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Higher Education Faculty Training for the Online Environment

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Walden University

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Tracie A. Jones

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the review committee have been made.

Review Committee

Dr. Sydney Parent, Committee Chairperson, Education Faculty
Dr. Jennifer McLean, Committee Member, Education Faculty
Dr. Joanna Karet, University Reviewer, Education Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost
Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

Walden University
2020

Abstract

Higher Education Faculty Training for the Online Environment

by

Tracie A. Jones

MS, Walden University, 2007

BS, Oklahoma Christian University, 1993

Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Education

Walden University

March 2020

Abstract

Universities continue to focus on providing opportunities for students to attain a degree. With more college courses moving to an online format, the faculty are not always prepared to teach in this new environment. The local university does not have a formal training program for faculty as they transition to teaching online. This study's purpose was to examine the available training and mentoring support for faculty as they gain the pedagogical skills to teach online. The concerns-based adoption model and constructivist theory inform how people learn, the support needed to adopt new learning, and how perceptions influence that adoption. The research questions involved the faculty's perceptions of their training needs and the resources for online teaching. A case study design was used to capture the training and support needs of faculty as they transition to teach online. Semistructured interviews were conducted with a purposeful sample of 10 faculty, including 1 faculty member who had never taught online, 3 who had taught less than 2 years online, and 6 who had taught over 2 years online. NVivo software was used for transcribing, coding, and the extraction of themes during the data analysis process. After analyzing, the themes identified were lack of formal training, student success in online courses, and support from other faculty or online resources. To address these themes, a 3-day training program was created that focuses on developing online courses and using online instructional tools to impact teaching and learning. An education empowers students to use their tools and mind to influence others and educators must assist students with facilitating their learning. As faculty continue to expand their learning to teach in an online environment, they are empowering their students to gain an education and developing positive social change for the communities in which they live.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my family who have supported and encouraged me through this process to accomplish my goal. A huge thank you to my husband, Brian, who never complained when things around the house were left undone when I needed to work on assignments for class and write. I love you for always supporting me in my dreams. To my children, Hannah and Zach, you can do whatever you set your mind on to accomplish. Never give up on something that is worth working for. It is dedicated to my mother-in-law who encouraged me to pursue a doctorate and continue to work in higher education. I am just sad she did not live long enough to see me start the degree and finish. To my parents, for instilling in me the drive to complete tasks and always better myself. I love you for all of the support you continue to give to me and my family. To my father-in-law, thank you for always encouraging in your calm manner to continue this path to my doctorate. To Anna Wilson, you always know what to tell me to get me refocused on the goal. Your example and friendship are so important to me. With Lindsey Swagerty and her assistance, guidance, and encouragement I was able to get through the doctorial study. To Debbie Givhan, you will never know how much your listening and coaching me through topics, frustrations, and accomplishments meant to me. I thank God for placing us as colleagues and friends. Lastly, I thank the Lord God for the all of the opportunities in my life. You have provided and given me incredible experiences. I am thankful to be an educator and impact other people. I pray as I continue my life as a Christian that I live as a Godly example to others.

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Section 1: The Problem

The Local Problem

Over the years, university campuses have had transitions in structure. Initially, when a student wanted to attain a college degree, the student would attend a brick and mortar university. Today, attaining a college degree provides many different opportunities from attending a brick and mortar university to an entirely online university or a combination of the two. However, the focus of the university has not changed. The purpose of the university is to assist students with bettering themselves through the attainment of a degree.

Even though the purpose of the university has not changed, the method of learning has changed over time. Face-to-face instruction provided direct instruction to students typically through a lecture structure. Instructional strategies have expanded in face-to-face instruction over the years. The role of faculty has been altered from the *sage on the stage* to a facilitator of learning (Lee & Tan, 2018). Faculty must adjust instruction to meet students' needs not only in face-to-face classes but online courses as well (Adnan, Kalelioglu, & Gulbahar, 2017). Online faculty are challenged with the facilitator role due to the change in format from face-to-face to online instruction (Boettcher & Conrad, 2016). Online learning is still developing as faculty adjust instruction to meet the needs of students whom they often have never met and transition to facilitators of learning (Adnan et al., 2017).

As facilitators of learning, the faculty provide opportunities for students to dig deeper into content, measure the students' new skills and content through authentic online assessments, and encourage students to engage each other in online scholarly discussions (Frazer, Sullivan, Weatherspoon, & Hussey, 2017). When faculty transition to teach online, there is also a transition to modifying instructional practices from lecture-based instruction to the chunking of instruction into shorter concepts, designing engaging and relevant discussions, and designing authentic assessments to engage learning (Frazer et al., 2017). Faculty's background experiences and philosophy impact their receptivity to new instruction and a new skillset (Adnan et al., 2017). Understanding faculty-learners' backgrounds and viewpoints assists in providing opportunities for a paradigm shift from a culture of teaching to that of a faciliator of learning (Adnan et al., 2017).

Often, training provided to faculty as they transition to teaching online focuses on the use of the learning management system or the technological tools for instruction and not on the tools and pedagogy requisite to become a facilitator of learning using this media (Frazer et al., 2017). Faculty need the training to support online pedagogy strategies, to design engaging instruction and authentic assessments, and to monitor online discussions to provide the students with a high-quality online course (McGee, Windes, & Torres, 2017). According to the associate vice chancellor, in reviewing the training opportunities at a selected 4-year, open-admission, southern state university, there is no formal training program for faculty who transition to teaching online. Nationwide, there is a lack of instructional quality indicators to identify effective online teaching practices (Frazer et al., 2017). The university does have a *Faculty Distance Learning Handbook* that outlines requirements for an instructor related to distance learning courses. The handbook includes expectations of the university related to the syllabus template, communication guidelines with students, course loads, and compensation, etc. The handbook has not been updated since 2010 to reflect recent instructional pedagogy trends, university operating procedures, and the university online syllabus template. According to the associate vice chancellor, as the university has expanded online courses, there currently is no pedagogical training to provide faculty with best practices in teaching in the online environment. The purpose of this study was to examine the available training and mentoring support for faculty as they gain the pedagogical skills to teach in an online environment.

Rationale

As education has evolved over the years from face-to-face instruction to hybrids and online, instructional methods continue to evolve and impact how courses are designed and facilitated. Postsecondary institutions continue to see the number of students taking online courses rise each year (Allen & Seaman, 2014, 2017). During the fall of 2014, there were 5.8 million students taking courses in an online format (Allen, Seaman, Poulin, & Straut, 2016). Of those 5.8 million, 2.97 million were taking at least one course online and the remaining students were enrolled in completely online programs (Allen et al., 2016). Institutional personnel are finding that transferring face-to-face course instruction to an online format is not a simple process (Adnan et al., 2017). Online teaching requires specialized skills and competencies to design and deliver high-quality, online instructional experiences for college students (Adnan et al., 2017). Both educators and students need and desire to have effective, efficient, and satisfying learning opportunities that contribute to the understanding and demonstration of learning.

Higher education continues to evolve with the digital age (Delgaty, 2015). With the frequent rise in numbers of online courses each year, faculty continue to feel apprehensive with online teaching and learning practices (Baran & Correia, 2014). The apprehension concerns revolve around the amount of time and energy to teach online, the continual advances in technology, and the lack of support provided by the university (Ko & Rossen, 2017).

Online faculty are key stakeholders in the success and implementation of online courses. Per an associate professor, higher education faculty at the local university are not trained in teaching pedagogy but are trained to be content experts, unless an individual received a teaching degree. The associate vice chancellor stated that there is no formal pedagogy training program for faculty as they transition to teach online at the local university; however, faculty do receive learning management system (LMS) training on how to set up a course, create assignments and tests, and grade through the software. The purpose of this study was to examine the available training and mentoring support for faculty as they gain the pedagogical skills to teach in an online environment.

Definition of Terms

Hybrid learning: When the course incorporates both face-to-face and online learning opportunities and activities (Sener, 2015).

Learning management software (LMS): Asynchronous software that provides a platform for class instruction in the use of available tools that allow students and faculty to access anytime, anywhere learning for submission of assignments, review of materials and resources, and communication with the instructor and fellow students (Han & Shin, 2016).

Online learning: When coursework and learning activities are taken completely online with no face-to-face sessions required (Sener, 2015).

Open-admission university: Higher educational institutions who are unselective and not competitive in admissions policies to reduce barriers to university access for all students (Nelson, 2013).

Significance of the Study

With this study, I addressed the gap in training and support provided to faculty at a local university as they transition to teaching online. According to a dean, during 2017, the local university began an online undergraduate degree and expanded their online master's degree programs. In 2015, 78% of all postsecondary institutions identified in their long-term strategic planning that online learning was vital for their organization's longevity (Allen & Seaman, 2015). Education contributes to a person's knowledge, understanding, and views and has a large influence on social change. The professional development to faculty as they transition to teaching online and promoting online teaching satisfaction impacts a student's education. The design and use of technology tools in an online classroom will provide positive social change by increasing student engagement and academic achievement in online courses, retaining students to graduation (Ko & Rossen, 2017).

States are seeing a shift in university funding to a focus on performance funding (Leonard, 2017). The vice chancellor stated that the local university is now impacted by the new performance funding formula for the state, with funding tied to the number of students graduating in 4 years. This is a major shift with a focus on output at graduation instead of enrollment numbers on the 11th day of class (Leonard, 2017). With the changes in funding, the focus on student engagement, student success, and graduation rates are at the forefront of university administrations across the country and locally (Leonard, 2017). Retention strategies in both online and face-to-face courses are gaining the attention of higher education faculty (Rubin & Hearn, 2018). Moreillon (2015) communicated that higher education faculty feel it is difficult to provide an engaging and collaborative online learning environment. Students aspire to have a vast learning environment in online courses (Moreillon, 2015).

According to an associate professor at the local university, as higher education faculty and administrations seek more engaging learning opportunities for students to assist with retention to graduation, there is a lack of opportunities for faculty to learn pedagogical strategies to support both face-to-face and online engaging instruction at the university level. The findings of this study can benefit positive social change by determining and illustrating the faculty’s needs and desires for pedagogical training as they transition to teach online courses and assist with student retention and graduation rates.

Research Questions

Beginning to teach in a new format or medium means instructors must rethink how they teach (Dietrich, 2015). Teaching online requires faculty to be clear, concise, and fair to the students (Dietrich, 2015). Learning to use the LMS is just one of the obstacles in transitioning to teach online. Another obstacle is creating an engaging classroom that provides opportunities for all students to connect to one another and the content (Dietrich, 2015). The purpose of this study was to examine the available training and mentoring support for faculty as they gain the pedagogical skills to teach in an online environment. The guiding questions used in this study were:

1. What are the faculty's perceptions of their needs as they transition to teaching online?
2. What resources did faculty use to support themselves as they transitioned to teaching online?

Review of the Literature

Conducting this literature review provided me with insight and understanding into the history of distance education along with concerns and issues faculty face nationally as they transition to teach online. I accessed the collected sources cited in this literature review from the following databases: EBSCO Host and Education Research Complete. In addition, I consulted Google Scholar, textbooks, and print and online books. Key search terms and phrases included *online learning, teaching online, online instruction, online teaching, distance learning, e-learning, online course development, online course design, perceptions about online teaching, professional development need of online faculty,* and *professional development*.

Conceptual Framework

Understanding how the mind organizes and finds a structure for learning is the focus of the constructivist theory of learning (Boettcher & Conrad, 2016; Papert & Harel, 1991). Piaget explained the constructivist theory as the personal learning system to make meaning out of experiences (Berger & Luckman, 1966). In addition to constructivist theory, I found that Hall, Wallace, and Dossett's concerns-based adoption model (CBAM) fit well with constructivist theory for adopting innovations in the classroom (see American Institutes for Research, 2018). Both the constructivist theory and CBAM focus on how humans adapt and integrate new learning. Each instructor will respond differently as they adapt to online instruction because of their unique attitudes, beliefs, and experiences (AIR, 2018). Both the constructivist theory and CBAM model support the understanding of how people learn, the assistance needed to adopt new learning, and how beliefs and perceptions impact adoption.

