

AIJ Conference Review Results

This message was sent with High importance.

Administrative, Journal [aij@swosu.edu]

Sent: Tuesday, August 16, 2011 12:42 PM

To: Steve Bounds

Dear Mr. Bounds,

The results of our double-blind review process are in, and your article has been accepted for presentation at the Administrative Issues Journal Inaugural Academic Conference. Congratulations!

The next step is for you, and any co-authors that may be attending, to go ahead and register for the conference. Each author/co-author who will be presenting or attending must complete their own "Conference Registration Form" and pay the appropriate registration fee. The link for the "Conference Registration Form" is as follows: <http://www.swosu.edu/academics/aij/conf-reg.asp>. Payments for registration may be made via PayPal, check, or money order. More information about the conference and payment methods may be found at the following link: <http://www.swosu.edu/academics/aij/conference.asp>.

Our Editorial Board is meeting next week to discuss details of the Conference presentation schedule and other issues that are of importance to you. After the meeting I will be sending you an additional email with the information you will need to prepare for the conference. At this point we simply ask you go ahead and get registered so we may start working towards an accurate head count.

Conference Overview

Thursday, October 13

Time	Topic	Location
7:45	Registration	Stafford Lobby
8:30-9:45	Keynote: Building Organizations of Opportunity	Stafford 104
10:00-11:00	Presentations (15 minutes each, 5 minutes of questions)	See Page 6
11:15-12:30	Lunch at SWOSU Student Union	Ballroom
1:00-2:00	Presentations (15 minutes each, 5 minutes of questions)	See Page 7
2:15-3:15	Workshop: Instead, the Exceptions are the Rules	Ballroom
3:30-4:30	Presentations (15 minutes each, 5 minutes of questions)	See Page 8
6:30-8:30	Dinner	Lucille's Roadhouse

Friday, October 14

Time	Topic	Location
8:00	Registration	Stafford Lobby
8:30-9:15	Presentations (15 minutes each, 5 minutes of questions)	See Page 9
9:30-10:45	Panel: Opportunities, Change, and Transformation: The 21st Century Mandate	Stafford 104
11:00-12:15	Editorial Board Panel: Submission DOs and DONTs	Stafford 104
12:30-1:45	Lunch at SWOSU	Ballroom

Conference Schedule - Thursday, October 13th

Keynote

Stafford 104

Building Organizations of Opportunity
Dr. Michael Williams

8:30 am

Presentations

10:00-11:00

Stafford 108

Session Chair: Evan Jarrett

The Leadership Triad: Identity, Integrity, Authenticity
David Henderson

10:00 am

Complexity, Knowledge, and Structure: A Systemic Understanding of Organizational Learning
Justin D. Walton

10:20 am

Designing and Implementing Two-Way Dual Language Programs: Issues to Consider
April Haulman and Regina Lopez

10:40 am

Stafford 110

Session Chair: Teri Allen

Testing the Efficacy of Self-Affirmation in Improving Student Performance in a Business Law Course
Lynn Murray

10:00 am

Revisiting the Arts in the No Child Left Behind Era
Patricia Simons

10:20 am

Reengineering Hospital Systems
Uche Nwabueze

10:40 am

Stafford 112

Session Chair: Kelly Moor

Creating Opportunities: Gerontological Service Learning in a Community Practice Project
Cindy Brown, Rosalie Otters, and Carolyn Turturro

10:00 am

Two Professional Learning Community Camps: Differing Opportunities
Glen W. Hartsoch

10:20 am

Introspection and Abstract Thinking: Maximizing Internship Opportunities
Flor A Ornelas

10:40 am

Conference Schedule - Thursday, October 13th

Lunch

SWOSU Student Union Ballroom

11:15 am

Presentations

1:00-2:00

Stafford 108

Session Chair: Trisha Wald

An Interprofessional Education Opportunity for Future Health Care Leaders
Denise Neill and Jere Hammer

1:00 pm

Nursing Workload and The Changing Health Care Environment
Denise Neill

1:20 pm

A Comparative Analysis of Cultural Competence in Beginning and Graduating Nursing Students
Helen Reyes and Deborah Davenport

1:40 pm

Stafford 110

Session Chair: Teri Allen

A 3-Prong Approach to a Competency-Based Curriculum
Tina Fields

1:00 pm

Graduate Student Perceptions of an Effective Online Class
Steve M. Bounds

1:20 pm

Factors Contributing to Successful Transitions into the Role of a New Superintendency in Texas: A Mixed Methods Triangulation Convergence Inquiry Check
Nancy B. Jones

