UMCP Educational Technology Outreach Online Course Assessment and Evaluation Model

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Abstract: This presentation offers lessons learned from the development and delivery of University of Maryland, College Park's Educational Technology Outreach Online Course Assessment and Evaluation Model. This model resulted from two overarching questions: How will our courses provide evidence of student content knowledge and skill competency to meet the NCATE review board requirements? Have the course content and activities actually changed participant behavior in the classroom/workplace?

Statement of the Problem or Issue

Technologically mediated instruction offered at a distance has rapidly become an important component of higher education. However, faculty/instructors often find it difficult to assess student learning and outcomes when they have little, if any face to face interaction with participants. While student assessment through distance learning poses a challenge, a focus on interactivity, design strategies that help decrease student anxiety level, and multi-pronged activities and assessment measures can provide unique opportunities for detailed feedback to learners.

Description of Activity, Project, or Solution

This presentation will discuss lessons learned from the evolution of the development and delivery of the University of Maryland, College of Education, Educational Technology Outreach On-line Course Assessment and Evaluation Model.

The Educational Technology Outreach (ETO) initiative results from two overarching questions: 1. How will our courses provide evidence of student content knowledge and skill competency to meet the NCATE review board requirements? and 2. Have the course content and activities actually changed participant behaviors in the classroom/workplace?

ETO has implemented (a three year + endeavor ) an evaluation strategy based the conceptual framework of the Kirkpatrick's Training model. Assessment and evaluations of the on-line courses are systematic and ongoing, and are used to improve the content and delivery of the on-going and future courses. Both formative and summative evaluation protocols and instruments are used to guide the content and delivery. All courses include an on-line pre-profile assessment, and an introduction discussion thread helps the instructor find out more about the particular interest and background of the participants. Throughout the course real time chat room dialogue allows participants to express comments and concerns regarding the course. Formative content knowledge assessments are on-going and include a variety of formats to include, on-line discussion threads, mini-assignments, group work, chat room discussions, projects and papers, on-line self tests and quizzes and graded quizzes and tests. Feedback gathered from assignments has helped in the redesign of course activities (both in the on-going course and in redesign of the same course offered later). Multiple summative evaluations are also used. These include: the post- profile assessment, the University’s evaluation instrument which has been recreated in the online format and can be submitted anonymously, two open ended discussion questions and completion of the How I as a Student Meet Standards Matrix.

To answer the second question, “Have the course content and activities actually changed participant behaviors in the classroom/workplace”?, ETO uses follow-up surveys to see if and how students have continued to apply the knowledge/skills after course conclusion. This is done 1-2 semesters after completion of the course.

The lessons learned are applicable to all disciplines, courses and/or professional development activities. Examples of all instruments, the original and current re-design of courses, and assessment and evaluation results will be shared.