CBAM utilizes tools and techniques that guide leaders to identify the concerns of faculty and adoption process to provide support for successful implementation of new learning (Hall & Hord, 2015). The three dimensions of CBAM include innovation configurations, stages of concern, and levels of use (AIR, 2018). The innovation configuration map serves as an exemplar model and focuses on staff efforts (AIR, 2018). The stages of concern process assist administrators with identifying the attitudes and beliefs of faculty as new programs or initiatives begin (AIR, 2018). Lastly, the levels of use guide the implementation of the new program or process (AIR, 2018). If leaders apply the three different dimensions, they can problem solve and assist faculty as new programs are adopted and implemented (AIR, 2018). As faculty become more comfortable with the process, they move from a personal focus or concern to how student learning is impacted (AIR, 2018). The online facilitator skills and pedagogy should be scaffolded to make connections to the best practices to impact student success and to build confidence in teaching online (Boettcher & Conrad, 2016).

Review of Broader Problem

As higher education faculty transition to teach online, the face-to-face perceptions and instructional behaviors transition to those of online pedagogy. The process of moving to online instruction takes time, energy, and support to make the transition successful for both the instructors and the students, and the beliefs, attitudes, and needs of each faculty member need to be considered in the transition (Terhart, 2013). Implementing an instructional strategic plan to support faculty's perceptions and assist in transitioning to teaching online is important to the university and their continuing ability to offer online courses (Wingo, Ivankova, & Moss, 2017). Over time, faculty are able to identify and modify skills and instructional strategies that are successful in an online environment.

Distance and Online Education

Many different forms of distance learning have existed in education over the last 100 years (Falowo, 2007). What has changed is the format and delivery method of distance education into what is now referred to as online education. The earliest forms of distance education were paper and pencil correspondence courses that were mailed between instructors and students (Falowo, 2007). Now, the online courses are both synchronous and asynchronous (Rockinson-Szapkiw, Wendt, Whighting, & Nisbet, 2016). As distance education has transformed, so has the growth of online student enrollments. Allen and Seaman (2017) referenced the number of higher education students taking at least one online course in 2015 was up 3.9% over the previous year.

The number of students taking at least one online course the previous year was 3.7% (Allen & Seaman, 2017). The growth rate of online student enrollment exceeds that of annual student enrollment within traditional brick and mortar universities (Abdelmalak, 2015; Lokken & Mullins, 2014). The number of students who are not taking some type of course in an online format dropped from 2012 to 2014 (Allen et al., 2016).

Online education continues to grow and evolve to meet demands. Golden (2016) stated that 86.5% of higher education institutions offered at least some form of online courses with 62.4% of institutions offering a complete online degree. The growth in online learning has brought attention to the changes that impact how faculty teach, the buy-in to teaching online, and support needed to maintain online instruction (Golden, 2016). The implementation of online instruction and coursework provides opportunities for universities to reach out to a more diverse population not confined to brick and mortar structures (Abdelmalak, 2015; Falowo, 2007).

Adapting to Online Teaching

Expanding online education brings new obstacles to universities. Higher education administration is faced with implementation strategies, planning, and infrastructure concerns that continue to evolve as the online courses expand (Abdelmalak, 2015; Falowo, 2007). Maintaining quality technology infrastructure and support systems as well as the restructuring of organizational practices, policies, and budgeting can cause administrators concern (Abdelmalak, 2015). In general, the development of online courses and the delivery methods can be costly and challenging in terms of both time and money (Smith & Keaveney, 2017). For instance, the online courses are designed and developed before the course is typically offered to students (Lowenthal & Hodges, 2015). Having faculty spend time developing instructional content and strategies to make a quality online course prior to teaching the class provides opportunity to build a high-quality course without the pressure of facilitating the course at the same time (Smith & Keaveney, 2017).

With the expansion of online courses, faculty are faced with adapting their face-to-face courses to an online format that impacts their pedagogical skills as instructors (Golden, 2016). Seasoned faculty members need to modify their current instructional practices, which typically include lecture, multiple choice tests, and discussions, to new online pedagogical skills (Golden, 2016). In addition, online instruction lessens the traditional face-to-face interaction between students and teachers. Teaching online brings challenges with developing student-teacher relationships (Buskirk-Cohen, Duncan, & Levicoff, 2016). Faculty are challenged with many new facets in the adoption of online instruction.

As online instruction continues to expand, universities are faced with the development of online courses, the need for professional development opportunities to improve online instructional skills and pedagogy, and keeping technological tools updated (Golden, 2016). Universities continue to seek opportunities and develop plans to support faculty and staff to adopt new ways to teach and learn (Golden, 2016). Moving faculty and students into an online instruction environment can be challenging. Faculty’s personal perceptions and experiences often impact their viewpoints about teaching and learning in an online environment (Golden, 2016). As faculty begin to identify their beliefs regarding online instruction, those beliefs can be challenging to overcome to prepare and develop high-quality, engaging learning communities, not only for the faculty member, but also for the administrators (Golden, 2016).

Golden (2016) expressed that professional development support for online faculty was an ongoing, growing concern for higher education administrators. The shift from face-to-face to online instructional format regularly occurs without pedagogical training or an ongoing support system (Golden, 2016). Online faculty need enriching professional development opportunities to expand their skills, learn engaging instructional strategies, and develop a support system with other online faculty that will influence teaching and learning in a new environment (Golden, 2016). Often, faculty continue to use the same teaching practices in an online environment as they used in their face-to-face teaching classroom (Golden, 2016). Higher education administrators are challenged with how to provide quality, engaging online coursework taught by poised, well-equipped, and supported faculty (Golden, 2016).

Resistance, Opportunity, and Challenges

Hunt et al. (2014) found that faculty perceptions are both motivators and barriers in distance learning. Their attitudes, experiences, self-confidence, and concerns all impact teaching online courses (Hunt et al., 2014). Faculty experiences with distance learning impact their desire to teach online as well as their perceptions about teaching in an online format. Faculty who lack experience in an online environment are concerned about their lack of training, technical skills, and face-to-face interactions with students (Bollinger, Inan, & Wasilik, 2014). Allen and Seaman (2015) reported that the faculty acceptance, value, and legitimacy of online education was 28% in 2014, which was a decrease from 2007 when it was 33.5%. The research of Allen and Seaman (2012) reflected university faculty showed they were especially pessimistic regarding the quality of online education, with nearly two thirds reporting they believe online learning outcomes are inferior or somewhat inferior compared to traditional face-to-face classrooms.

Often, university leaders have not asked faculty members if they want or desire to teach online courses, but the faculty members have been assigned and told to teach online courses (Falowo, 2007). The more courses offered by a university, the more accepting of online course legitimacy faculty will be (Allen & Seaman, 2015). Allen and Seaman (2015) noted that even in those universities with high online course offerings, only about one-third of faculty accept online courses as valid.

Faculty who have no experience with online instruction have a more narrowed view of online education than those with limited or extensive knowledge (Hunt et al., 2014). Faculty with no experience are not motivated by stipends, linking the student requests for online instruction, or participating in online strategies to engage students (Hunt et al., 2014). The limited training provided for faculty as they transition to teach online are concerns of novice online teachers (Hunt et al., 2014). Those concerns include the lack of opportunities to observe online instruction and the use of effective online pedagogy (Hunt et al., 2014).

In addition to some faculty’s personal viewpoints that online instruction can be inferior to face-to-face, the faculty are often concerned about the amount of time required to teach with virtual education (Boulton, 2002). These concerns center around communication and the misinterpretations that can happen through online communication strategies (Boulton, 2002). The amount of time spent communicating in online courses is typically higher than in person (Boulton, 2002). In addition, the students and faculty member must wait for the response to a question. The physical distance factor often causes both the faculty and students to feel alienated and not included in the campus (Dolan, 2011).

Dolan, Kain, Reilly, and Bansal (2017) discussed that the concerns of online faculty encompass the lack of training to develop skills to teach online and foster engagement. Developing new online courses or transitioning face-to-face courses is time consuming for faculty (Bollinger et al., 2014). The insufficient training and time to develop online pedagogy and course activities is concerning for inexperienced online faculty (Bollinger et al., 2014; Smith & Keaveney, 2017). Faculty desire and expect high-quality instruction for their students, but without time and training, faculty feel unprepared to support their students (Hunt et al., 2014).

Golden (2016) identified that higher education administrators are struggling to balance the demand for online courses with the training and support to faculty as they develop new courses and transition face-to-face courses to an online format. Higher education administrators are seeking support and resources to deepen the professional practices of faculty to meet the growing demands for more online course and degree selections (Golden, 2016). The cost factor for developing online courses and degrees is high for the university, which underlines the need to train faculty in online pedagogy to develop high-quality courses (Smith & Keaveney, 2017). The development of a strong community of support for both online faculty and students impacts the success of online courses, degrees, and, ultimately, the university (Smith & Keaveney, 2017).

Motivation to Teach Online

Higher education administrators continue to consider and pursue opportunities to retain students with completing a degree (Kahu & Nelson, 2017). Dolan (2011) stated higher education institutions continue to explore ways to nurture and motivate faculty to gain new pedagogies to raise student engagement, which will assist with retaining students. Online coursework is one of the strategies implemented to affect student retention across many universities. Taking and teaching courses online may seem cold and impersonal but incorporating online pedagogies and engaging curriculum will soften and provide student-focused online instruction (Dolan, 2011).

Understanding how faculty attitudes related to online education impact the perceptions of faculty is the focus of the work of Bunk, Rui, Smidt, Bidetti, and Malize (2015). A faculty member’s personal perceptions, beliefs, and feelings impact the teaching practices in the classroom. Bunk et al. (2015) identified the feel of excitement and acceptance of online education that impacted a faculty member’s attitude about teaching online. Motivation and emotion are both important factors that influence faculty to be motivated to teach online (Bollinger et al., 2014). Transitioning to teaching online can cause concerns for faculty regarding their ability to connect with their students (Dolan, 2011). Without an established online learning community to provide support; resources; and ongoing, job-embedded professional development, the faculty feel less valued and student retention often suffers (Dolan, 2011). Online faculty can experience isolation from their counterparts who teach in a traditional format, and the isolation tends to lead faculty to not being retained (Dolan, 2011). When faculty do not feel connected and confident teaching online, the faculty member's instructional planning and performance impacts the student learning and success in the classroom (Dolan, 2011). Student learning and success are impacted because they do not feel connected to the instructor, to peers in the course, and often with the content.

Experience with Online Courses

Face-to-face instruction and the physical classroom environment are familiar and comfortable to faculty. As faculty transition to teaching in an online environment, the comfort zone changes drastically for most faculty (Rhode & Krishnamurthi, 2016). Most higher education faculty teach the way they were taught (Schmidt, Tschida, & Hodge, 2016). A higher education pedagogy course is not required to teach at the university level. If faculty have never participated or completed an online course, then they lack a model of what online teaching could include (Schmidt et al., 2016).

The question for most faculty as they transition to online instruction is where to begin. Frequently, faculty do not feel prepared to teach online or consider teaching online (Smith & Keaveney, 2017). The perceptions of faculty about online instruction, the climate and culture of the campus, workload, the technology resources, time, and available training opportunities impact faculty's decisions about online education (Walters, Grover, Turner, & Alexander, 2017). The concerns about the demands of teaching online often cause the faculty to be resistant to transitioning to a new format of instruction (Bunk et al., 2015). Transitioning to teaching online is a journey (Northcole, Gosselin, Reynaud, Kilgour, & Anderson, 2015).

As faculty make the transition to online instruction, it can cause uneasy feelings that make instructors analyze their beliefs, course structure, and instructional resources (Shattuck & Anderson, 2013). The faculty face many challenges as they transition courses to an online format with the first often being lack of what online instruction should include (Schmidt et al., 2016; Walters et al., 2017). Shattuck and Anderson's (2013) research identified frustration, confusion, self-doubt, and often fear as normal concerns and behaviors as faculty began to transition to a new teaching environment. Without appropriate training and support to assist with lessening the fears, frustrations, and doubts, faculty will not be able to transition easily to online instruction (Walters et al., 2017).

