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ABSTRACT

This paper contains summaries of three presentations that explore critical issues that must be addressed before launching a non-traditional online degree program. "Student Orientation" (Cable Green) provides a comprehensive student orientation, including an introduction to technological infrastructure, pedagogical issues, communication skills, and study and time management skills for an online community of learners. "Weaving a Virtual Education Web: Creation of an Online, Non Traditional Doctor of Pharmacy Program" (Dennis Mungall) focuses on factors to consider when weaving a virtual education program, consistency of course design, faculty course development training and responsibilities, creating the "on campus" feel, student training, recruitment, and supportive resources (e.g., residents, fellows, and technology experts). "Integrating an Online Program into Existing University Infrastructure" (Barbara Skunza) discusses how to liaison with the existing infrastructure to ensure a smooth administrative transition for an online program, including the idea stage, building the team, marketing/recruitment, university processes, and atmosphere. (Contains 14 references.) (MES)

**Challenges of Creating an Online Doctoral Program:
Panel Discussion of the Trials and Success of the Ohio State NonTraditional Doctor
of Pharmacy Program**

Presenters:

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ABSTRACT

An increasingly large number of colleges and universities are at least exploring the feasibility of, if not rushing headfirst into, offering credit-bearing courses on the Web. As the result of the combination of several factors, colleges and universities are being confronted with the need to make significant changes in the ways in which they function academically and administratively. The increasingly diverse demographics of the student population, the evolving perceived role of education, and the escalating costs for both the institution and the student all contribute to this evolutionary pressure.

In response to these challenges, numerous schools, both in this country and internationally, are actively investigating, and implementing, non-traditional academic programs. The College of Pharmacy launched the first online degree-granting program, the NonTraditional Doctor of Pharmacy Program, at the Ohio State University in January, 2001. Although there are numerous competitive advantages to a web-based course delivery system, there are an equal number of issues that must be addressed.

This presentation explores three critical issues any program must address before launching a non-traditional online degree program: (1) learner orientation, (2) translating the techniques for facilitating and monitoring student learning that have been developed for a classroom-based delivery into a web-based environment and (3) integrating the new program into existing University infrastructure.

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Student Orientation (Cable Green)

Cable Green is the Director of Educational Technology in the College of Pharmacy, Clinical Assistant Professor in the Division of Pharmacy Practice and Administration, and Doctoral student in the School of Journalism and Communication at The Ohio State University. He studies how collaborative teaching pedagogies and problem-solving strategies can be used in conjunction with technology to create informing on-line learning spaces. Cable is active in designing, developing, supporting and evaluating on-line distance learning programs.

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Abstract:

Virtual universities are changing the landscape of higher education. Without the proper student orientation to multiple online education issues, students are left with traditional tools in a non-traditional environment. Aggressive student orientation must include an introduction to technological infrastructure, pedagogical issues, communication skills, and study and time management skills for an on-line community of learners to succeed.

There are fundamental pedagogical differences between traditional and on-line classrooms. While one can argue learning online is no different than a traditional classroom, the reliance on technology for the delivery of instruction changes the process by which instruction is delivered. Therefore, the incorporation an appropriate on-line learner orientation, pedagogical methodologies and strategies in a Web-based learning environment can aid in helping both student and teacher to adapt and succeed in this new learning environment.

To meet these challenges, this part of the presentation will provide a comprehensive student orientation including an introduction to technological infrastructure, pedagogical issues, communication skills, and study and time management skills for an on-line community of learners. The student orientation includes a wealth of information the novice online learner will need to succeed including: differences between on-line and traditional classes, hardware and software specifications, Internet access, configuring software, learning Internet tool sets (i.e., E-mail, web browsers, chat, bulletin boards, etc.), hints on how to succeed with on-line courses, how to create the right on-line study environment, citing web resources, and on-line codes of conduct.

Guidelines for Developing an Online Student Orientation for a Virtual University

Establishing the objectives for a web site

- Understanding your objectives will help determine the content and organization of your web site.
- While developing your web site, keep in mind your objectives when making web design decisions.

Keep the audience in mind

- How familiar are your students with the Internet?
- Will students be accessing the web site from campus via Ethernet or from off-campus via a modem?
- What type of computers or web browsers will your students be using?

