

Title of Session: Faculty Resistance to Online Learning

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Room: Faculty Resistance to Online Learning Group

RogerMG: That means moving outside the standard role descriptions as well as finding ways (now with technology) to teach across the curriculum.

GeorgeK: Warren Bennis points out that all the major social changes that happened in the 20th century were driven from the bottom up, so we can get around the structure.

RogerMG: I believe that is the only way change is going to occur in a 19th century system.

CharlesLM: Anyone else here from VA?

RogerMG: What are SOLs Chas?

BJB2: standards of learning

RogerMG: oic

CharlesLM: standards of learning tests at the end of the year.

CharlesLM: state mandated

RogerMG: OK . . .and so people teach to the test. I taught in NY for a bit and they had the Regents Exams. People taught to those too.

BarbS: the thing that everything is based on these days..

CharlesLM: very restrictive on time available for innovation

CharlesLM: I teach physics, and we don't have tests for that ...yet

BarbS: so technology really is not tested into those standards..

RogerMG: OK . . .and so innovation is impossible? That's what you are saying?

GeorgeK: We had standardized tests too, but on everything, not just a few subjects. Why have we lowered the bar?

BarbS: no.. it has to happen.. but we are fighting an uphill battle..

CharlesLM: the tests are content driven multiple-choice and delivered online

BarbS: and yes, I too believe technology will be the driver but how do we get others to go along..

RogerMG: What would you do if you could change things Barb?

BarbS: when they are so "entrenched" in 19th century methodology encouraged by the push of the tests.

CharlesLM: I think it's a matter of time and willingness to commit to learning new things

BarbS: most of ours aren't online.

CharlesLM: Va's didn't used to be but are now

BarbS: I'd reinvent the "times" of the school day.. and offer online curriculum

BarbS: supplemented with face to face groups/ enrichment corrective activities, etc.

CharlesLM: easier said than done with online classes

RogerMG: It's interesting that the tests are online, but faculty won't use technology to help prepare the students.

BarbS: I'm not really talking about online classes, but online curriculum..

CharlesLM: I mentor in a virtual high school

CharlesLM: ok I see

BarbS: I teach in an online high school and a face to face middle school..

BarbS: and would love to blend the two together..

CharlesLM: I teach face to face also full time

CharlesLM: mentor at night

BarbS: have kids take basic curriculums online, but have the teachers be the mentors when they come in the door, and fill in the gaps left ..

CarolE joined the room.

BarbS: which school do you mentor for Charles?

RogerMG: Hi Carol. Welcome.

CharlesLM: that is the hope I think

CarolE: Hello!

BJB2: welcome, Carol

CharlesLM: George Mason's Online Academy

BarbS: ok.. it's for HS?

CharlesLM: it is difficult to convince teacher to take training to teach online

CharlesLM: Yes, high school

BarbS: that's because the LMS's are still so challenging to learn..

BarbS: some of them..

BarbS: the school I teach for has two different LMS

CharlesLM: My county bribes teachers with a free MEd degree

BarbS: and another student information system..

BarbS: that's a good incentive..

CharlesLM: we have to design and put new courses on line for two years

BarbS: do you get paid regular salaries? or per student?

CharlesE: I am Charles Elliott, from Erie, PA.. I teach online for a couple of universities in their grad education technology programs.

CharlesLM: we are paid by the student "\$700 a year

BarbS: Hi Charles E..

CharlesLM: online teaching is very scary for most teachers because of the "lack of sight" issue

RogerMG: Research shows again and again that if we want to get teachers more involved with teaching technologies that incentives are vital.

CharlesLM: and very labor intensive - 2 hours per night for 5 students 7 days a week

GeorgeK: Avoiding a drive in lake-effect snow might be an incentive in Erie? Yes?

CharlesLM: Ha!

SherrieC joined the room.

RogerMG: Hi Carol and Sherrie.

SherrieC: Hi

GeorgeK: I am in a Chicago suburb and keep a bunch of on-line lessons loaded in the LMS in case of snow...what in case of...for when it snows.

CharlesE: for sure

CharlesE nods

CharlesLM: And with the price of gasoline, schools may end up going to short weeks and more online courses

BarbS: good point..

CharlesLM: Our county funds Blackboard and encourages teachers to get training, but most won't.

KarenNS joined the room.

BJB2: hi, Karen. Welcome

CharlesLM: The fear of something new I think, based upon conversations

BarbS: Blackboard is so simple compared to the competition..

CharlesLM: yes, it's a great resource

CharlesE: to Charles LM You are in a K-12 setting, right?

RogerMG: I'm somewhat resistant to Blackboard because of the patent debacle.

CharlesLM: I'm in a 9-12 HS... public

CharlesLM: patent debacle?