Skills Needed to Teach Online

Understanding when faculty transition to teach online, it is not a simple process to transfer face-to-face courses to an online format (Schmidt et al., 2016). Designing and delivering online courses requires specific skills, competencies, and training to provide quality teaching and learning experiences for the students and teachers (Schmidt et al., 2016). Rhode and Krishnamurthi (2016) identified that a gap exists between the ins and outs of online learning and how educators teach and facilitate a student-centered online learning environment. In order to positively impact student outcomes, faculty need to be knowledgeable and possess the appropriate skills to teach online (Frazer et al., 2017). A plan to support faculty in developing new skills to teach in an online environment is needed by the university (Golden, 2016). The plan often begins with developing and deepening technological skills for faculty and sometimes students (Boulton, 2002; Galusha, 1997). Continuing to deepen and develop technological skills to remain up to date with societal needs and changes will need to be included in the university plan (Schmidt et al., 2016).

With a plan to develop, deepen, and maintain skills, as faculty design and deliver courses the educational needs of students, their learning expectations of the course, and how to motivate students should be considered (Smith & Keaveney, 2017). The time and effort faculty dedicate to developing and teaching online courses is more involved than when teaching face-to-face (Schmidt et al., 2016). As faculty develop online content, the use of modules of study provide a basic structure for learning. The modules are focused on content and topics to build a comprehensive process for learning (Smith & Keaveney, 2017). Students then have the opportunity through the learning modules to develop and form connections for the learning to be interwoven (Smith & Keaveney, 2017).

Professional Development Need to be Successful in Online Instruction

As universities prepare for adding additional online courses to their schedules, the need to provide ongoing, job embedded professional development and time to prepare quality courses to make the transition to teaching formats is needed (Rhode & Krishnamurthi, 2016). Developing a faculty professional development program focused on online instruction assists with bridging gaps in skills, pedagogy, and communication strategies to develop high quality online programs of study and courses (Rhode & Krishnamurthi, 2016). Without structured professional development opportunities to assist faculty with deepening skills and transitioning to new online pedagogy, the quality of course and instruction can be hindered (Rhode & Krishnamurthi, 2016). The planned professional development opportunities should be structured to provide continual learning opportunities for all faculty. Moving the professional development opportunities to content specific training deepens the meaningful interactions among faculty to develop collaborative learning structures (Rhode & Krishnamurthi, 2016; Schmidt et al., 2016; Shattuck & Anderson, 2013).

Investing in professional development, which is timely and meaningful, allows the faculty member to develop quality courses (Golden, 2016). Not all professional development needs to be just in time based, but building and deepening faculty pedagogy through mandated training will cultivate student success in the classroom (Golden, 2016). Without ongoing, job embedded professional development the faculty will not develop the competencies and confidence in online course design and online facilitation of learning (Northcole et al., 2015). Providing training on the latest and newest technology gadgets does not enhance classroom instruction but providing training on student success and online student engagement pedagogy will affect student learning (Schmidt et al., 2016).

Support for Faculty as they Transition

As humans, we want to connect to others and for faculty being a part of a community of online faculty can provide the needed support as they transition to teaching online (Adnan et al., 2017; Shattuck & Anderson, 2013). Transitioning from face-to-face instruction to online brings new challenges as a facilitator of learning. The changes in pedagogy practices, the learning of new technological tools, and transitioning current instructional activities to online learning impacts the support faculty desire and need to be successful (Walters et al., 2017). Teaching online can feel isolated for faculty (Golden, 2016). Planning and providing for the social needs of online faculty will assist with enhancing a stronger sense of purpose and commitment to the university for them and to the students (Golden, 2016).

If a faculty member has not ever taken a class online then transitioning to teaching online is a whole new experience and often feels like trial by fire (Adnan et al., 2017; Shattuck & Anderson, 2013). If a faculty member has taken online courses then the format is familiar, but transitioning face-to-face instruction and assessments to online components is often a daunting task (Shattuck & Anderson, 2013). Online faculty roles transition from the typical sage on the stage instruction to a mentor, tutor, and facilitator of learning in an online environment (Galusha, 1997). The roles of mentor, tutor, and facilitator of learning are daunting, but with focused support and a community of collaboration the transition becomes more manageable (Meyer & Murrell, 2014). The ongoing support and professional development opportunities assist online faculty with continuing to enhance and diversify quality learning experiences (Meyer & Murrell, 2014).

Online faculty desire to work for higher education institutions who value developing professional capacity and skills of faculty to enhance online instruction (Allen & Seaman, 2013). Developing support tools for online faculty to exchange best practices, tools, resources, and collaboration opportunities enables the university to motivate faculty and thus retain students (Dolan, 2011). Providing opportunities through support programs and ongoing professional development allows online faculty the structure to collaborate to develop and deepen pedagogy, technological skills, and enhance student success (Golden, 2016).

Conclusion

Transitioning to teaching in an online format is a process for faculty. However, administration often does not have a formal strategic professional development plan to support faculty along the way. The faculty's perceptions of online learning impact the results and success of the faculty teaching online. Understanding the faculty's perceptions should assist administration as formal training and support is developed to guide the effective, efficient, and engaging online coursework and curriculum to assist students with furthering their training and degree.

Implications

The ongoing, job embedded training and support needed to teach online is often lacking for faculty. The training and support are often not job embedded and ongoing. Professional development opportunities not only assist faculty with continuing to enhance skills, but they build collegial relationships. Knowing there is continual, planned, and strategic support enhances the opportunities for faculty to deepen and fine tune their online pedagogical and technological skills. The outcome from this project study is to identify the training and support faculty need as they transition to teach online. I am proposing a professional development that would support faculty and their needs as they transition to teach online. The professional development is anticipated to be a 3-day, 8-

hour each day workshop format to assist faculty in understanding, identifying, and enhancing online pedagogical skills to feel confident and successful with teaching in an online environment. The workshop will include preassessments, PowerPoints, hands-on activities, research based instructional strategies, and ongoing support for the faculty.

The findings of this study and the resulting project have the possibility of impacting faculty at other universities as they transition to teach online. Conceivably, this study will promote positive social change by impacting the students who are pursuing degrees. When students persist through degree completion, they impact their communities by being included as degree completers in statistical data, having a higher standard of living, and giving back to their communities.

Summary

Online education is at the forefront in higher education. It has become the norm for students in the 21st century. The student demand for more online courses has caused faculty to transition from face-to-face courses to an online format. The transition brings the need for new support structures to assist faculty with understanding, learning, and mastering online pedagogy. Often faculty’s perceptions and beliefs impact their desire to teach in an online format. In addition, the technology to teach online brings another factor for faculty to consider.

In Section 1 the local problem was summarized, which was the lack of a formal, structured professional development for faculty as they transition to teach online at a local university. The rationale, terminology used in the study, the significance of the problem, research questions to guide the study, and an inquiry into current literature associated with the problem were outlined. The implications of the study ended Section 1.

In Section 2, I examined the qualitative, case study methodology design and approach. I also outlined how the research questions guided the study. In addition, I discussed the collection of data process, the details of selecting the sample, and the data analysis methods discussed.

In Section 3, I reviewed the project plan that includes the format, structure, and evaluation that was developed. In the study, I addressed the training and support needed for faculty to be successful as they transition to teach online. The project goals and objectives are also included in this section.

In Section 4, I described the analysis and findings of the project’s strengths and limitations. My personal reflections of the research are also in this section. A review of the methods, the strengths, and the weaknesses that surfaced during the research, and the implications of future studies on the topic are shared.

Section 2: The Methodology

Introduction

Adjusting to a new teaching format can be challenging for faculty (Peerani, 2013). As faculty transition to online instruction, their desire to meet the student's needs, design instruction and assessments, learn new technological tools, and engage students with the content can be a challenge. To gain a greater understanding of the gap in practice, I examined the shortage of pedagogical training for faculty as they transition to online instruction in this project study.

Research Design and Approach

In this qualitative, descriptive case study, I focused on the perceptions and training needs of faculty as they transition to teach online courses. The insights learned provided an opportunity to influence training and support for faculty as they make this transition. The case study method allowed for gathering information focused on local issues affecting a particular group of faculty. The personal viewpoints and opinions gathered from interviews provided insight into the needs of the faculty to improve their online instructional strategies (see Yin, 2003).

Case study research is used when focusing on a question that describes, documents, or discovers information from individuals (Hancock & Algozzine, 2017). Case study researchers are decision makers and make recommendations to address a problem (Hancock & Algozzine, 2017). Using the case study method allows for an in-depth review of the problem and those involved (Hancock & Algozzine, 2017).

Researchers who use the case study method provide direct influence on policy, practices, procedures, or future research (Hancock & Algozzine, 2017).

I considered other qualitative methodologies for this study, including ethnography and grounded theory. Ethnography looks at behaviors, beliefs, and language by describing, analyzing, and identifying patterns within groups (Creswell, 2012). Using the ethnography method focuses more on the culture and climate, where in this study, I focused on the perceptions and needs of local university faculty regarding teaching online. Another approach I considered was grounded theory. Since I focused on solving a local problem instead of developing a new theory in this project study, grounded theory was not chosen to employ.

The key research question for this study was: What training and support do faculty need as they transition to teach online? The guiding questions of this study were:

1. What are the faculty perceptions of their needs as they transition to teaching online?
2. What resources did faculty use to support themselves as they transitioned to teaching online?

Participants

Using purposeful sampling, I selected participants based on three criteria. The three criteria are those who have never taught online, those who have taught less than two years online, and then anyone who has taught over two years online. I interviewed one faculty member who had never taught online, three who had taught less than 2 years online, and six who had taught over 2 years online. The local university has a small faculty, most of whom have had the opportunity to teach online. Some faculty have chosen not to transition their instruction to an online format or are new to teaching in a postsecondary environment. The participants for the study were nine faculty from the local university. Each participant was interviewed to gather their perceptions and needs relating to online instruction (see Creswell, 2012). Using fewer participants allowed for a deeper inquiry during the interview with each individual. By using a small but carefully constructed sample, I was able to gain a deeper and more detailed information from each faculty member (see Marshall, 1996).

Gaining Access to Participants

Once the Institutional Review Board (approval # 04-05-19-0041088) at both Walden University and at the local university approved my proposal, I began the process of recruiting the participants. The Academic Computing Department staff on the local campus aided in identifying faculty who met the criteria for the three categories. No participants came from the instructional unit in which I am housed. I sent e-mails to all faculty who met the criteria, asking for volunteers for the interviews. Once faculty volunteered, another e-mail was sent with details about the study, including an informed consent form, privacy information, and a request to establish a time to conduct the interview.

Researcher-Participant Working Relationship

To establish a researcher-participant working relationship, I used e-mail and/or phone calls for personal communications with participants once their consent was received. The communication allowed me to introduce myself to each of the participants and to explain my research role. During each conversation, I shared the structure of the interview process, the confidentiality involved in the project, that the study was completely voluntary, and an estimate of the length of the interview. Each participant had the opportunity to ask any questions about the study or the interview process.

Ethical Protection of Participants

Once faculty volunteered for the interview, each participant received a detailed e-mail from me describing the study, the interview timeline, their rights as a participant, and the informed consent form to complete. Within the e-mail, information about the protection of their identity in the study was provided. Each participant e-mailed the consent form back to me prior to the interview. Then as the interview began, I discussed in person their rights as a participant, including the ability to withdraw at any point with no repercussions, the protection of their identity in the study, and the recording of the interview for transcription and analysis.

Data Collection

I used a semistructured interview process with the participants at the local university for this qualitative study (see Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The interview protocol was designed to gain the information necessary to answer each research question (see Appendix B). The interview questions were organized according to each research question. The data gathering process was conducted through face-to-face, personal interviews at various locations on the local campus. I also audio recorded the interviews. During the semistructured interviews, open-ended questions were asked to gain insight and understanding from each participant (see Creswell & Creswell, 2017). This type of interview allowed for me to be flexible in asking additional probing questions based on the interviewee's answers to the interview questions (see Brinkmann, 2014).

Keeping Track of Data

I used reflective journals to document experiences, opinions, thoughts, and feelings during the research process (see Ortlipp, 2008). The journaling process allowed reflection to assist me in checking for the accuracy of each interviewee's responses following each interview. In addition to the reflective journal, I kept a research log to document the places, times, locations, and other relevant information relating to this research (see Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Research logs are a recording tool to document the information gathered during the research process (Bankhead, Nichols, & Vaughn, 1999).

