Title of Session: Faculty Resistance to Online Learning
Moderator: Roger Goodson
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Room: Faculty Resistance to Online Learning Group

BJB2: Welcome to the Faculty Resistance to Online Learning discussion.

BJB2: we usually start all the Tapped In discussions with introductions. Please tell Roger where you are located, what you teach, and what interests you in this topic.

DavidWe is in New Jersey, near New York City. He helps teachers learn more about educational technology for math education

GeorgeK: I am the Dean (nee' faculty member) of the business school at NDNU (Roger's place) in Belmont, CA.

EvelynRP: I'm a grad student at University of Southern Mississippi. Should graduate this May with Master's in Education Administration with emphasis in Student Affairs. Currently writing a paper on technology use in the higher ed classroom.

JamesCox: Hi I teach 5th grade in San Antonio and I am the campus technology rep

BJB2: I teach remedial communication in Pennsylvania and am on Tapped In helpdesk

KarenRiz: I am in Carlsbad, California, just north of San Diego. I am a student in a doctoral program (this is part of the class) and an Asst. Supt. very interested in online learning

JamesCox: I am a grad student at Texas AM Kingsville

RogerMG: I am a professor at Notre Dame de Namur University. I teach three hybrid/blended courses and have a long-time interest in technology in Ed. dating back further than I like to admit:-)

DavidWe wonders if Roger drives a hybrid/blended automobile

RogerMG: Roger does not . . .but has considered it:-)

DavidWe smiles

RogerMG: OK. I thought we would focus on one of the chief problems in terms of resistance to OL.

RogerMG: For some, it is THE problem . . .

RogerMG: Administrators.

GeorgeK: Shall I sign off?

RogerMG: No . . .You stick around:-)

DavidWe hands George some chocolate

BJB2: are you part of the problem or part of the solution, George?

GeorgeK: I need it.

GeorgeK: Hopefully the solution

EvelynRP: yikes!

BJB2 . o O (I'd like to hear Karen's thoughts on admin)

BJB2 . o O (and Evelyn's)

KarenRiz: I am not sure I understand why administrators are the problem. I would like to hear more

EvelynRP: Do administrators hold faculty back or push them too far?

RogerMG: Over the past couple of years, in this discussion forum, I have heard soooo many complaints about admins. 'They don't understand . . '; 'They don't 'see' the future'; 'They know nothing of OL . ..'

BJB2 . o O (admin has to lead by example)

DavidWe has learned that school administrators are KEY to improving the use of digital technology in K-12 schools

RogerMG: Yes David.

BJB2 agrees with David

KarenRiz: I would agree that there are administrators that know very little about OL, however that can be said about some teachers as well. So is lack of knowledge really the issue

DavidWe . o O (LEADERSHIP is the issue)

EvelynRP: Interesting. I work at a community college that is really embracing online learning, but go to grad school at a 4 year university that is really dragging its feet.

GeorgeK: I found minutes of high level admin meetings from 10 or more years ago. Most of the topics discussed were the same ones as discussed in today's meetings. Admin is stuck in a rut because it measures success by the same old yardsticks, not the ones needed for the future.

JamesCox: My Boss loves technology which is nice. She encourages its use by sending her staff to inservices and has purchased key storage units for everyone

RogerMG: But . . .how can this not be left to the 'frizzibility' of the admin. roles . . .they are not there forever . . .is the issue really 'policy'?

RogerMG: (bit of leading question there.)

GeorgeK: Do we not all, in a way, measure success by how many we graduate....but what if the graduates are ready for 1950, not 2050.

JamesCox: She is new and the folks that are resistant to change are being encouraged to find a new career

DavidWe . o O (I like Ike?!?!)

RogerMG: George . . .I like James' admins. approach. Could we use it?

GeorgeK: We (Business) have hired with tech use in mind....there are other areas that don't hire that way.

RogerMG: Actually, this whole admin. thing gets into the whole thing of 'managing change'. What's different about this change is the rapid shift of technologies in what our student's refer to as the 'real world.' What holds us back, as Seymore Sarason would say is, 'The Culture of School and the Problem of Change.'

GeorgeK: Tell us more.

RogerMG: Sarason indicates that over the years, since Horace Mann invented the (bureaucratic) school system, a 'culture' has evolved which is value laden in ways that inhibit change, rather than embracing it.

RogerMG: As you know George, each 'layer' of the school organization has a different 'value sturcture'. These often conflict with one another in ways that create a sort of 'warfare' within the system. However, the 'value' issue is usually undiscussable as it is also politically laden.

GeorgeK: A Financial Times editorial I read recently suggested that bloated public sector bureaucracies could never be expected to deliver effective education....I sometimes am afraid that might be true, and that, worse yet, I may have contributed to the problem.

EvelynRP: The bureaucratic problem is deeper than just the school administration. The government funding apparatus is mired in the past too.

RogerMG: . . .of course, bureaucracy s . l .o. w. s d. o .w . n . everything.

RogerMG: And the older the bureaucracy . . .the slower it goes.

GeorgeK: I am about to sin...so is our longstanding belief in the primacy of the holy grail of education, the liberal arts.

RogerMG: Just look at the federal government . . . or better yet don't.

RogerMG: So . . .in a sense, admins are the problem, and from a 'school culture' standpoint, so are the teachers, boards, etc.

JamesCox: well the feds boss was running things down here in Texas and now runs the whole show so you can guess our situation

GeorgeK: Let's be practical....anyone have any ideas about what the 8 of us can do about the dilemma we are discussing?

GeorgeK: Where and how can we make a difference?

JamesCox: my boss's approach is basically if you are going to be a teacher then get on board with tech or move on and it has worked but this a little harsh.