RogerMG: Blackboard patented just about everything related to LMSs, indicating that they 'invented' it.

RogerMG: Law suits are pending.

CharlesLM: so they hijacked available technology ?

RogerMG: Yes.

CharlesLM: oh, scary

CharlesE: I find the classroom based teachers are either hot or cold with online education. I teach online grad ed courses and all of these folks teach f2f all day.. they have a hard time seeing any of their students doing well online..

CarolE: LMSs?sorry

BarbS: Learning Management System Carol

CarolE: Thanks

BarbS: Blackboard, WebCT, ecollege, Apex

CharlesLM: OK - like Blackboard ?

GeorgeK: Moodle

BarbS: plus quite a few proprietary ones out there.. the latest I've heard is Angel

BarbS: yes, moodle.

CharlesE: Angel is the up and coming one as well.

RogerMG: Blackboard, WebCT (which Blackboard owns), Moodle and a host of others.

CharlesE: Moodle is open source

RogerMG: Joomla is becoming more popular

RogerMG: Yes. I use Moodle.

CharlesE: angel is as well, but you have to buy into the training

BarbS: haven't heard of Joomla, yet..

BarbS: so who is suing who?

CharlesLM: but it's the school system that will determine which ones get used.

CharlesE: Open source?

BarbS: in the blackboard debacle

RogerMG: It's up and coming. Is an offshoot of another LMS that I can't recall the name of . . .also open source.

CharlesE: school administrators will listen to the recommendation of the tech services, but the bottom line is \$

BarbS: usually, I agree..

CharlesLM: exactly; everything is \$\$\$ driven

BarbS: some of the virtual schools develop their own..

CharlesLM: It's amazing how many administrators are techno-ignorant though

CharlesE: the key to a successful lms implementation is your tech services.. can they fix and manage the servers.

RogerMG:

http://www.bizjournals.com/washington/stories/2006/08/21/story3.html?from_rss=1

RogerMG: URL for blackboard suit

BarbS: but their hands are tied by the adminocrats

BarbS: thx

RogerMG: Goggle it and you will find more recent news.

CharlesLM: That's a fact in my county

CharlesE: admin feels that the teachers should use the tech, the tech services should manage the lms and they should get the hooplas

CharlesLM: But the county is really pushing technology here.

CharlesE: all the schools are under the county system in your state?

RogerMG: Of course, if your place(s) are like my place, most admins. have never been online learning practitioners themselves, nor have they taken online courses.

BarbS: but the media coverage on teacher bashing and utubing isn't easing admin fears..

CharlesLM: yes, Va is county managed

BarbS: yes.. county system in MD too

BarbS: CO was not.. I just recently moved back to MD from there.

CharlesLM: too many in admin came up from non-academic fields - coaching, etc

CharlesLM: at least here in Va

CharlesE: In PA each county may have from 2 or 3 to a dozen districts in them.. we don't have the county admin system.. 500 districts, all independent

RogerMG: Unfortunately, in public institutions, the major job of the admins. is conflict avoidance, and conflict containment. They spend a great deal of their time dealing with these two tasks.

CharlesLM: Doesn't the state govt in PA control everything ?

CharlesE: not really...

CharlesLM: here in Va, the state sets all the rules

CharlesE: School board Assoc and State teachers org are just a powerful.

CharlesE: lobbyists in Harrisburg..

CharlesLM: not here in Va

CharlesE: DOE sets up the rules, but they can't admin them.

BarbS: in MD, they call it "voluntary state curriculum" but the districts mandate it due to testing

KarenNS: regardless of the state, I feel the techs have split loyalties...I'm not sure which group they want to support. It's frustrating.

CharlesE: We have a Instructional Technology Specialists position that every school district is to have at least one person in.. but there are only about 35 ISTs in PA

BarbS: I'm not sure they know either

CharlesLM: We have many layers of tech admin and support

BarbS: so do we..

BarbS: have many layers..

RogerMG: So . . .Chas. What %age of the teachers really are adept at tech, and use it with their students?

CharlesLM: but they are stretched too thin

RogerMG: approx.

KarenNS: Admin wants to show off a nice snazzy overview. Teachers need ease of use and easy maintenance.

BarbS: but they all answer to one CIO at the top who answers to the board, etc.

RogerMG: ic

CharlesE: The technology initiative went with the past governor...

BarbS: Roger.. I think most teachers are tech literate to a degree these days, but using the technology is not easy

CharlesE: I think most are self taught as well.

BarbS: there's a lack of computers. to students, and the laptop labs are constantly in use.

RogerMG: I agree Barb, particularly when it comes to integrating it with teaching.

BarbS: quite a few are.. but now districts do quite a bit of training.