Role of the Researcher

Researchers are to be honest and ethical during the research process. Being able to communicate, collaborate, and provide information to benefit others is the goal of research (Butler et al., 2019). Due to this study taking place on my local campus in which I serve as grant coordinator, I divulged my personal relationship and position on the campus to the participants. As I recruited participants for interviews, I looked for people who were not from the school unit or department in which I am housed. I had no supervisory or managerial responsibility or power over any of the participants in the study. I also had no working relationships with any of the participants in this study.

Data Analysis

Analysis Process

I audio recorded each interview and transcribed them within 5 days of their occurrence. Reflective journals and research logs were also kept during the research process. Using an open-coding process, I employed NVivo software to transcribe and code each interview (see Saldana, 2016). After working with the data from each interview in the software, I began to analyze the data using axial coding to chunk related information. The chunking process provided opportunities for themes to emerge (Saldana, 2016). In addition to coding, I reviewed the research log and reflective journal. The journal and log allowed for me to record my thoughts on the participants who were interviewed; their background with online instruction; their content expertise, and ideas gathered during the interview relating to body language, their perceptions, and the data gathered.

Evidence of Quality

To maintain accuracy and credibility, I used member checking for the process of review and validation by the interviewees (see Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, & Walter, 2016). Once the interview was transcribed, the document was sent to each participant for accuracy and any additions or revisions to the transcript (see Birt et al., 2016). I began to code the transcribed interviews to identify emerging themes. The process assisted with avoiding researcher bias through having the participants review and confirm the preliminary results (see Birt et al., 2016). No interviewee made any changes to their responses during the transcript audit or the member checking.

Discrepant Cases

A discrepant case is one in which a participant’s view does not align with those obtained from other interviews (Morrow, 2005). I analyzed the data from all interviews in the research process and included in the study. There were no discrepant cases in this study (see Rajput & MacMahon, 1992). Using any discrepant cases would have provided for a depth of understanding regarding the local problem along with the perceptions and needs of the faculty as they transition to teach online.

Data Analysis Results

As many college classes and degrees have moved from the traditional, face-to-face format at a brick and mortar university to online formats, faculty have had to learn to teach and plan for instruction in an online format. The purpose of this study was to examine the available training and mentoring support for faculty as they gain the pedagogical skills to teach in an online environment. I collected data from nine professors on the local campus for this project study. All nine of the participants were current faculty on the local campus. Of the nine, one had never taught online, three had taught online for less than 2 years, and the remaining five had taught from 4 to over 12 years online.

I used NVivo software for both the transcription and the analysis of data. I used word and small phrase codes to begin the analysis. The initial coding began with about 10 words or small phrases. Examples include technical support, training support, course shell creation, and perceptions. From this point, the combining of codes progressed to longer phrases, such as support in the creation of course shells, support to develop engaging online instruction, and university technical support services. After the combining of terms, themes emerged as the analysis progressed. I aligned the themes and analysis results according to the research questions.

Research Question 1

Theme 1: Little training for online teaching. The participants had all taught in the face-to-face format; only one faculty had never taught online, three had taught online for less than 2 years, and the remaining five had taught online for more than 4 years. Participants A and C shared a desire for feedback on the course layout to improve their instruction and provide an engaging online classroom environment. Two of the participants shared concerns about not knowing what other online courses look like or how what they have developed could be improved upon. Participant A stated, “A huge barrier for me is I just don’t know I’m doing what I need to do and whether is good enough or looks like other faculty’s courses.”

Faculty are concerned about preparing a quality online course to deliver the content. Four of the participants made reference to desiring feedback about the design of their course. They expressed a desire for someone to sit down with them and review their course to identify ways to improve and include new tools available in the learning management system.

Each August during the back to school professional development, training has been available for faculty on the basics in the learning management system in 1-to-2-hour blocks of time. But the trainings do not typically include opportunities for online pedagogy or best practices in online instruction. Training is not ongoing, or job embedded. Many of the participants expressed they were not comfortable using the basic tools available in the learning management system. Several participants said the training was not sufficient to design a quality course, nor to completely feel comfortable teaching online. Those same participants shared they have reached out to other faculty on campus for support to integrate some of the learning management tools. Participant D stated, "when I began to teach online, I was thrown into it and told to go forth and develop my first course, so I did by converting my face-to-face courses with some videos attached." Most participants agreed that more instructional strategies, student engagement ideas, and content specific training from the university were needed to teach in an online environment with success.

Theme 2: Responsibility for content instruction and student success. Several of the faculty believe online learning is not the best instruction for all learners. Participants A, C, and F shared they do not feel every course in every content area lends itself to an online format. Some of the examples provided by these participants included botany courses where one needs to feel the texture of plants and shapes, upper-level accounting courses, and oral communications courses when you need to give speeches in front of an audience.

Some participants believe that online instruction is not as rigorous as face-to-face courses. Participant B shared,

> Online courses can work in some instances though I don't believe again that they are as rigorous as traditional classes. One of my online courses has been revised consistently over 12 years and I still have not reached a point where I am satisfied

> intellectually that it is rigorous as it is with my in-class students. You can use the chat rooms and online discussions where are all right but again, I’m more of a traditionalist in my teaching. Face-to-face and having a group of students together in the traditional German seminary method is optimal. I’ve also never heard a student say that an online course was their favorite.

This perspective was similar to many of the other participants. The concern is a high quality and rigorous course to help the students get their degree.

Faculty are concerned about knowing their students and understanding their needs. Participant D shared concerns that many of her online students are older nontraditional learners and they often have issues with technology. Many can have difficulty with scanning documents and uploading for grading, video conferencing, and general navigation of the learning management system.

Participants were concerned with providing quality instruction to the students so they could learn the material. Students must seek help when struggling in both face-to-face and online courses. Preferences are to teach in a face-to-face format. Most of the participants were concerned about lack of engagement and connections with students in online courses. Participant D stated,

> I am often disappointed with the lack of interaction with online students. I mean you can see the interaction in face-to-face courses because the students are talking back and forth in content discussions. You can also read body language to know how the student is understanding the content. With online courses, I cannot read a student’s body language.

Participant E stated,

> When teaching online, you have to be more structured in your lectures and how you design the course. Whereas in a face-to-face there's more talking back and forth and more spontaneous questioning. You don't get the spontaneity online so trying to anticipate where confusions could occur in the lesson. Trying to not only educate yourself but your students as to what tools are available and create learning communities using the group and collaborative tools in the learning management system. Sometimes these tools work great and other times they don't. It takes a lot more time to plan and interact with students online than in a face-to-face course.

Faculty are concerned about the developing relationships along with the quality and engaging instruction for online students.

Research Question 2

Theme 3: YouTube and colleagues were used more frequently than the university technical support services. The university's technical support services are relied upon by the participants during normal work hours. However, participants stated they often work on courses from home, and when they need assistance or have questions, they have to rely on YouTube for help and not university support services. Participant D stated, "I want somebody to be available to help me 24/7 to answer my calls when I need the help. I need someone I am comfortable with being able to say help me." The local campus' academic computing office is available during the regular workday to assist with questions or problems when they arise. Lack of assistance for students and faculty outside of the workday is a concern by all of those interviewed. Online learners have access to courses 24-hours a day, but do not have access to technical assistance or student services outside of normal business hours.

The participants referred to using other faculty who teach online as a resource and support for learning new tools or answering questions. Most participants stated they relied on YouTube how to videos or colleagues to help with issues or integrating new tools in the online course. Participant A stated, “I went downstairs and still do to another department on campus who teach a lot of classes online and get help when I’m struggling with the learning management system or wanting to try a new tool.” All of those interviewed stated the learning management system had tools they were not even aware of and could have used in their courses. Three participants shared they know the learning management system allows for videos to be embedded in the course shell, but don’t know how to create the video or embed a video.

Outcomes in Relation to the Research Problem

Universities continue to focus on providing opportunities for students to attain a degree. However, the methods of attaining the degree have changed. Students’ only option at one point was to attend a face-to-face brick and mortar institution of higher education. Today, students have opportunities to take courses online, hybrid, and/or face-to-face. Online course offerings continue to grow each year, but faculty are not always prepared as they transition to teach online courses. Online faculty are key in the success and implementation of online courses. Higher education faculty are typically content experts and are often not trained in teaching pedagogy, according to an associate professor. An associate vice chancellor shared, there is no formal pedagogy training program for faculty as they transition to teach online at the local university.

The purpose of this project study was to examine the available training and mentoring support for faculty as they gain the pedagogical skills to teach in an online environment. As I researched and interviewed participants about the available the training and mentoring on the local campus, there was little evidence to show that there was ongoing, job embedded training available to faculty as they transitioned to teach in an online format. Participants stated they were provided training during the fall back to school professional development week focused on the basics of the learning management system. The training was typically 1 to 2 hours in length, and the training was not required. The content of the training offered to the faculty focused on the basic components of the learning management system, such as creating a folder, creating an assignment, and creating a test. There has been little pedagogy instruction for teaching in an online format.

Participants mentioned the need for content pedagogy training and best practices to support engaging and high-quality instruction. Many study participants believe that online instruction is not up to the rigor and quality of face-to-face courses. The faculty preferences are to teach face-to-face and use online as a supplemental teaching tool. The local campus is a small, rural university with low student to teacher ratios. Faculty know students and students often seek assistance from faculty with course content. Participants shared they do not feel connected to the students taking online courses. They cannot tell that a student is struggling because they cannot see their body language which provides a visual clue. Engagement pedagogy is lacking from the support and training provided to faculty.

There was a concern about point-in-time technology support for both students and faculty. As participants began to transition to teach online, they attended a 1-2-hour training provided during the back to school in service on the campus about the basic elements of the learning management system. Participants shared they often sought out assistance from other faculty teaching online to learn how to use new tools and online resources to support student success. The campus provides an Academic Computing office during normal university hours. There is a lack of after-hours and weekend technical support for faculty and students. Many of the participants stated they use time at home to communicate and help students troubleshoot concerns with courses.

Evidence of Quality

As a researcher, I have to understand my own biases as a researcher to validate the findings in the project study. Qualitative researchers need to be aware of their own bias through the recording of notes while in the field, which typically includes the researcher's reflections about the collected data (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). I reviewed my research log and reflective journal to determine any personal bias. This review allowed for reflection of who the participants were, their experiences with online instruction along with their content expertise, and notes about their body language during the interviews. This review allowed for the reflection of the perceptions and realities of each of the interviewees and their valid concerns and desires that needed to be considered. I placed my own biases to the side as I began to focus on the interviews and responses.

During the interviews, I was cautious not to say or make any body language movements that would impact the interviewee’s responses. Once interviews were completed and transcribed, the data from the nine semistructured interviews were compared. Once analyzed, the themes emerged within the data. Member checking was used to send preliminary findings out to each participant for their views and feedback. Reviewing the findings assisted with understanding the intent of each participant’s viewpoints. Accuracy of the findings is important for the credibility and trustworthiness of the study (Creswell, 2012).

Discrepant Cases

The participants’ responses were analyzed to determine themes and trends in thinking relating to transitioning to teach in an online environment. There were a variety of responses but no discrepant cases in this project study.

Description of the Project

In order for faculty to feel more confident with providing engaging and rigorous online instruction, participants shared the need for pedagogy training and resources to support their learning to thus support a quality, vital curriculum for students. Based on the results of this qualitative study, I determined a face-to-face 24-hour training developed into module topics would meet the needs of faculty as they transition to teach online. The modules would range in skill from learning the basics of the learning management system, to instructional strategies, best practices for success, and developing authentic assessments. The components within each module could include guided discussion questions, PowerPoint presentations, handouts, hands on activities, resources, module exit slips used as formative assessments to guide training, and an evaluation at the completion of the 24 hours of training.

Section 3: The Project

Introduction

The purpose of the project is to present a formal training program for faculty to help them transition to teaching in an online environment. One common finding from the research analysis was the need for support as faculty began to teach online along with continued support as they develop the modules within the course. I used the findings as a guide to design and develop a professional development plan that offers best practices that support developing engaging online learning courses. The participants will be involved in hands on activities that will allow them to apply the learning as they develop an online course.