Organization

- Make your web site easy to navigate
 - Organize your content into logical sections
 - Create a consistent style (possibly develop a template for your web pages)
 - Considering limiting the layout of your web pages to the dimensions of the average computer screen.
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Weaving a Virtual Education Web: Creation of an Online, Non Traditional Doctor of Pharmacy Program (Dennis Mungall)

Dennis Mungall, Pharm.D. (<http://members.aol.com/thertch/resume.htm>) is the Director of the Non Traditional Doctor of Pharmacy Program in the College of Pharmacy and Associate Professor in the Division of Pharmacy Practice and Administration at The Ohio State University. He has been actively involved testing and development of bedside medical decision tools, multimedia teaching, and clinical pharmacology training for several years.

Abstract:

The presentation will focus on the following areas: Factors to consider when weaving your virtual education program, consistency of course design, faculty course development training and responsibilities, creating the “on campus” feel , student training, recruitment and, supportive resources: residents, fellows, technology experts. Other areas to be discussed include: assuring the quality/outcome of a non-traditional Doctor of Pharmacy when compared to the residential doctor of pharmacy program, creating a clinical “toolbox” for the NTPD: transferring clinical expertise via virtual clinics and finally intellectual property issues.

1. Purpose
 - a. Review online curriculum approaches currently used in pharmacy education on the web
 - b. Review the implementation strategy at OSU for the online NTPD
 - c. Discuss the possible outcomes of a Web based program
 - d. Discuss impact on faculty, and traditional doctor of pharmacy program

2. Content Description
 - a. Factors to consider when weaving your virtual education program
 - consistency of course design
 - faculty training
 - creating the “on campus” feel
 - b. The Nuts and bolts of creating courseware
 - What administrative web system should I use?
 - How do I create courseware: Faculty generated? Capture live lectures, Technical team to assist development?
 - What do software system do you use for creation and Porting audio/video presentations to the web?
 - Needs assessment of faculty members
 - Training faculty to create digital presentations
 - c. How do we assure the quality/outcome of a NTPD , online program is at Least the same as the on campus Pharm.D. program?
 - d. Creating a clinical “toolbox” for the NTPD: transferring clinical expertise

Integrating an Online Program into existing University Infrastructure (Barbara Skunza)

Barbara Skunza is the Program Manager for the Non-Traditional PharmD program at Ohio State. She has 20 years of experience in higher education administration and recently earned her Masters Degree in Public Policy and Management (higher education).

Discussions of online programs typically focus on discussions of technology, pedagogy and learners. While important, these discussions do not take into account the underlying political, and administrative, infrastructure necessary to operate an online nontraditional degree program. Servers and bandwidth aside, programs must concern themselves with integrating all of the University services traditional programs take for granted including: marketing, registration, online applications, new committees, codes of conduct, copyright clearance, use agreements with faculty, library resource distribution, etc.

My 10 minutes will focus on how to liaison with existing infrastructure to ensure a smooth administrative transition for your online program. I will follow the process from the initial idea and planning stage all the way through to the first class completing their first term.

Idea Stage: The planning phase for a program like this is necessarily long and involved. It is imperative, at this stage, that the faculty and college community share in the vision and mission of the distance program. It is at this stage that the university support is secured, both financially and philosophically.

Building the team: Most important step. Very important that you have the expertise that you need to make the technology work for the students and the instructors; but more important that they work together well and that they all share the same vision of 'customer/client focus'.

Marketing/recruitment: Ideally there is plenty of time before the first class is expected to be enrolled to engage in a well-thought out marketing scheme. It should be clear from the planning phase what the base of applicants lie. Rather than throw out a large net, we elected to concentrate on our own state, following the mission of our university, to educate and reach out to our own citizens. This strategy has served us well, as we have a large base of alumni in the State of Ohio, who were among the initial voices expressing a desire for OSU to offer a Non-Traditional PharmD.

University Processes: Because we chose to offer this program on a different calendar schedule than the university (trimesters vs. quarters) and because we were the first to offer an academic degree using web-based coursework, we were presented with many challenging administrative tasks. Special arrangements had to be worked out with university officials concerning such issues as admissions, registration, tuition, grades among others. Once in place these processes will be routine and will serve other new distance programs in the university.

Atmosphere: The most important ingredient in the success of our program has been the commitment, excitement and visibility of the team. Because these students have so little personal contact, and little if any opportunity to visit campus, their connection, and sense of belonging, to the university comes from the people with whom they interact...the team.



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