1:40 pm

Workshop

Ballroom

Instead, the Exceptions are the Rules
Dr. Michael Williams

2:15 pm

Conference Schedule - Thursday, October 13th

Presentations

3:30-4:30

Stafford 108

Session Chair: MaryRose Hart

Novice Principals Need Peer Mentoring
Rosalinda Hernandez

3:30 pm

School Leadership's Trials and Trails: A Hundred Leadership Paths Diverged, Intertwined
and Bifurcated, Sometimes Coming Out At the Same Place
Charles Waggoner

3:50 pm

Leveraging the MBTI to Affect Change
MaryRose Hart

4:10 pm

Stafford 110

Session Chair: Dana Gray

Service-Learning as a Professional Development Tool
Lillian C Wichinsky

3:30 pm

Service Learning and Student Practitioners
Dana M. Gray

3:50 pm

Anomalies in the System: Is a New Educational Paradigm Upon Us?
Ed Cunliff and John Barthell

4:10 pm

Dinner

Lucille's Roadhouse

6:30 pm



Conference Schedule - Friday, October 13th

Presentations

8:30-9:30

Stafford 108

Session Chair: Lisa Appeddu

Creating Opportunities with Mentoring Relationships
Carrie Boden McGill 8:30 am

Mentoring Postsecondary Tenure-Track Faculty: A Theory Building Case Study and Implications for Institutional Policy
Isela Russell 8:50 am

Stafford 110

Session Chair: Teri Allen

High School Students Embedded in Adult Community College Classes
Karen Saenz 8:30 am

A Comparison of Urban, Suburban, and Rural Principal Leadership Skills by Campus Student Achievement Level
Susan Erwin and Pam Winn 8:50 am

Panel

Stafford 104

Opportunities, Change, and Transformation: The 21st Century Mandate
Dr. Michael Williams 9:30 am

Workshop

Stafford 104

Editorial Board Panel: AIJ Submission DOs and DONTs
Dr. Tami Moser, Dr. Patsy Parker, Dr. Trisha Wald, Dr. Kelly Moor, Dr. Lisa Appeddu 11:00 am

Lunch

SWOSU Student Union Ballroom 12:30 pm

**GRADUATE STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF AN EFFECTIVE ONLINE
CLASS**

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Graduate Student Perceptions of an Effective Online Class

Abstract

Online learning is a growing trend within the higher education community. As more universities offer more graduate programs totally online for the convenience of the older student who often has a family and full-time job it is imperative that instructors give attention to what students believe constitutes an effective online class. This paper surveyed 36 graduate students to determine what they considered important in an online course. Students want a professor who uses multimedia effectively, who establishes social interaction among students, who has a well-designed online format, who has an online presence, and who is available to students.

Keywords: online learning, graduate, pedagogy, statistics

Today online classes are an increasing trend within the higher education community. Pace and Kelley (2006) reported that during the 2001-2002 academic year, 56 percent of all 2- and 4-year colleges offered some form of distance education. That trend increased to nearly 90 percent just a few years later. According to a June 2010 supplement to USA Today, over 4.6 million students were taking at least one online course during the fall 2008 term; a 17 percent increase over the number reported the previous year. It went on to state that from 2004 to 2010 online enrollments were growing substantially faster than overall higher education enrollments. In an effort to meet the demands of their students, especially the graduate students, universities have been expanding their number of online offerings annually. This propensity to offer more courses online requires faculty to face new challenges. As Kosak, Manning, Dobson, Rogerson, Cotnam, Colaric, et al. (2004) point out, “faculty need to have some understanding of pedagogy as it relates to distance education.” The purpose of this study was to examine the suggestions expressed by graduate students regarding the components of what they considered an effective online class.

The primary challenges to developing a good online course have typically fallen into two categories, technology and instructor characteristics. The technology challenge has been dramatically reduced in recent years. Regarding instructor characteristics, Milheim (2011) examined the role of adult education philosophy in facilitating online instruction and the humanistic philosophy in which there is significant emphasis on self-direction. The instructor becomes more of a facilitator of learning as students are given much control over how and when they participate in a course.

Research has found that students want their professors to use technology, but only if it is used well (Kvavik & Caruso, 2005). Some specific technology-use complaints expressed by

students included professors filling PowerPoint slides with lots of verbiage and simply reading them verbatim; failing to moderate discussion boards; and not making good use of the learning management system, or LMS (King, 2007).

Student learning is supported by effective course design (Eastmond, 2000). The organization of an online course is very important and usually requires a considerable amount of time to design and develop (Smith, Ferguson, & Caris, 2003; Li & Akins, 2005). Course navigation is a concern expressed by students. Students appreciated instructors whose course was well organized, carefully structured in an easily-navigated manner, and contained a detailed syllabus (Brescia, Miller, Ibrahima, & Murry, 2004; Young, 2006). Simply converting lecture notes to a format that can be posted on the LMS may not constitute an effective course design.