I designed the project to be a 3-day professional development that will focus on best practices for teaching online, promoting active learning, and developing the modules for their course as they transition the instruction to an online format. The design of the workshop will supply participants with tools, instructional strategies, and support to assist them to develop engaging online courses to support student learning. Yamauchi, Im, and Mark (2013) discussed workshop approaches that have incorporated opportunities for active engagement, critical thinking, and practical application; consequently, I incorporated these features into the professional development project.

The design of the 3-day professional development was guided by best practices and industry standards for developing online courses established by Quality Matters (2018). The structure of the training includes whole group instruction, small group discussions and feedback, and hands on practice developing modules for courses. The format includes a PowerPoint presentation, videos, and discussions about best practices to develop an understanding of how to move a face-to-face course to an online format that supports engaging learning opportunities for students. Assessments of participant learning will be conducted through observations, questioning, feedback, daily formative assessments through exit slips, and a summative evaluation.

Project Goals

The purpose of this study was to examine the available training and mentoring support for faculty as they gain the pedagogical skills to teach in an online environment. The goals of the project are for faculty to learn how to create engaging online instructional courses to support students and their learning and feel confident in facilitating online courses. Best practice strategies and instructional tools are integrated into the professional development to assist faculty with developing engaging instructional modules to support student learning. The data analysis and findings identified the need for a formal training program that supports engaging students in their learning and assisting faculty with developing instructor-student relationships in an online course. The training provides for interactive, hands on learning along with discussions about teaching online to incorporate engaging learning strategies.

Rationale

The problem at the local university was an absence of any formal training program to support faculty as they transition to teach in an online environment. The results of my study determined my choice to develop a 3-day professional development to address this problem. Research cited in Section 1 identified the need for training and support for faculty to feel confident as they transition to teach in an online environment that engaged active learning for students and faculty (Golden, 2016). The results of my qualitative study identified that faculty need and desire a more structured training program as they transition to teach online. The training I created in response assists faculty with developing and planning engaging instructional tools and materials to support learning in an online environment. Participants were frustrated with the lack of timely training when they began to teach online and that they still did not feel confident with all the instructional tools available in the learning management system as they developed courses. The study participants shared the need for a formal professional development program to support faculty as they began to teach online courses.

I chose to design and develop a professional development to assist faculty with the opportunity to learn and discuss best practices to support an engaging online learning environment. The training includes hands on time to integrate the different topics of discussion as the faculty develop their beginning modules for a course (see Stoll, Lamont, Block, & Pesavento, 2019). Participants will follow a learn, develop, and coaching feedback sequence throughout the training. The professional development also provides training for faculty on developing a Welcome Module that provides a focus on creating a video and written introduction for students to meet their instructor and understand the goals, expectations, and requirements of the course. Then, participants will learn about identifying and developing focused learning goals for the course and modules, using engaging instructional tools, planning for engagement during learning, and assessing authentically, allowing students to show mastery of learning (see Brundiers & Wiek, 2017).

Review of Literature

The growth of online learning opportunities in higher education has provided students with more access to courses without attending in person (Dell, Dell, & Blackwell, 2015; Massengale & Vasquez, 2016). However, this growth has also impacted the number of faculty who teach online and the development of those courses. As faculty transition to teach online, they need to consider the barriers students could experience and to plan for those in the development of their course and learning activities (Massengale & Vasquez, 2016). By planning and addressing barriers, faculty are providing equal access opportunities for all students to experience learning environments to support their educational goals. Throughout the literature review and planning of the training, my focus was on providing an engaging professional development opportunity for faculty that would impact the design and delivery of online courses to influence student success and learning for all.

Through this literature review, I provide insight and understanding into developing high quality and impactful professional development workshops, using authentic assessment, and developing engaging online courses. The collected sources cited in this literature review were accessed through the EBSCO Host and Education Research Complete databases. In addition, I consulted Google Scholar, textbooks, and print and online books. Key search terms and phrases included *quality professional* *development, designing online courses*, *authentic assessment*, *engagement in an online courses, online teaching,* and *online course design*.

Effective Professional Development

Education has been a valued tool in individuals bettering themselves (Akinsooto & Akpomuje, 2018). As educators, it is important to continue to be a lifelong learner, and professional development is one opportunity to continue learning. It is also important not to plan for a one-size fits all professional development because faculty have many different levels of experience and skills (Rhode, Richter, & Miller, 2017). Higher education faculty have extensive training in their content area of expertise but often lack pedagogy and effective teaching strategies, especially in an online instructional format (Elliott, Rhoades, Jackson, & Mandernach, 2015; Zheng, Bender, & Nadershahi, 2017). Professional development that is content focused, provides for active learning opportunities, sustainable, and cohesive is important if faculty are to feel their time participating is worthwhile (Desimone & Pak, 2017). When a person feels their time and efforts were valued and worthwhile, they are more apt to incorporate the learning into daily practices (Desimone & Pak, 2017).

When designing quality professional development, the content of the training needs to address principles and instructional practices as well as facilitate learning and communication to develop a bond among the participants to implement the learning into the everyday teaching environment (Elliott et al., 2015; Patel, Margolies, Covell, Lipscomb, & Dixon, 2018). Faculty do not want to be preached at in a professional development but want to be active learners engaged in the exploration of opportunities for growth (Patel et al., 2018). When faculty are engaged in hands on, active learning opportunities, they are more likely to implement the practices into their own classrooms (Elliott et al., 2015; Jiang, 2017).

Ching, Hsu, and Baldwin (2018) discussed that learning takes place when instructors reflect more on their current teaching practices and less on new skills. Teaching practices must continue to emerge and align with workforce preparation. The practices also need to embrace project and problem-based learning environments that allow for students to be guides for their learning and teachers to become the facilitators of that learning (Bernhardt, 2015; Kricsfalusy, George, & Reed, 2018). As faculty participate in professional development, there needs to be consistency in terminology, practices, and policy (Kricsfalusy et al., 2018; Le Cornu, 2015). Faculty should also be engaged in active learning, reflection and feedback, and skills development necessary to teaching in an online environment (Hokanson et al., 2019).

Developing Engaging Online Courses

Over the years, the growth of online learning has increased and so has the pedagogy centered around brain research and standards-based learning (Robinson & Wizer, 2016). The expanded knowledge about research-based online pedagogy has impacted how courses are designed and how learning happens in online instruction (Van Rooij & Zirkle, 2016). Teachers need to design online learning experiences that make learning accessible for all students (Van Rooij & Zirkle, 2016). When designing online courses, the instructor needs to develop learning experiences that cultivate self-discipline and self-direction in order to be successful (Van Rooij & Zirkle, 2016). As faculty learn to teach in an online format, they need to plan for engaging learning experiences that incorporate instructional practices and deepening content knowledge that is relevant to the real world (Van Rooij & Zirkle, 2016).

Not all universities have instructional designers who partner with the faculty to design courses. It is important that professional development be offered to faculty to help them learn to collaboratively design curriculum and courses for students (Adams, Coffey, Delacruz, & Rodriguez, 2018; Voogt et al., 2015). Faculty often face barriers to designing online courses, including anxiety, technology skills, and lacking knowledge of online teaching pedagogy (Scoppio & Luyt, 2017). When designing the professional development for the transitioning faculty, I considered those barriers in the design and layout for cohesive flow and support.

Developing effective online learning requires a focus on creating a student-centered learning experience (Scoppio & Luyt, 2017). When beginning to design professional development to assist faculty with developing student-centered courses, the developer needs to remember that instructors have individual needs, teaching styles, and goals related to their own course; this will assist in identifying appropriate support, instructional tools, and pedagogy to include in the professional development (Scoppio & Luyt, 2017). Just like students in a classroom, the faculty must be engaged in the learning experience, creating the course, and reflecting on their learning (Scoppio & Luyt, 2017). Understanding the available technology to incorporate into the training is important so that the terminology, pedagogy, and the course development will deepen the learning experience (Gillett-Swan, 2017).

According to Jaggers and Xu (2016), students believe an effective online instructor is one who is active in the course, provides timely feedback for improvement, and encourages interactions among everyone in the course. Considering this, it is important to design a professional development training with the same needs in mind so faculty can learn how to appropriately design courses that allow for engagement and effective interactions. Faculty need to design environments that allow for vibrant and engaging interactive courses (Puzziferro & Shelton, 2008; Stone & Springer, 2019). Creating a focus from the beginning of the training on establishing learning visions, objectives, and goals for the course assists in developing focused coursework with relevant and real world connected assignments (Puzziferro & Shelton, 2008; Stone & Springer, 2019). Faculty also need to have the belief that all students can learn and be successful and that failure is a reflection on the design and facilitation of instruction (Stone & Springer, 2019).

As faculty design their online courses, they must intently plan for engagement and communication. In face-to-face courses, the engagement and communication tend to naturally happen; however, in online courses, everything must be planned for and considered (Stone & Springer, 2019). Cho and Tobias (2016) discussed that active online interactions between students and instructors impact both social, cognitive, and teaching presence. One of the easiest ways to plan for active learning is through discussion boards that encourage interactions and learning understanding (Cho & Tobias, 2016). Developing a strong sense of community and support is important in online discussion boards; through the effective use of online discussion boards, students feel connected and contribute to the learning of others (Cho & Tobias, 2016). Leveraging the available technology tools throughout the courses also impacts student learning and their grades (Jaggers & Xu, 2016).

Authentic Assessment

As online instruction has grown, so have the instructional and planning tools we use in learning (Koehler, Newby, & Ertmer, 2017; Moreillon, 2015). Turnipseed and Darling-Hammond (2015) discussed that in fostering highly skilled, creative, and innovative adults, there needs to be a more meaningful and richer accountability system. The accountability system needs to be tightly linked to the curriculum (Ajjawi et al., 2019). As universities have focused on learning outcomes and impacting student learning, assessments play an essential role (Bring & Lyon, 2019; Parsi & Darling-Hammond, 2015). Assessments link the gap between learning and teaching (Nasab, 2015; Shepard, Penuel, & Pellegrino, 2018). The more that is learned about assessment, the stronger the connection between assessment and student achievement.

Assessments are used to support student learning. The more authentic assessments are used in online learning and in face-to-face courses, the students are able to connect how their content of the courses impacts their learning. Assessment is for learning, not just for grades. Assessments for learning should provide feedback to students and offer support on how to improve (Frazer et al., 2017; Nasab, 2015). Feedback allows students to monitor their learning and what they need to do to improve. It also connects the learning and curricular outcomes to the objectives of the course (Nasab, 2015; Shepard et al., 2018). Authentic assessments make learning active and allow for ownership of the skills and learning for not just the course, but for life (Barber, King, & Buchanan, 2015; Stark, Kintz, Pestorious, & Teriba, 2018).

Authentic assessments are when students respond to questions through constructing answers producing a product, open-response or short-answer essays, or performing an activity (James & Casidy, 2018; Lambert, Kim, & Burts, 2015; Parsi & Darling-Hammond, 2015). Authentic assessments are not multiple choice or fill in the blank assessments. Authentic assessments are also known as performance assessments. Basically, it is through real world tasks that students demonstrate their learning (Barber et al., 2015; Barron, 2015; Guha, Wagner, Darling-Hammond, Taylor, & Curtis, 2018). By using authentic assessments, students’ engagement and motivation are impacted with learning the content.

Poindexter, Hagler, and Lindell (2015) discussed how integrating concepts and content together provide for a richer learning opportunity for students. Then when more authentic assessment strategies are used, the students connect the mastery of skills they need to be successful in college, work, and civic life (Guha et al., 2018; Moreillon, 2015). The goal of instruction is student learning and when authentic assessment opportunities are used in coursework then students can connect the learning and demonstrate it more effectively (Brabeck et al., 2016). Designing authentic assessments is important in the overall development of instruction.

Conclusion

Designing effective instruction in an online environment is key to success of the course and engagement for both students and the instructor. When designing the course, integrating instructional strategies that include active learning, engagement, authentic assessment with prompt feedback, and regular interactions between the students and the instructor is key for success of student learning and satisfaction within the course (Inan, Yukselturk, Kurucay, & Flores, 2017; Kaufman, 2015). As a new course is designed, the following should always be considered and included in the design: encouraging communication between students and faculty, developing cooperative learning opportunities throughout the course, using learning strategies that engage students with the content and give opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning in authentic ways with prompt feedback for improvement.