KarenNS: My county has 1-3 IT specialists per school. I'm very fortunate. Finding time to keep pages up to date and relevant can be challenging. I need to get into a better habit of uploading my work each day.

CharlesLM: We have many computer rooms in every school [15 or so] plus carts of laptops

BarbS: the young ones got it in preservice programs, and the old ones get it in prof devel.

BarbS: but having the ability to apply it with the limited tech makes it challenging

RogerMG: Sounds like a busy place Karen.

CharlesE: They get inservices, but the topics are mostly introductory.

KarenNS: Busy, challenging, and FUN! It's a very tech-savvy community, so the parents and tax-payers expect all of the bells and whistles.

CharlesLM: Most of you sound like you have much the same system as I do.

CharlesE: PA is hit with the digital divide as well. The haves really have a lot and the have nots struggle to get what they can gather up .

BarbS: but I only have 3 labs and one laptop cart for 900 students.

CharlesLM: Our county mandates that every teacher have a personal school-based website

BarbS: so my scenario sounds worse than yours.

GeorgeK: Forgive a sidebar question....have you seen as yet a reduction in support brought about by the reduce tax revenues during this allegedly non-existent recession?

RogerMG: Well, then we get back to pedagogical issues again. I tend to think that online work with students is best done using a constructivist philosophy.

BarbS: we have edline where they post the grades and worksheets, but I wouldn't call that web pages

CharlesLM: Yes, define constructivist please

BarbS: it's coming. as budget talks his boards this spring

BarbS: define online work with k-12 students

RogerMG: So, do you find that most teachers these days tend more towards constructivism?

CharlesE: not really.

BarbS: yes in face to face but not online yet..

BarbS: no access to online

CharlesE: they may like to talk and plan that way.. but the tests are coming.....

BarbS: (except in my online school)

BarbS: I agree Charles E

BarbS: it gets pushed aside for testing

CharlesE: Now that the PSSAs are over, the teachers can really teach.... but only until summer.

RogerMG: Barb, given the ultimate strength of online work is interaction, I wonder why the teachers do not see that . . .or is it that they do not know how to structure it?

BarbS: they believe in the pedagogy..

CharlesLM: my online school has a very specific course design. mentors only assist/guide students through it; we don't teach

KarenNS: online work for k-12 = classroom notes and examples for absent students or students who need a bit of extra help. Calendar of due dates, upcoming events, etc. Even online assignments...

CharlesE: I have to run to another class..

BarbS: I agree Charles LM.

BarbS: I agree Karen

BarbS: Roger.. most teachers have never seen online learning.

CharlesE left the room.

RogerMG: OK Chas. Many thanks for the discussion.

CharlesLM: younger teachers seem more receptive to online experiences

BarbS: except if they've taken a blackboard course in a grad class.

BarbS: yes.. but have no clue how to get to an online system in the classroom

BarbS: no access to online tools

RogerMG: There is some research that indicates that getting teachers to take a good online course helps them to understand online teaching better.

KarenNS: I've taken several undergrad and graduate level courses online. Even with the lab-component, I learned an incredible amount because I had to construct it, rather than have the professor do a braindump.

BarbS: I agree with your philosophy Roger, but the reality is that school systems don't have access to LMS

CharlesLM: that's a fact . I took two before getting interested

BarbS: I've taken a doctoral program , created Pre-service online courses, and taught in 4 virtual schools, but I still don't have access in my brick and mortar school which frustrates me

BarbS: doctoral program online that is

CharlesLM: Some studies say that in 10 years, 50% of all high school and college courses will be delivered online. any thoughts?

BarbS: I hope it's true.. they need the experience.. but I'd like to see a hybrid..

RogerMG: Actually, getting teachers involved with TI may help some, particularly those that are thinking of working online with students.

KarenNS: I can see why it's frustrating. The world is going by, and it can seem like one is still using sliderules!

GeorgeK: I'd bet as hybrids, not full-on-line.

BarbS: we don't have access to TI in my district.. all chats are locked

RogerMG: There are groups here that deal with just about every subject matter area.

CharlesLM: hey there is a lot to say on favor of slide rules folks

RogerMG: Barb. Actually, teachers can access TI without using the school computers, from their own homes.

KarenNS: Charles, do you use CMS or blackboard? How active are you with it? Oh slide rules....I have nothing good to say!

BarbS: I used TI with a former district in the Rocky MTs.. but this rural county in the east coast is so far behind.

CharlesLM: as building and staffing schools gets more expensive, districts will look for online options

BarbS: yes.. but to teach it to kids. would be a no-no in this district..

CharlesLM: and they will need teachers

KarenNS: Barb, I moved to VA from PA because of the poor rural school district. What county are you in? I was in Berks.

