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Janine Kremling TSSA Winter 2013

Janine Kremling
CSUSB, janinekremling@gmail.com

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Janine Kremling

FETC 2012 Report
The Brain, Online Learning and Technologies

Application to the Criminal Justice BA Degree Completion Program

The main purpose of attending the FETC conference was to familiarize myself with new online technologies and how brain research applies to learning and online technologies. Several sessions talked about brain research and about online technologies and course delivery. Most presentation on online programs recommended that the classes within the program should be consistent with regard to the menu and design, assignments, activities, and assessment of learning. After the conference I developed a plan for the menu for each course and the basic teaching strategies. The following guidelines were developed:

Menu (left hand side on Blackboard)

Homepage
Syllabus
Lectures
Homework Assignments/Quizzes
Discussion Board
Exams
Tools
Help
Surveys

Detailed Outline

Home Page
Syllabus
      1) Syllabus (you can keep your syllabus, just make sure you cover the
         information required by WASC)
      WASC (Include a paragraph on netiquette, academic integrity, expectations
      regarding learning activities, discussions, e-mail communications, and
      plagiarism)
      WASC (Grading policy and practices are easy to understand)
      WASC (Hardware, software, and web browser requirements are specified)
      WASC (Prerequisite skills in the use of technology are identified)

      2) Monthly Calendar that outlines due dates
      WASC (Instructor provides clear overview of assignments and due dates)

(Make due dates the same every week. For instance, have the same due day and time for the weekly quizzes.)

Lectures
  Module 1
    Learning Objectives
    WASC (Objectives are clearly stated ad measurable and clearly state what the students will know or be able to do at the end of the class.)
    Powerpoint or Presentation in some other format
    WASC (Students have access to resources that enhance the course content)
    Relevant weblinks, you tubes, videos, podcasts, etc. with questions they can answer on the discussion board.
    WASC (Teacher engages students in active learning)
    WASC (Teacher engages students in learning by using a variety of learning styles and preferences)
    Self-Assessment or practice questions
    WASC (Assessment strategies and tools make students continuously aware of his/her progress in the class and mastery of the content beyond letter grades)

  Module 2
    Learning Objectives
    Powerpoint or Presentation in another format
    Relevant weblinks, youtubes, videos, podcasts, etc. with questions they can answer on the discussion board.
    Self-Assessment or practice questions
  Module 3
    Learning Objectives
    Powerpoint or Presentation in another format
    Relevant weblinks, youtubes, videos, podcasts, etc. with questions they can answer on the discussion board.
    Self-Assessment or practice questions
  Module 4
    Learning Objectives
    Powerpoint or Presentation in another format
    Relevant weblinks, youtubes, videos, podcasts, etc. with questions they can answer on the discussion board.
    Self-Assessment or practice questions

Homework Assignments/Quizzes
    WASC (Assessment strategies and tools make students continuously aware of his/her progress in the class and mastery of the content)

Discussion Board (weekly discussion questions, such as reflection questions, etc.)
    WASC (Information literacy and communication skills are incorporated as an

integral part of the curriculum)
WASC (Course provides opportunity for students to engage in higher-order thinking)
WASC (Course provides opportunity for instructor-student and student-student interaction) – basically, respond to student comments on the discussion board. I usually play devils advocate or highlight important points.

Discussion Board Threads:
Introduce yourself (Ask students to introduce themselves – helps build a community and enhances student-student interaction)
Coffee Shop or Meeting Room (Ask students to post questions about the class here and answer them – several students may have the same questions, thus, it helps avoid too many e-mails)

Module 1 Discussion Questions
Module 2 Discussion Questions
Module 3 Discussion Questions
Module 4 Discussion Questions

Exams
WASC (Instructor includes appropriate methods of assessment)
Make sure that you assess whether students understand all of the learning objectives outlined.
Provide a Study Guide.

Surveys
WASC (Course provider uses multiple ways of assessing course effectiveness)
1) Assessment of learning
(Some type of assessment of learning, such as pre-post-test or some other form of assessment – Did students meet each of the course objectives?)

2) Class Survey
(Did they feel that they learned a lot about the topics, did they feel that they belong to a community of students, do they get enough administrative support from CEL, and whatever else you want to know)
(Give me a little summary of what we could change to make our program better – attract more students, have higher retention rate, and graduate students)

In addition, the program will be evaluated using the program evaluation procedure proposed by the Institute of Higher Education. Table 1 outlines the evaluation procedure.