Project Description

A 3-day professional development was developed for faculty as they transition to teach in an online environment. The training is sequential to guide faculty in connecting how they teach in face-to-face courses and using the same structure but modifying to incorporate best practices for online instruction. Faculty will discuss and plan for engagement and facilitation of learning throughout the course. Throughout the 3-day professional development, the faculty begin to develop their own course. They will be given prompt feedback and be able to discuss their concerns in an environment conducive to learning.

Resources, Supports, and Barriers

Needed resources. The resources needed to support this 3-day professional development include approval from the director of academic computing and the vice chancellor of academic affairs at the local campus. Once approval is granted, the professional development would be scheduled on the campus calendar and advertising of the training would take place through fliers and emails from the vice chancellor of academic affairs to the different deans on the campus. A classroom with computers with web cams will be needed for the 15-20 participants. There should be a presenter station with a computer, projector to present the PowerPoint, videos, and modeling of the learning management system. In addition, supplies needed are chart paper, markers, masking tape, highlighters, and Post-it notes. If I am not available to conduct the training personally, then an equally qualified faculty member who has been teaching online with engaging coursework could provide the training using the materials provided.

Existing supports. A learning management system is already available on the local campus. Every course offered on the campus has a course shell created to use as a secondary support for instruction for face-to-face courses. There is an Academic Computing Office located on the main campus that provides technical support to both faculty and students.

Potential barriers and solutions. The greatest barrier could be the scheduling of online courses each semester earlier than the process presently used. Currently, the course schedule for the next semester is released in October and March of each year with preregistration happening the first two weeks in November and April. New online courses could be planned more than one semester before they are to be taught so faculty can receive training and develop the new online courses in advance of the start date of the semester.

Implementation and Timeline

The timeline to implement the professional development will be at least the semester prior to faculty members planning to teach a course online. This timeframe will allow the instructor to have all modules created prior to beginning the semester of instruction. Allowing at least one semester ahead will provide the instructor time to develop all modules and receive feedback with coaching to improve student learning. A detailed timeline for implementation is as follows:

1. I will contact the director of academic computing to obtain a schedule for the training at the beginning of each semester and secure a room for the training.
2. I will contact each dean of the different units on campus to identify what courses and instructors will be new to teaching online.
3. I will provide an overview of the training to the dean to assist in identifying who will need to attend.
4. Once courses and instructors have been identified, I will work with each dean to get the instructor registered for the course.
5. If seats are still available, then additional online instructors will be able to register on a first come basis.
6. I will compile the resources and make copies of the PowerPoint, exit slips, and evaluation needed to conduct the training.
7. I will conduct the training over the course of 3 days.
8. Each day participants will complete an exit slip to assist in guiding the next day’s morning discussion.

9. Once the training has finished, each participant will complete an evaluation and provide feedback for improving the training in the future and make suggestions for topics for brown-bag lunch professional development sessions.

Roles and Responsibilities of Student and Others

Student. As a researcher, my role was to develop a 3-day professional development based on the findings from my research. Then as a facilitator of the professional development, my responsibility is to the instructors at the local university, so they are provided with the opportunity to receive the necessary information, training, and feedback to develop engaging online classroom learning. I will model instructional learning tools, aid in the discussion of best practices for designing engaging instructional lessons in an online environment and discuss how to develop authentic assessments that provide students a way of exhibiting and mastering their learning. In addition, my role in the professional development will be to review the daily exit slips to guide discussions, clarify learning, and deepen understanding of the day’s topics. Lastly, I will review the evaluation to assist in revising the professional development to meet faculty and learning needs for future participants.

Participants. The participants for the training will be faculty from the local university who are transitioning to teach courses online or who are currently teaching courses online and want to revise those courses. The faculty will be active participants throughout the professional development as discussions take place, developing modules of instruction, and providing peer feedback for improvement on learning modules. They will also be applying the learning as they develop the course in an online format during work time throughout the training.

Administration on the local campus. The administration on the local campus need to embrace and adopt the formal training program to assist faculty with transitioning to teach online. Then the administration will offer the professional development each semester.

Project Evaluation Plan

Formative and Summative Evaluation

The professional development evaluation was designed to include daily formative evaluations to guide the next day's opening discussions and clarification prior to moving into new learning along with a summative evaluation at the end of the training. Both formative and summative evaluations will be completed on paper. The formative evaluations will assist in revising and fine tuning the professional development prior to being taught to a new group of faculty. The responses for the summative evaluation are in a Likert scale format with the opportunity to provide detailed written feedback. The formative evaluation is an exit slip that allows participants to reflect on their learning and on what they still need guidance and clarification within their new learning. The exit slips will be utilized at the end of each day of the training to assist with opening and guiding the discussions the next day of the training. After the faculty has developed and taught the online course, faculty will be asked to participate in a short follow-up evaluation to determine if there were any gaps of learning missing from the content in the training workshop, opportunities to modify the training, and opportunities to develop other training to meet the faculty needs. The formative evaluation, summative evaluation, and follow-up evaluation are included in Appendix A.

Justification of Evaluation

Planning for the use of formative evaluations assists the facilitator with designing and guiding meaningful learning experiences to meet the goals of the lesson or training (Han, Hu, & Li, 2013). The reason to use formative evaluations during instruction is to use continuous improvement and feedback to strengthen participant learning (Peterson, 2016). The formative evaluation feedback will also assist with revisions to the training prior to being facilitated again. The summative assessment will provide feedback about the entire training and allow for written comments to assist with planning future support workshops for faculty.

Overall Evaluation Goals

Both the summative and formative evaluations are important for providing feedback for continuous improvement and redesign along with overall effectiveness of the training. The goal of formative evaluation is to guide instruction to meet the participants' needs. Formative means capable of alteration by growth or development (Merriam-Webster's, 2019). The formative evaluations will be used to improve the support and training for faculty, so they feel more confident with their skills and the instructional tools to design engaging online learning environments. The summative evaluation will be used to determine if the training has impacted faculty's development of engaging online courses and their confidence in the development of the course. Recommendations provided through the evaluation process will be reviewed and considered as the professional development and training support continuous to meet faculty needs and wants.

Description of Key Stakeholders

The key stakeholder for this training is the director of the Academic Computing Office on the local campus. The evaluation informs others about whether the program is making an impact on the faculty and their confidence in designing online courses (Adams, Nnawulezi, & Vandenberg, 2015). The key stakeholder will assist in establishing policies, processes, and practices on the campus to provide embedded professional development opportunities for faculty which are relevant to the instructional assignments across the campus.

Project Implications

Implications for Positive Social Change

The research data analyzed in this project were used to alter a gap in instructional practice, which impacts the support for faculty when transitioning to teach in an online environment. The significant shift in instructional practices will be to implement a formal professional development training to support faculty and assist with planning engaging and relevant instructional online courses. The influence on positive social change will be the implementation of the training on the local campus and that faculty will feel more confident in creating an engaging classroom environment in their online courses. In addition, faculty will use instructional tools in the learning management system to engage, and develop relationships with, students to impact learning and retention of students.

When students feel connected and engaged, they are more apt to participate, meet the expectations for learning, and complete the course (Law, Chung, Leung, & Wong, 2017). The use of engaging and relevant instructional modules provides students with real world learning to feel connected to the learning and their peers. The positive social change will be the retention of students in courses and completion of their college degree.

Project Importance

There is a gap in practice at the local university in not providing a formal training and support plan for faculty as they transition to teach in an online environment. The development of this training will eliminate that gap in learning and support for the faculty. When faculty feel support from, and connected to, their work environment it impacts how they relate to others and do their job (Law et al., 2017).

The purpose of this study was to examine the available training and mentoring support for faculty as they gain the pedagogical skills to teach in an online environment. Changing the way faculty receive training and support when teaching online courses should impact job satisfaction and personal satisfaction about teaching. The training will not only benefit the faculty but also the university and the students who take online courses to complete their degree.

Conclusion

Based on my research, the project developed is a 3-day face-to-face professional development that provides the understanding and skills to develop an engaging online course. The goal of the professional development is to provide college faculty who are transitioning to teach online a formal training and support program. The design of the professional development uses best practices and hands-on learning activities throughout the 3 days. As participants progress through the professional development, they will develop two of the modules in the course they are preparing to teach online.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

In this project study, I examined the needs and perceptions of faculty as they transition to teach in an online format. Based on the findings, I developed a 3-day professional development to assist faculty with using available instructional tools as well as understanding how to develop a quality, engaging online course and the pedagogy to support online instruction. The professional development has many opportunities for small group, large group, and independent practice time over the 3-day duration. Participants will also participate in opportunities to provide peer feedback.

Project Strengths and Limitations

Strengths

I structured the 3-day professional development to support faculty as they transition to teach in an online environment. The training is focused on best practices designed to develop engaging courses that provide learners with opportunities to demonstrate their understanding of the content. The professional development structure incorporates large group, small group, and independent opportunities to learn and develop an online course. The best practices reflect the industry standards Quality Matters (2018) uses in their rubrics and certifications programs. One aspect of the professional development is creating a Welcome or Start Here Module so that learners know where to begin when logging into the course for the first time. In addition, having access to university resources in a central location makes it easier for students who may never come to the campus for classes to gain assistance. Throughout the professional development, learning is scaffolded so knowledge is built and the modules are developed to support one another. Embedded time for peer reflection and feedback is important so that improvement and viewpoints can impact the development of the course.

Another strength of the professional development is that it is not dependent on one particular learning management system. Key components of the professional development focus on practical, engaging instructional strategies and communication ideas, which are critical for any online instructor to understand (see Shepherd, Bollinger, Dousay, & Persichetti, 2016). The professional development gives participants opportunities to take the new learning and apply it in the creation of two of their modules for their first course. It also allows the participants to work with peers and gather feedback on their design and plans for instruction.

Limitations

Many of the strengths of this project meet a need for the local campus to provide engaging online courses and support for faculty as they transition to teach online. However, one limitation I identified was the length of the professional development. Even though 3 days of professional development is a lot, it is often not enough when learning to use new pedagogy and possibly new technology to teach content to learners in an online environment. Effective professional development is job embedded; ongoing; and includes coaching feedback, support, and mentoring for improvement (Marzano, 2017). If the professional development is extended to a longer format, the ability to embed the coaching, support, and mentoring into the training for the faculty would add depth to learning to teach in an online format.

Recommendations for Alternative Approaches

Alternative Approach

I planned and created a professional development for this project, but alternative approaches addressing the local problems were possible. In this study, I used a qualitative approach; however, a quantitative approach surveying all faculty on the local campus to gather more perspectives to impact online teaching and learning could have been carried out. Surveying more participants would provide the larger perspective of all faculty instead of the smaller numbers interviewed as part of this qualitative study. Every instructor on the local campus can use the learning management system as a component of any face-to-face course as a supplemental support. A survey affords an opportunity for more people to voice their concerns, even though they do not teach completely in an online format.

Alternate Solution

Instead of creating the 3-day professional development, a possible alternative solution would have been to develop a policy recommendation or write a white paper. Since there is no local formal training program for learning to teach in an online environment at the campus, I could have created a policy regarding requirements for teaching online. The policy could have addressed the training requirements in preparation for teaching online and the timeline for creating and evaluating the incorporation of best practices, strategies, and tools for a high-quality, engaging course.

Scholarship, Project Development, and Leadership and Change

Scholarship

I was challenged throughout the doctoral process. I have not always been a strong writer but going through the coursework and project study process, I now feel like I am a better writer and more focused in the process. I was also challenged as a researcher. Navigating databases and finding peer-reviewed articles was not always an easy task; however, I now have a deeper understanding of the process and the need to use research to assist in problem solving for improvement. One of the focuses of doctoral programs is not just completing the degree but also being able to effectively produce scholarship in the field (Bagaka, Badillo, Bransteter, & Rispinto, 2015). As a scholar, I have grown in my ability to conduct research and analyze the data collected to develop solutions to the issues at hand. The process of writing a project study was daunting, but now at the end, I see that it was a process I was able to complete.