BarbS: I'm in MD.. Harford

BarbS: other districts around me are more willing to try the technology

CharlesLM: I use both Karen

KarenNS: Gotcha. How many households have access to reliable internet, Barb?

BarbS: but I wound up back here for a reason.. I'm hoping it's to help lead them to the light.

BarbS: Don't know the stats, but that's a good question.. probably most..... that aren't on free lunch..

BarbS: it's a basically wealthy district with pockets of poor.

RogerMG: It's interesting that two whole countries which are mostly rural have gone online and have had great success (Canada and Australia.) My original home state, Maine, also is large and very rural and has had great success by going online.

CharlesLM: How many here have been teaching at least 10 years?

GeorgeK: I have

BarbS: Maine also provided laptops for every 7th & 8th grader.. an unprecedented and uncopied move

BarbS: I'm on number 25

RogerMG: Me.

CharlesLM: I'm on 40th

CharlesLM: Who took online courses in college ? anyone?

RogerMG: It's strange that Maine did this . . .generally it is an ultra-conservative state and has never been terribly innovative in ed.

KarenNS: Charles, I'm on number 2. My background is technology-rich and I'm amazed how backwards the schools here still are--and supposedly, we're tech savvy!

GeorgeK: Didn't exist in the 60's.

CharlesLM: not for me either

BarbS: most of the rural ones did it because traveling was so hard.. I mentored teachers in a district in CO where there were only 30 kids in the school, but when they went online 700 signed up because it was a 2 hour drive from the ranch to school

CharlesLM: but I took some recertification courses

BarbS: I did..

CharlesLM: distance favors online

BarbS: in graduate programs.. and created online programs for pre-service teachers at the university

KarenNS: Has "No-Child" spurred some of the necessity for online so districts can provide qualified teachers?

CharlesLM: and busy schedules

RogerMG: I wonder, are tech. grants a possibility for rural areas?

CharlesLM: I'm not sure NCLB has done much

BarbS: was it Maine or Mass? I may have them confused..

BarbS: tech grants started for rural areas and online learning

RogerMG: If you're from Maine, there's no confusion there:-)

BarbS: if anything it's slowed it down due to testing..

CharlesLM: Didn't Maine opt out of NCLB ?

BarbS: however, there is a part of NCLB that says students need to be tech literate by 8th grade.

CharlesLM: yes; that's part of Va's SOLs too

RogerMG: I'm not sure, but I wouldn't be surprised . . 'As Maine goes, so goes almost no one else'

BarbS: but not many states are jumping to worry about that one.. CO is though

CharlesLM: HaHa Roger

CharlesLM: well, have we learned anything?

BarbS: I've got to go grade assignments.. it was great talking with you all..

CharlesLM: bye Barb

BarbS: bye

RogerMG: Great having you here Barb. Hope to see you again

GeorgeK: bye

BarbS left the room (signed off).

RogerMG: Good question . . .what have we learned?

CharlesLM: Roger, what were you hoping to get from this session?

KarenNS: I don't think teachers are resistant to tech, I think they just are short on time and staff development. Lessons learned? More training...more dedicated time to apply technology.

GeorgeK: Learned: to have hope for the future based on what I hear from all of you.

CharlesLM: I like that Karen!

CharlesLM: and you too George

CharlesLM: Hope springs eternal

KarenNS: Charles, we need to print out a transcript. I'm new to this. how do we go about doing that?

BJB2: just log out, Karen...

CharlesLM: I have been getting one automatically at school; must have clicked a box

BJB2: the transcript is automatically emailed to you

CharlesLM: right see :-)

CharlesLM: why do we need a transcript Karen?

KarenNS: will do. thanks, Roger and BJ. It was nice spending my Thursday pm with you.

KarenNS: Charles, mod 2 says we need to send Robin a transcript of the moderated chat we attend...

CharlesLM: oh, I've not read that far yet thanks

RogerMG: Chas. The FROL sessions seem to almost always go this way . . .we struggle with our problems of getting faculty involved, we hit on NCLB and the problems its caused, and other issues. But, usually towards the end, we begin to feel a bit better not only from venting, but also from hearing what others have to say that is working, not working . . . and what they are attempting. In particular there is an outstanding 'feeling' of dedicated people having faith in their work, and working really hard at it. That's about all I could hope for in these sessions.

CharlesLM: looks like you succeeded tonight. this has been good

KarenNS: Roger, this was my first chat. I didn't have high hopes, but I enjoyed it. Thanks!

GeorgeK: Yes, thank you all, and good night.

CharlesLM: I've enjoyed the exchanges

KarenNS: Good Night, John Boy. Good Night, Mary Ellen...

BJB2 waves goodnight

RogerMG: Thank you all. I am grateful for your participation and contributions. Good nite all.

CharlesLM: yes and all the ships at sea