Table 1. Benchmarks essential for program success

Institutional Support Benchmarks	A documented technology plan that includes electronic security measures is in place and operational to ensure both quality standards and the integrity and validity of information.
The reliability of the technology delivery system is as failsafe as possible.	
A centralized system provides support for building and maintaining the distance education infrastructure.	
Course Development Benchmarks	Guidelines regarding minimum standards are used for course development, design, and delivery, while learning outcomes determine the technology being used to deliver course content.
Instructional materials are reviewed periodically to ensure they meet program standards.	
Courses are designed to require students to engage themselves in analysis, synthesis, and evaluation as part of their course and program requirements.	
Teaching/ Learning Benchmarks	Student interaction with faculty and other students is an essential characteristic and is facilitated through a variety of ways, including voice-mail and/or e-mail.
Feedback to student assignments and questions is constructive and provided in a timely manner.	
Students are instructed in the proper methods of effective research, including assessment of the validity of resources.	
Course Structure Benchmarks	Before starting an online program, students are advised about the program to determine (1) if they possess the self-motivation and commitment to learn at a distance and (2) if they have access to

	the minimal technology required by the course design.
Students are provided with supplemental course information that outlines course objectives, concepts, and ideas, and learning outcomes for each course are in a clearly written, straightforward statement.	
Students have access to sufficient library resources that may include a "virtual library" accessible through the World Wide Web.	
Faculty and students agree upon expectations regarding times for student assignment completion and faculty response.	
Student Support Benchmarks	Students receive information about programs, including admission requirements, tuition and fees, books and supplies, technical and proctoring requirements, and student support services.
Students are provided with hands-on training and information to aid them in securing material through electronic databases, interlibrary loans, government archives, news services, and other sources.	
Throughout the duration of the program, students have access to technical assistance, including detailed instructions regarding the electronic media used, practice sessions prior to the beginning of the course, and convenient access to technical support staff.	
Questions directed to student service personnel are answered accurately and quickly, with a structured system in place to address student complaints.	
Faculty Support Benchmarks	Technical assistance in course development is available to faculty, who are encouraged to use it.
Faculty members are assisted in the transition from classroom teaching to	

online instruction and are assessed during the process.	
Instructor training and assistance, including peer mentoring, continues through the progression of the online course.	
Faculty members are provided with written resources to deal with issues arising from student use of electronically-accessed data.	
Evaluation and Assessment Benchmarks	The program's educational effectiveness and teaching/learning process is assessed through an evaluation process that uses several methods and applies specific standards.
Data on enrollment, costs, and successful/innovative uses of technology are used to evaluate program effectiveness.	
Intended learning outcomes are reviewed regularly to ensure clarity, utility, and appropriateness	

Note. From "Quality on the line: Benchmarks for success in Internet-based distance education" by The Institute for Higher Education Policy, 2000.

Measuring the Effectiveness of Online Learning Community

Several sessions dealt with building online learning communities and assessment of synchronous versus asynchronous technologies.

*AZCOM Pilot Online Synchranous Faculty Learning Comm*unity

- cross disciplinary
- 8-12 faculty
- collaborative and active
- year long
- SoTL curriculum that enhances teaching
- Safe/supportive
- Allow faculty to take risks

Goal:
- Enhance teaching/quality learning
- Build a strong sense of community

Cohort/Topic
- hybrid cohort
- Cohort – all clinical teachers
- Topic
  - Evolved

Pre- and Post-Test on Competencies (Categories: Beginner, Minimally competent, Competent, Proficient, Masterful)
- Teaching large and small groups
- Teaching in a clinical setting
- Facilitating and managing learning
- Planning learning
- Developing and working with learning resources
- Assessing trainees
- Evaluating courses and undertaking research in education
- Understanding the principles of education
- Understanding of attitudes, ethics, legal issues
- Decision-making skills and use of evidence
- Understanding the role of teaching in a healthcare organization
- Personal development with regard to teaching

Conferencing
- Video conferencing - WEBEX
- Meeting once a month

Session Agenda and Schedule

November: Introduction
December: Scholarly Teaching Part I: What? How? Why?
January: Scholarly Teaching Part II: Developing your research project.
February: Promoting Active Learning
March: Teaching our students

FLC Scholarly Project Suggested Timeline – **Graduate Students who are Writing a Thesis or Preparing for the Comps – WEBEX Software**
- Explore possible projects
- Complete literature review
- Develop a statement of goals/sub-goals
- Determine methods, materials, resources
- Develop timeline and target dates: submit proposal to IRB
- Gather and/or create materials
- Complete first draft
- Edit, troubleshoot, peer review, and finalize
- Present to FLC meeting

Social Events for Face-to-Face Time

- Face-to-face time is key
- Have social events

Strengths of Online Synchronous FLC

- Sharing information
- Accountability
- Accessibility