Project Development

The development of the project for this study was not as daunting of a process as was conducting the research. For over 20 years, I have been providing professional development to educators; however, creating a 3-day professional development to assist faculty as they transition to teach online required a focused, strategic approach in planning so the participants would feel more confident and prepared to teach online after completing the professional development. Working with adult learners when planning a project needs to be considered. Planning for opportunities to develop knowledge, skills, and broader teaching strategies using instructional methods to promote learning for adults and also mirror what would be happening in a course were important to consider in the development of the project (see Girvan, Conneely, & Tangney, 2016; Loucks-Horsley, 1996). I considered these components and included them in the project developed.

Leadership and Change

I have been an educator for 25 years and have been a teacher leader since the beginning. For the last 12 years, I have coordinated a partnership grant on the local university campus and have been a leader working with both higher education and K–12 educators in the state. The doctoral study process has allowed me to continue to grow and learn about facilitating and conducting research to address needs on the local campus and beyond. Throughout the process, I have developed more skills in research, especially around using databases. My writing skills have also deepened to be more precise, detailed, and consistent in tone and voice. As I continue to work in the higher education environment, I will continue to use my writing and research skills to support social change and positively impact stakeholders.

Reflections of Self as a Scholar

During this research study, I have developed an ease with conducting research and searching for scholarly articles in databases while producing scholarly writing. I expect to continue my research through action research projects to impact higher education and my K–12 education partnerships. I feel more confident in questioning problems, looking for ways to solve them through research, and positively impacting social change. I feel confident that I can construct scholarship that will impact others who are presently working in higher education to assist students with achieving their goals and faculty with job satisfaction.

Reflections on Self as a Practitioner

As a director of a grant project on the local campus with an intense interest in online instruction, I want to be informed on the needs of faculty as they support students with attaining a degree. In addition, my professional focus is on providing high-quality professional development to support K–12 educators and higher education faculty to stay current on state and national initiatives. I must have a deep understanding of how to develop high-quality, meaningful professional development that addresses a need. I have deepened my background and knowledge in the areas of professional development, authentic assessment, and planning for engaging instruction in an online course. Even though I have completed much research on these topics, I know this is an ever-evolving field, and I will need to maintain and continue to research and learn about how to teach online using new tools and strategies.

Reflections on Self as a Project Developer

My love and strength are providing professional development and planning for educators. I can see the big picture and plan backwards for a cohesive flow and design. Planning and developing the project was my favorite part of this study. In fact, this is one reason I chose Walden for my doctorate program. I have spent the last 23 years of my career developing and providing technology-focused professional development to educators and college students. From this background, I know the need for details and considering your audience when planning for workshops to design learning opportunities.

In planning for the project, I challenged myself to pay attention to details and to consider what tools and strategies a new faculty member would need to be successful in teaching in an online environment. I will continue to use these strategies and the planning process as I develop new workshops and support opportunities for learning in the future.

Reflections on the Importance of the Work

Throughout this extensive doctoral process, my beliefs about the importance of learning to teach online has been confirmed. I believe the most important consideration when faculty begin to teach online is for them to feel supported and prepared to create high-quality online courses and understand how to use the appropriate tools and strategies in an online environment. I reflected on best practices, instructional tools, and needs of faculty as I developed the 3-day professional development project for this study. Those reflections are embedded throughout the professional development to support faculty as they transition to teach online. I have learned to listen to others’ concerns, research how to support those concerns, and develop solutions to assist others.

This work is important because it can be used to positively impact the satisfaction of faculty who teach online. Those faculty want to provide quality instruction to students, but they also want to get to know students and have a general concern for the content knowledge students gain. In addition, this work is important because faculty are impacting the lives and futures of the students who take the courses. The world is impacted by the knowledge someone gains through learning. The knowledge gained impacts how people interact, live, and guide the future of the world. Social change happens when people use their knowledge to impact others.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

Implications

This project study has implications for positive social change that not only impact the local campus but also other postsecondary institutions. The purpose of this study was to develop a solution for the faculty’s concerns about the lack of training as they transition to teach online courses at the local campus. However, in reflecting, the concerns are not just a local issue but ones that face any instructor who is transitioning to teach in an online format who has not participated in a formal training program. The 3-day professional development will help faculty develop the skills to teach online and create the first two modules of the course they are preparing to teach for the local university.

Throughout the study, I researched and reviewed a vast amount of evidence that suggests the structure, pedagogy, and instructional tools that can be used in online instruction to impact student learning and engagement. Most learners desire to receive new learning through hands-on approaches (Gillett-Swan, 2017). I designed the professional development to include opportunities for the participants to create and develop modules for their first online course. In addition, reflection time was included to gain feedback from peers on what was planned and designed well and what could be modified to support more engaging learning activities. The professional development is reflective of best practices that support engagement and active learning for teaching in an online environment.

Applications

Based on my research and best practices in training, I have two recommendations for implementation. The first recommendation would be for any faculty who teaches completely online to participate in the training and evaluate a current course to see if it includes components and best practice strategies for engaging and high-quality courses. Evaluating current online courses would include looking to see if each course has a welcome or start here module to assist students with knowing where to start, what to expect, and how to be successful in the course. The second recommendation would be to begin planning at least one semester in advance for online courses. Planning and preparing in advance, the new faculty could complete the training and design their online courses prior to the beginning of the semester in which they will teach. This would then allow the instructor to facilitate the learning and be more actively engaged in discussion and providing feedback and not worried with getting assignments created and in the course. Preparing in advance relieves stress on preparation and more focus on high-quality, timely feedback to develop a since of community among the learners.

Directions for Future Research

After reflecting about this study, another direction for future research would be to plan a quantitative study which surveyed the entire faculty and gain a broader set of perspectives of those faculty who use the learning management system for either hybrid courses or supplementation for their face-to-face courses. Looking at a broader set of perspectives brings new light to current concerns and issues surrounding the use of the learning management system and online pedagogy strategies for online learning. The new perspectives could possibly provide a different insight that would cause a modification to the 3-day professional development or even the preparation of a policy recommendation paper about online instruction at the local campus. This study could be replicated at another university or in a public-school setting. Online instruction is not only growing in postsecondary settings but also in the K–12 public school areas.

Conclusion

The purpose of this qualitative project study was to explore the perceptions and needs of faculty as they transition to teach online courses at the local university. Since the study site has no formal training program for faculty as they learn to teach online, gaining the perceptions and needs of faculty through individual interviews assisted in selecting the components included in the 3-day professional development. The literature review information was incorporated into the professional development to support faculty with best practices in course design, instructional tools, online pedagogy, and developing a high quality and engaging online course. The content of the training is included in Appendix A. While the training was designed for the local campus, it could also be a resource for other organizations who are needing to support faculty who are new to teaching in an online environment. Providing faculty with appropriate and comprehensive professional development opportunities to support their learning is critical to the success of any program but especially online course development. Developing high-quality and engaging courses assists students who enroll in getting a valuable learning experience in an online environment.

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Appendix A: The Project

Developing Engaging Online Courses

Day 1

8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

- 8:00 – 8:30
  - Welcome and introductions (slides 1-3)
- 8:30 – 8:45
  - Establishing our learning NORMS (slide 4-5)
- 8:45 – 9:00
  - Establish the purpose for the training (slide 6)
- 9:00 – 9:15
  - Setting the expectations for learning (slide 7)
- 9:15 – 10:00
  - Establishing a welcoming online course discussion (slides 8-9)
- 10:00-10:15
  - Break (slide 10)
- 10:15– 10:45
  - Create a visual chart for developing a positive, engaging classroom environment (slide 11-12)
- 10:45-11:15
  - Ways to develop positive climates in an online classroom (slide 13-14)
- 11:15-11:30
  - Establishing the Why? (slide 15)
  - Discussion focused on your why? (slide 16)
- 11:30-12:00
  - Lunch (slide 17)
- 12:00-1:00
  - Components that should be included in a Welcome/Start Here Module (slides 18-19)
- 1:00-1:30
  - Creating your instructor introduction (slide 20)
- 1:30-1:45
  - Break (slide 21)
- 1:45-2:45
  - Turning your instructor introduction into a video (slide 22)
- 2:45-3:45
  - Creating your own YouTube Channel and uploading videos (slide 23)
- 3:45-4:00
  - Closure and Exit Slip for the day (slide 24)
- 4:00
  - Dismiss

Developing Engaging Online Courses

Day 2
8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

- 8:00-8:30
    - Welcome back and reflections from Day 1 (slide 25)
    - Setting the stage for today (slide 26)
    - Learning goals for the day (slide 27)
- 8:30 – 9:30
    - How to design and set up an engaging course (slide 28-31)
    - Format of modules/structure (slide 32)
- 9:30-10:30
    - Creating your Start Here/Welcome Folder in Blackboard (slide 33)
    - Reflections on Start Here/Welcome Folder creation process (slide 34)
- 10:30-10:45
    - Break (slide 35)
- 10:45-11:30
    - Developing engaging online instructional modules (slide 36)
- 11:30-12:00
    - Components that can be included in modules (slide 37)
- 12:00-12:30
    - Lunch (slide 38)
- 12:30-1:30
    - Course accessibility (slide 39)
- 1:30-2:30
    - Designing your learning Module 1 (slide 40)
    - Reflections and feedback about course accessibility (slide 41)
- 2:30-2:45
    - Break (slide 42)
- 2:45-3:45
    - Creating interactive learning experiences for students (slide 43)
- 3:45-4:00
    - Wrap-Up and Daily Exit Slip (slide 44)
- 4:00
    - Dismiss

Developing Engaging Online Courses

Day 3
8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

- 8:00-8:45
    - Welcome Day 3 and feedback from Days 1 and 2 (slide 45)
    - Setting the stage for the day (slide 46)
- 8:45-9:45
    - What is assessment? (slide 47)
- 9:45-10:00
    - Break (slide 48)
- 10:00-11:00
    - Authentic assessment (slide 49)
- 11:00-12:00
    - Assessment tools (slide 50)
- 12:00-12:30
    - Lunch (slide 51)
- 12:30-1:30
    - Developing Module 1 assessment (slide 52)
    - Reflections and feedback about assessments (slide 53)
- 1:30-1:45
    - Break (slide 54)
- 1:45-2:45
    - Additional tools to engage learning (slide 55)
- 2:45-3:45
    - Developing engaging learning for Module 1 (slide 56)
    - Reflections and Feedback on tools to engage learning (slide 57)
- 3:45-4:00
    - Closure of Training and Evaluation (slide 58)

Training Materials

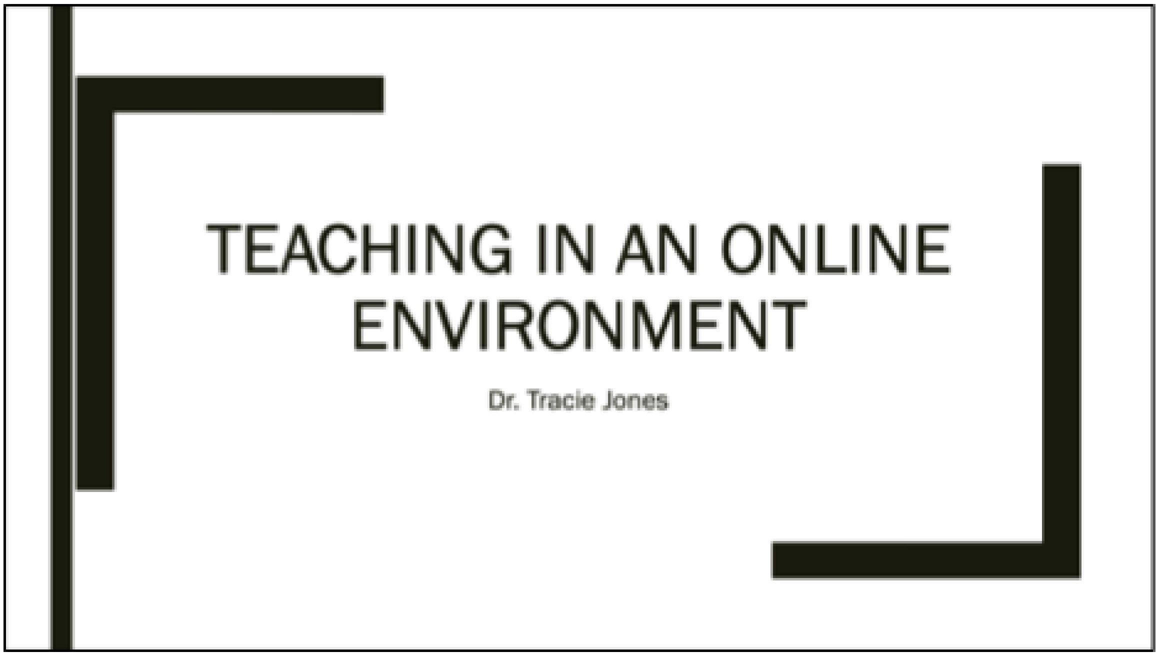
Instructor

- PowerPoint Presentation
- Projector
- Computer
- Chart Paper
- Markers
- PowerPoint Presentation Copies
- Formative Evaluation Copies
- Summative Evaluation Copies