Some suggest that perhaps the most important aspect of teaching an online course is for the instructor to establish an online presence by going online regularly. Quick response to student questions, timely evaluation of submitted work, and occasional contributions to student discussions help establish this presence. The goal is for the instructor to be perceived as a real person who is interested in teaching the student (Johnson & Aragon, 2003; Wallace, 2003). Students have a tendency to expect the instructor to be available 24/7 to provide feedback in an online environment (Hillstock, 2005).

Careful course design that ensures social interaction has been cited as essential to counteract the feelings of alienation and isolation (Li & Akins, 2005; Thurston, 2005). Several researchers have found that the greater the interactivity in an online course, the more the students were satisfied and the more they learn (Little, Titarenko, & Bergelson, 2005).

Methods

The Effective Online Class Survey instrument was developed based on the findings in the review of literature. Thirty-six graduate students in an online statistics course were surveyed using the instrument. The survey considered 20 components typically found in an online class and the respondents were asked to indicate the level of importance the component was to them personally. A Likert scale with 7 choices was used where 1 represented being very important and 7 being not important at all. For purposes of this study a choice of 1, 2, or 3 indicated the student felt the component was important and a 5, 6, or 7 indicated it was not important. A choice of 4 was considered neutral. Simple descriptive statistics were computed.

Findings and Discussion

Most of the students who completed the survey were older and held full-time jobs. A third listed their age as 36+ and only three listed their age as under 25. There were only six individuals who were in their first online class and five reported they had taken ten or more online classes.

All students reported they wanted a well-organized course that was easy to navigate and easy to find materials. In fact, 92% of the respondents chose 1 as their response. Likewise, they wanted a course syllabus with expectations laid out in meticulous detail and an easy to read textbook that explained the material well.

When asked how important it was to have optional supplemental materials on the site that covered the same material, 75% responded it was important but only 11% said very important. Seventy-seven percent felt it was important that the instructor use relevant examples from newspapers, magazines, TV news reports, etc. to illustrate the concepts being presented.

Students were divided equally over the importance of having material presented in an audio format but 81% felt it was important to have the instructor to use video to explain the

concepts. However, seeing the instructor on the video was very important to only 25% of the respondents. It was also important to have the ability to download the video material for viewing offline but not important to have it in a format to be used by MP3 players, iPods, etc.

Students preferred lessons to be presented in several relatively short chunks instead of one long session. They also preferred working independently instead of in groups with only 17% reporting it was somewhat important to work in groups. However, nearly two-thirds felt it was important to interact with other students via a discussion board. Likewise, two-thirds felt it was important to have a forum on the discussion board where they could post and respond to questions about issues without being graded on it. It was important to students that the instructor have a presence on the discussion board with 40% saying it was very important.

Prompt feedback within 72 hours on assignments was important to all students with 75% responding that it was very important. It was also important to 89% of the students that the instructor maintain “online office hours” to respond to questions and provide feedback. Likewise, students felt it was important for the instructor to use humor in the class and, especially, to show enthusiasm for teaching the class with 95% giving it a 1 or 2.

The results of this study mirrored many of the results of previous studies. Students like a well-organized class taught by an instructor who injects humor into the class and shows enthusiasm for teaching the class. They especially want quick feedback on assignments that have been submitted. One surprising response, at least to the author, was that students felt it was important that the instructor maintain online office hours to answer questions and provide feedback. The experience has generally been that students want immediate answers 24/7 and prefer not to wait for a certain time of the day or week.

In classes where video lessons are used students like to see their instructor but do not necessarily want just a “talking head”. Students who responded to the survey in this class viewed numerous videos without seeing the instructor that demonstrated how to use the software to perform statistical tests. Students also like the idea of being able to download the video lessons so they can view them offline at their convenience.

The use of discussion boards was another interesting response to the author. Two out of three students responded that it was important to have interaction with other students in the class via discussion boards. Students apparently feel the need to have a social connection with other members of the class. They want to know the other students and become acquainted (Koontz, Li, & Compora, 2006). This topic, despite recent studies, might warrant further research into the types of interactions students want to have with one another.

While this study used a relatively small sample and did not reveal any significant deviations from previous findings it did confirm that students want a professor who uses multimedia effectively, who establishes social interaction among students, who has a well-designed online format, who has an online presence, and who is available to students. As more instructors migrate their courses to an online delivery format attention should be given to what students believe constitutes an effective online class.

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