EvelynRP: I recently read an article that proposed that information technology is in the process of fundamentally changing what knowledge and learning actually are. How do we clue administrators in to this critical change in how we teach and learn in the 21st century?

RogerMG: This is a difficult thing to 'attack' (given this is submerged warfare, the metaphor fits, I think) but not impossible.

GeorgeK: Or submerged welfare

EvelynRP: Shouldn't we lead by example?

KarenRiz: Interestingly, I am dealing with more resistance from teachers than administrators.

RogerMG: But . . .we cannot 'lead' individually. We will be shot down.

RogerMG: Karen, that is just another manifestation of the same 'cultural' issue.

MarleneK: Positive media relations seems to work where I am. By doing well thought out technology projects, inviting parents and local newspapers in on the action, it spreads the word that a technology project is working and not just about "playing on the computer."

EvelynRP: But that's the beauty of it - we're not alone. we are tapped in!

RogerMG: (in my opin.)

RogerMG: YES!

RogerMG: Now. What do we do with it?

RogerMG: How can it be used, locally, as an organizational tool to construct constituencies?

GeorgeK: CI know educators hate the term customers...can we please our customers? (students, their parents, their employers, etc)

MarleneK: You're not alone in using that term, personally I've called them cliental.

RogerMG: Because this IS a political issue (as politics cannot be separated from organizational culture) those groups are critical.

KarenRiz: When we think about our customers, we also have the responsibility to consider those that do not have access to technology outside of school. That makes a difference

RogerMG: I agree. How can we help them, and draw them into support?

GeorgeK: But future political....a big chunk of the customers are too young to vote, so the politicians don't pay attention to them.

MarleneK: I've always felt that practical application of any curriculum was the key to winning over the community. Lessons need to be applicable to what skills they will need in the "real world." We are building the future work force.

RogerMG: Skills is where it's at.

RogerMG: 21st century skills. Help them get good jobs. Help them in their career development.

EvelynRP: I agree with Marlene. If people can't apply it to their real world - they won't see the value.

MarleneK nods.

MarleneK: So if in our schools, we are able to invite industry in, and perhaps allow them to guide the curriculum to a point were they are assisting in skill develop of the students....

GeorgeK: Evelyn, but that "can't apply it" business has been in place for years, and we still teach a bunch of stuff one can't apply to the real world.

RogerMG: Well . . .it's a mixed bag . . .some parents are into 21st century skills, others are into just the 3Rs (which are impt, but not sine qua non-wise)

EvelynRP: True George.

JamesCox: How can a teacher who still uses paper and pencil to do averages instead of the grading software ever understand the value

JamesCox: ??????????

GeorgeK: What if they can't even do averages? I have seen that.

RogerMG: We need to 'teach' students 'foundational knowledge' do we not?

EvelynRP: LOL. this is a pet peeve of mine. I think teachers should be required to work in the "real world" before they're allowed to teach. Schools are such a rarified atmosphere that teachers and administrators can be out of touch with how most people have to operate in the world of work.

RogerMG: Foundational knowledge, whatever the field, is critical.

RogerMG: But after that . . .let the student's learn to fly.

KarenRiz: Do you think there will be a time when the foundational skills are measured on the STAR test or are part of AYP for NCLB? That which is measured is what gets done.

MarleneK: Students have great imaginations when they have that base knowledge and letting them fly on a project is such a rewarding experience.

EvelynRP: I agree with Roger. Flying is what you have to do in the business world. And that's what students need to know before we send them out there.

GeorgeK: Are we willing to accept that the educational world should not fly? I am not. Other countries seem to manage to teach tradition, foundation, and future skills. Why can't we?

MarleneK: Most curriculums only set what needs to be taught, but it doesn't dictate how a teacher teaches it or what examples they use to teach it.... would not this be where we as teachers have more control and can use real world examples, field trips and guests in our classes to bring the real world to the kids?

GeorgeK: Wonderful.

KarenRiz: Yes, and it is a perfect way to integrate technology as a tool to help students learn the content.

JamesCox: technology reinforces the lesson with a very interactive approach that improves retention

RogerMG: But, back to the original issue . . .which we have determined is not really the issue . . .only a part. Administrators. Like all other 'actors' in the education 'drama' they are 'locked' into roles by the organization's culture . . .which in terms of education, is strongly influenced by the 'macro-national' ed. org. culture. So the issue is really 'change'. One response is the construction of networks of cross-interest groups (teachers, students, parents, etc.) a

RogerMG: What did you see as other means for change?

GeorgeK: Grow our numbers, by growing our own type and getting them into education.

GeorgeK: Have we all given up?

MarleneK: Partnerships with industry, student internships and work experience programs for teachers and students to develop current necessary skill levels.

RogerMG: Great one.

GeorgeK: Outstanding!

MarleneK: And if all else fails, have them watch Shrek... after all.... Change is good donkey!

RogerMG: Somehow . . .this has to become 'real world.' Interestingly, the student's do know the difference between the two.

BJB2 . o O (our hour is almost up, Roger)

RogerMG: Although, they may not admit it.

GeorgeK: But our set-in-their ways colleagues don't see that.

RogerMG: OK. Sorry. Got carried away.

KarenRiz: People need to recognize the need for the change. If it isn't going to happen at the national or state level, then it needs to be at the local level. Creating a compelling need and then supporting the change with data that show why technology helps students learn and why it is an important skill for their future. If that doesn't work, give them a copy of the "World is Flat"

BJB2: The next FROL discussion will take place on March 22

RogerMG: We're done for tonight. Thank you for participating.

GeorgeK: Thank you Roger and everyone.

BJB2: thanks, Roger!

EvelynRP: Thank you.

KarenRiz: Thanks

RogerMG: Next time.

JamesCox: yes thanks