

Research-Based Online Teaching Strategies and Best Practices: Building Online Community and Interaction

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Introduction (Cont'd)

- "Shovel" traditional instruction to an online environment usually does not generate effective interaction for learning
- Online communication and interaction can be heavily text-based and lack social context cues
- "No interaction" equals "no learning" (Gunawardena, 1995)
- Good learning, like good work, is collaborative and social, not competitive and isolated
- Sharing one's ideas and responding to others' (ideas) improves critical thinking and deepens understanding

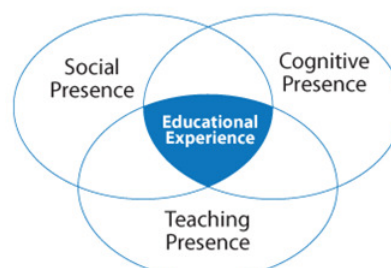


Outline

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 - Interaction with Content
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 - Interaction with Peers
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 - What is an Online Learning Community?
 - Building an Online Learning Community
 - Online Community of Inquiry
 - Success of an Online Learning Community
 - Best Practices in building an Online Learning Community
- Implications for Practice
- Faculty Development Program: Empowering Teaching Online



Online Community of Inquiry



Rourke, Anderson, Garrison, & Archer's (2001)

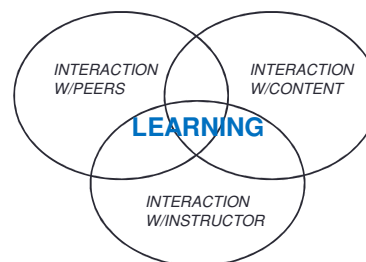


Introduction

- 6.1 million, taking at least one online course by fall 2010 (SLOAN-C 2010)
- An increase of 560,000 students over the previous year (SLOAN-C 2010)
- Major challenges identified (Middleton, 1997; Wiesenbergs & Hutton, 1996)
 - Creating a sense of online community
 - Limited interactions between students, instructors, and course materials
 - Appropriately motivate online students

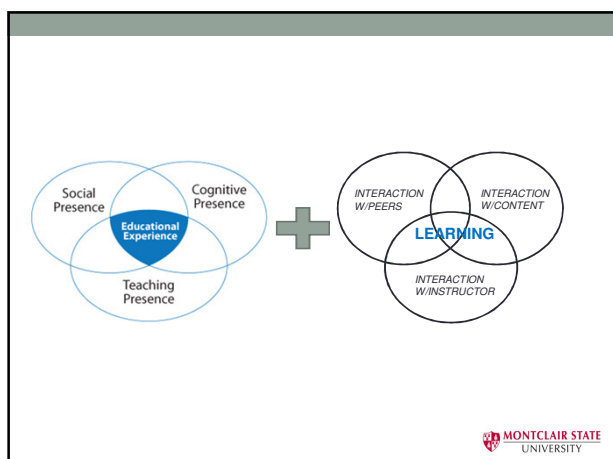


Online Interaction



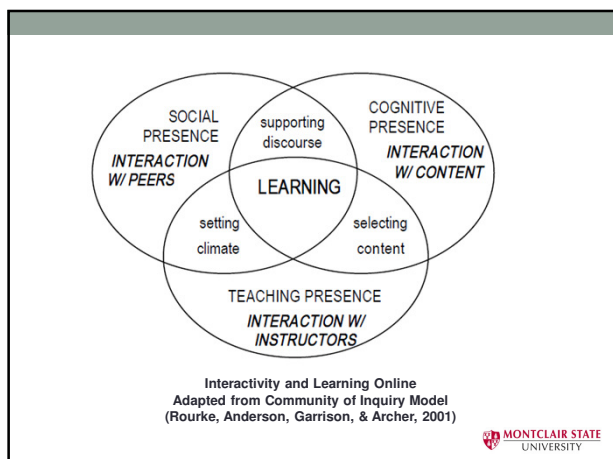
Moore's (1989) Three Types of Interaction





Interaction with Instructors

- Information presentation, skill demonstration, modeling of certain attitudes and value
- Planning, organizing communication channels
- Counsel, support, feedback and encouragement
- Teaching presence:
 - Design and Organization
 - Facilitating Discourse
 - Direct Instruction



Interaction with Peers

- A virtual learning community
- Group interaction
- Apprenticeship
- Social presence: Salience of the other & the consequent salience of interaction (Short, Williams, & Christie, 1976)



Interaction with Content

- Internal didactic conversation (Holmberg, 1986)
- Cognitively interacting with content
- Enhancements in the learner's understanding, the learner's perspective, or the cognitive structures of the learner's mind
- Cognitive Presence (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000)
 - Critical thinking and practical inquiry
 - Construct meaning through sustained communication



Other Interactions

- Learner-interface interaction (Hillman, Willis, & Gunawardena, 1994)
- Learner-self interaction (Soo & Bonk, 1998)



What is an Online Learning Community

- A learning community is “a group of individuals who collaboratively engage in purposeful critical discourse and reflection to construct meaning and confirm mutual understanding.” (Garrison, 2007)



