Business course instructors
 - Online video lectures personalized the instruction process and created presence

Conclusions

Q2: What Teaching Presence components do undergraduate Business students find valuable in online courses?

- Design and Organization
 - Designing Methods
 - Students needed specific learning activity requirement information
 - Video lectures were a valued aspect of "Design and Organization"
 - Clear expectations stated at the course outset were valued by students
- Design and Organization
 - Establishing Time Parameters
 - A full course schedule was desired on the first day of the course
 - Instructor reminders and announcements further established time parameters

Conclusions

Q2: What Teaching Presence components do undergraduate Business students find valuable in online courses?

- Discourse Facilitation
 - Setting Climate for Learning
 - Students valued facilitation through instructor encouragement and prompting of exploration
- Direct Instruction
 - Confirm Understanding
 - Students wanted a “lifeline” in the form of instructor reassurance
 - Feedback fostered student understanding

Conclusions

Q3: How do exemplary undergraduate online Business course faculty demonstrate Teaching Presence in online instruction?

- Design and Organization
 - Establishing Time Parameters
 - Exemplary instructors communicated time parameter information frequently and early
 - Utilizing the Medium Effectively
 - Teaching Presence can be demonstrated through effective use of the medium
- Direct Instruction
 - Confirming Understanding
 - Instructors that demonstrated a high level of Teaching Presence provided very specific feedback

Conclusions

Q3: How do exemplary undergraduate online Business course faculty demonstrate Teaching Presence in online instruction?

- Discourse Facilitation
 - Assessing the Efficacy of the Process
 - Presenting information in an effective manner assisted students with task management
 - Drawing in Participants, Prompting Discussion
 - Exemplary course instructors understood that some students needed specific directives in order to actively participate
 - Instructors that demonstrated a high level of teaching presence were thoughtful about discussion development in an effort to prompt engagement
 - Instructors that demonstrated a high level of Teaching Presence were deliberate about their own engagement in course discussions

Recommendations

Teaching Presence Model Online Business Course Guidelines:

Design and Organization

- Provide clear learning activity instructions and consistent arrangement
- Prepare integrated video lectures
- Include a clear, detailed course calendar on the first day of the course

Recommendations

Teaching Presence Model Online Business Course Guidelines:

Discourse Facilitation

- Actively facilitate online course discussions
- Provide students with well-crafted discussion questions
- Incorporate a supplementary discussion forum to address questions, provide guidance
- Include specific directives regarding how to participate in discussions

Recommendations

Teaching Presence Model Online Business Course Guidelines:

Direct Instruction

- Provide responsive, multifaceted approach to instructor-student interaction
- Actively prompt student-instructor interaction
- Identify and address student comprehension struggles
- Provide feedback that guides student understanding and enables students to move forward in a successful manner

Recommendations

Future Studies:

- Examine how online students in different academic disciplines perceive Teaching Presence
- Conduct a qualitative study at a different research location
- Design a study focusing on how technology can increase Teaching Presence
- Conduct a longitudinal study of student's perceptions of Teaching Presence from the beginning of their program to the end
- Examine how instructor attributes influence Teaching Presence

Limitations

- The researcher had taken and taught several online courses, including courses during the Fall 2015 semester. There may have been potential for researcher bias in the interpretation of findings.
- The researcher was a faculty member at the research location. Student and faculty participants may have been inclined to answer in an overly positive way, rather than speaking frankly during the interview process.

Delimitations

- This study examined faculty and students at a single Midwest university in a mid-size city. Research findings may have limited transferability to institutions in different settings.
- Student taking Business courses online during the Fall 2015 semester were selected to participate. The selected students did not represent the entire university population.
- The researcher constructed the interview protocol on the concept of Teaching Presence and its three components in order to learn more about their individual importance within the model and their application to the population of this study.

Questions



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