Best Practices to building Online Learning Community

- Provide clear goals and guidelines on learning activities and assessments
- Use small group sizes (4-6 students per group)
- Emphasize the importance of frequent, regular interaction
- Specify a process for mediation conflict(e.g. personality conflicts, lack of participation)
- Encourage using Web 2.0 technologies to support collaboration
- Consider collaborative evaluations (individual, peer, instructor)



Building An Online Learning Community

- Interaction is the key to build a Online Learning Community
- Building a Online Learning Community requires commitment, time, and long-term planning



Implications for Practice



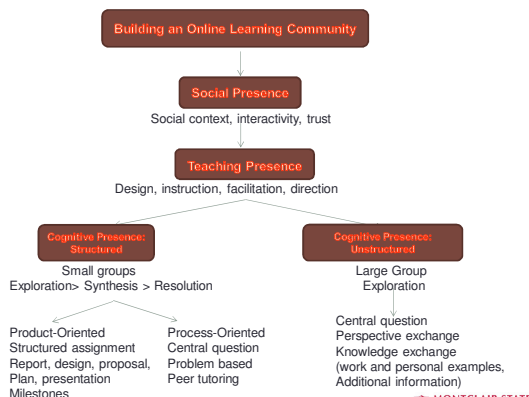
Interaction with
Course Interfaces
and Content



Interaction with
Instructors



Interaction with
Peers



Interaction with Course Content

- Identify course goals/learning objectives
- Present subject matter by using appropriate media
- Develop learning exercises to enhance content comprehension
- Provide constructive feedback
- Consider interacting with course Interface
 - Develop consistent interface and insure clarity
 - Orientate learners to course interface



Interaction with Instructors

- Establish clear expectations for instructor-student interactions and encourage personal contact
- Provide timely & supportive feedback
- Direct common interaction/questions to Cyber Café/Q & As
- Facilitate one-on-one interaction via journals, emails, office hours, etc.



Faculty Development Program

- Pedagogical Track: Empowering Online Teaching and Learning
 - Introduction to Teaching and Learning Online
 - Online Teaching Management Strategies
 - Online Instruction and Interaction
 - Online Learning Assessments
- Technology Track
 - Building a Student-Friendly Online Course
 - Facilitating Interaction Online
 - Designing Assessments Online



Interaction with Peers

- Share experiences & beliefs in online discussion
- Provocative, open-ended questions, modeling & support & encouragement for diverse points of view
- Respond to classmates postings &/or to respond to all responses to their own
- Design and facilitate group work
 - design small groups for online interaction (discussion boards, wikis, blogs, etc.)
 - assign roles for each member in each group
 - require discussion summaries -- knowledge creation process
- Use other course activities such as: peer review/activities, collaborative projects, and simulations, role-playing



Pedagogical Track

Empowering Online Teaching and Learning: A Faculty Development Program

- A four-week, online course for faculty (cohort-based)
- Provides an overview of teaching and learning online
- Introduces online pedagogies and best practices
- Offers online learning experience by taking an online course
- Faculty start developing their own online course, as an ongoing project in the program



Integrating Theory into Practice Through Faculty Development



Welcome

Welcome to the Faculty Development Program

Empowering Online Teaching and Learning

Introduction to the Program

Teaching online can be both challenging and rewarding. The online teaching environment provides a unique set of possibilities and challenges when compared to the traditional in-classroom face-to-face environment. Before teaching online for the first time, faculty often have questions like: "How and where do I begin?", "What does a quality online course consist of?" and "What does a quality online course look like?"

This faculty development program is intended to provide faculty with an overview of teaching and learning online, an introduction of various pedagogical considerations, an orientation of the best online practices, and provide a guideline for integrating appropriate instructional technologies to facilitate online (include hybrid) teaching and learning. These components are necessary to offer a quality online learning experience for students. They are applicable for both online and hybrid courses. This program includes the following six learning units:

Learning Units

- Unit 1: Introduction to Teaching and Learning Online
- Unit 2: Online Teaching Management Strategies
- Unit 3: Online Instruction and Interaction
- Unit 4: Online Learning Assessments

Participation in this program is highly recommended for all faculty members who will be teaching in a fully online degree program for the first time at Montclair State University. All faculty who intend to teach individual online and/or hybrid courses are also encouraged to participate in the program.



Overview of Four Learning Units

- 1 • Introduction to Teaching and Learning Online
- 2 • Online Teaching Management Strategies
- 3 • Online Instruction and Interaction
- 4 • Online Learning Assessments



Learning Unit 3: Online Instruction and Interaction

- Learning Unit 3 includes the following sections:
- I. Introduction to Online Instructional Strategies
 - II. Creating and Facilitating Effective Two-Way Interactive Learning

Learning Unit 1: Introduction to Teaching and Learning Online

Learning Unit 1 includes the following sections:

- I. What is Online Teaching?
- II. Differences Between Online and Face-to-Face Teaching and Learning Environments
- III. Characteristics of Online Learners

Learning Unit 4: Online Learning Assessments

Learning Unit 4 includes the following sections:

- I. Introduction to Learning Assessments
- II. Assessment Types
- III. Assessment Best Practices
- IV. How to Use Assessment Tools in Blackboard

Learning Unit 2: Online Teaching Management

Learning Unit 2 includes the following sections:

- I. Essential Elements of a High Quality Online Course
- II. How to Manage an Online Course
- III. Best Online Practices

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Questions

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