Participants

- Laptops with camera or separate webcam
- Instructional Materials
- Content Materials

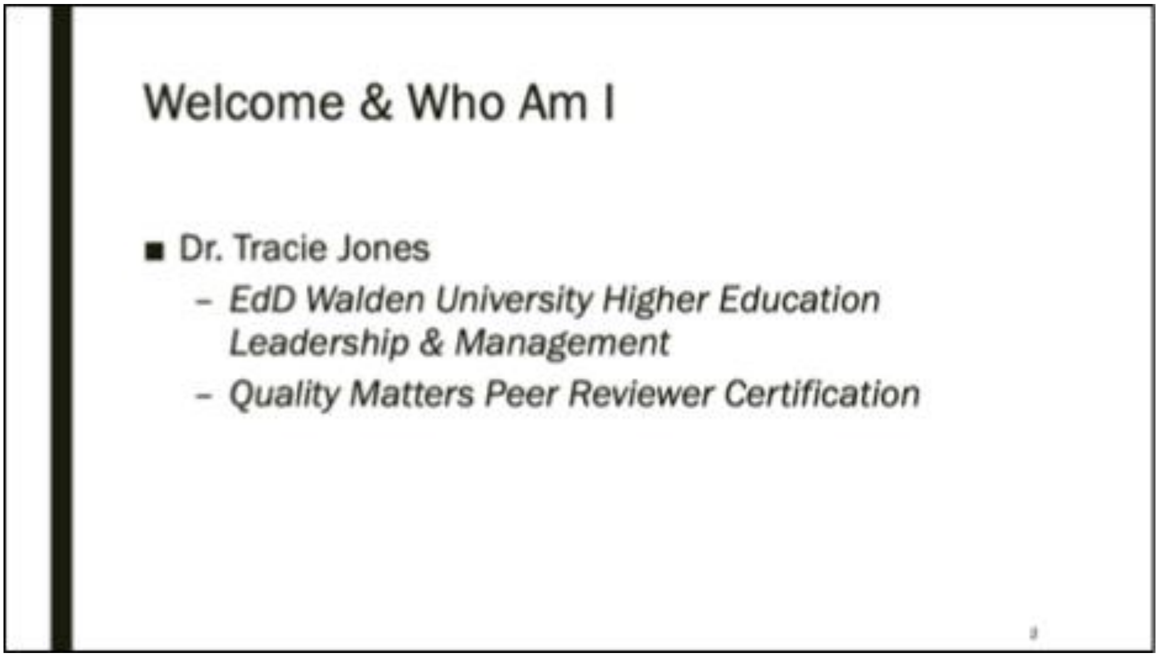
Slide 1



TEACHING IN AN ONLINE ENVIRONMENT

Dr. Tracie Jones

Slide 2

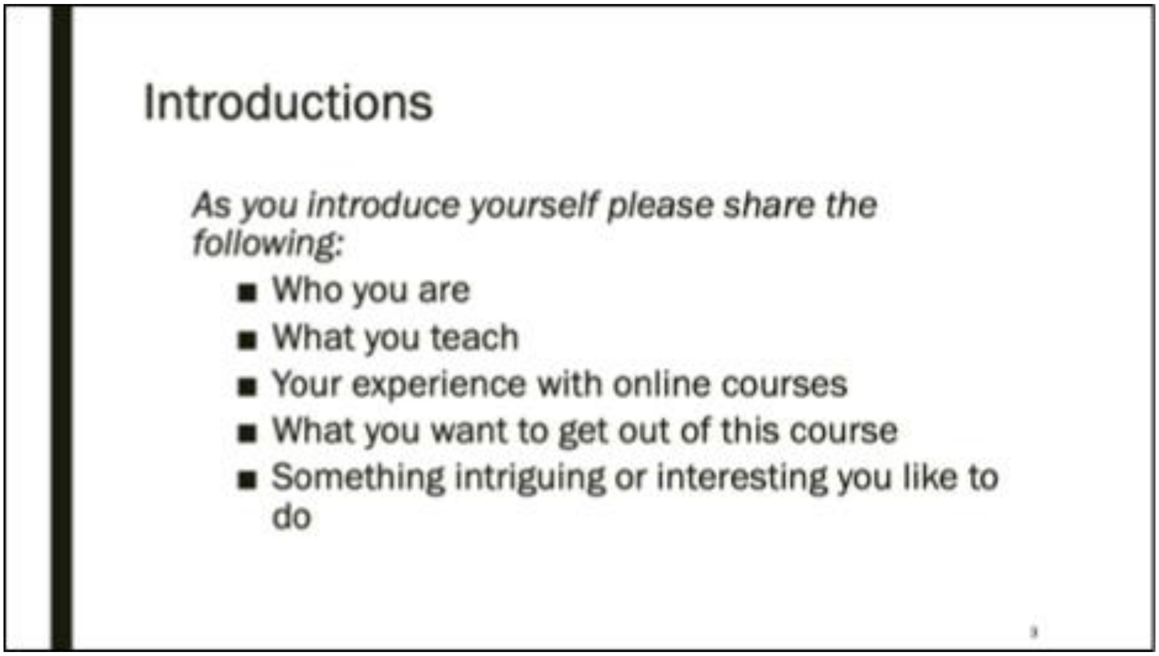


Welcome & Who Am I

- Dr. Tracie Jones
  - *EdD Walden University Higher Education Leadership & Management*
  - *Quality Matters Peer Reviewer Certification*

Slide 2: Good morning! I am Tracie Jones and I will be facilitating the learning during these modules. I have served as an online instructor and a Quality Matters Peer Reviewer over the last several years. In 2005, I began an online Early College High School program. My love for online learning began in 2003 when Compressed Interactive Video was placed in every high school in the state. Throughout these modules, we want to embed ongoing support for you as you transition your face-to-face courses to online. Please stop me at any point and ask questions so we can clarify the learning.

Slide 3



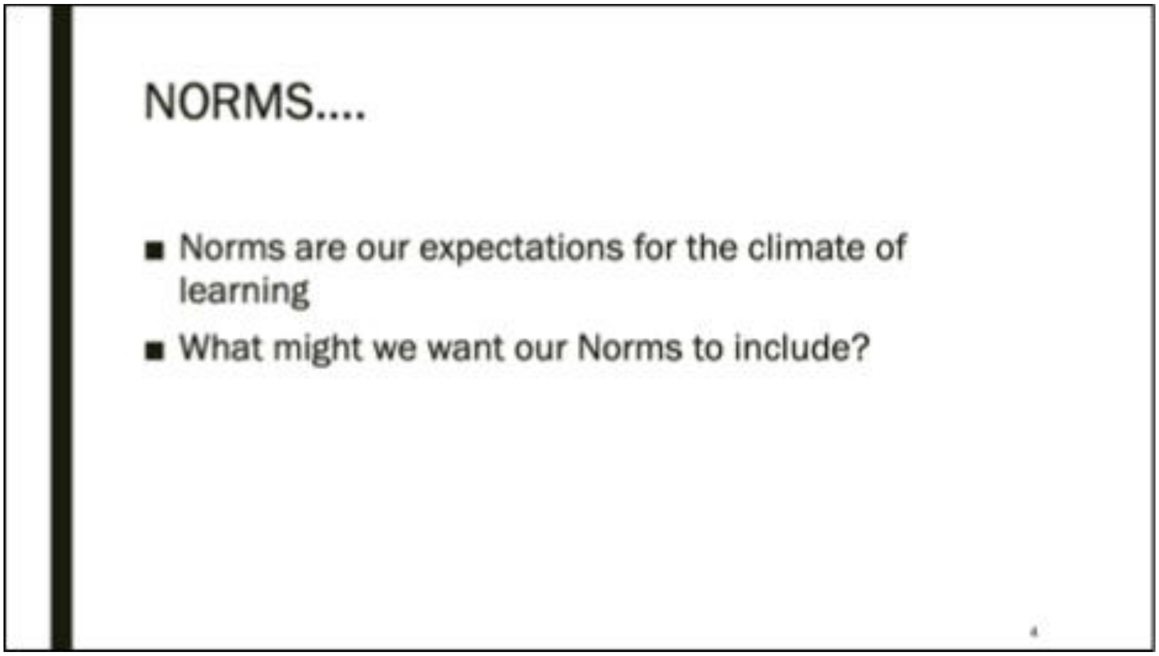
Introductions

As you introduce yourself please share the following:

- Who you are
- What you teach
- Your experience with online courses
- What you want to get out of this course
- Something intriguing or interesting you like to do

Slide 3: Since we will be spending several module sessions together, we want to get to know one another. I want you to find a partner and share the information on the slide with your partner. When the timer of 10 minutes goes off, you will introduce your partner to the group.

Slide 4

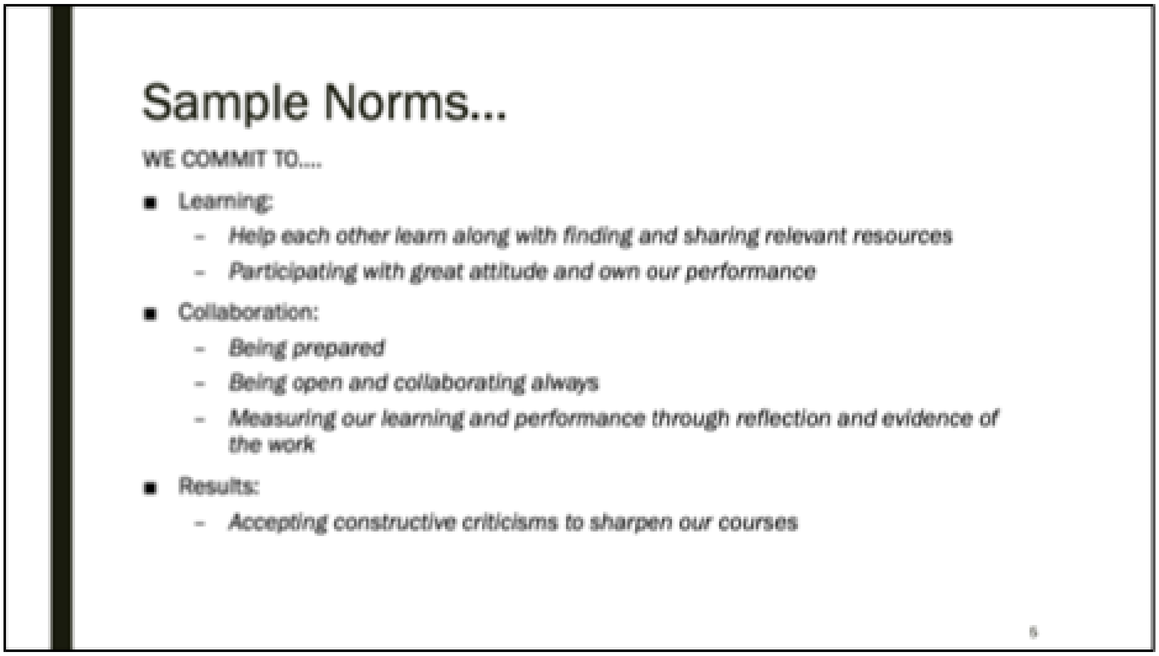


NORMS....

- Norms are our expectations for the climate of learning
- What might we want our Norms to include?

Slide 4: We want to establish our learning Norms for our time together. Norms our expectations for learning. What might we want in our Norms? Here is an example me might could use...

Slide 5



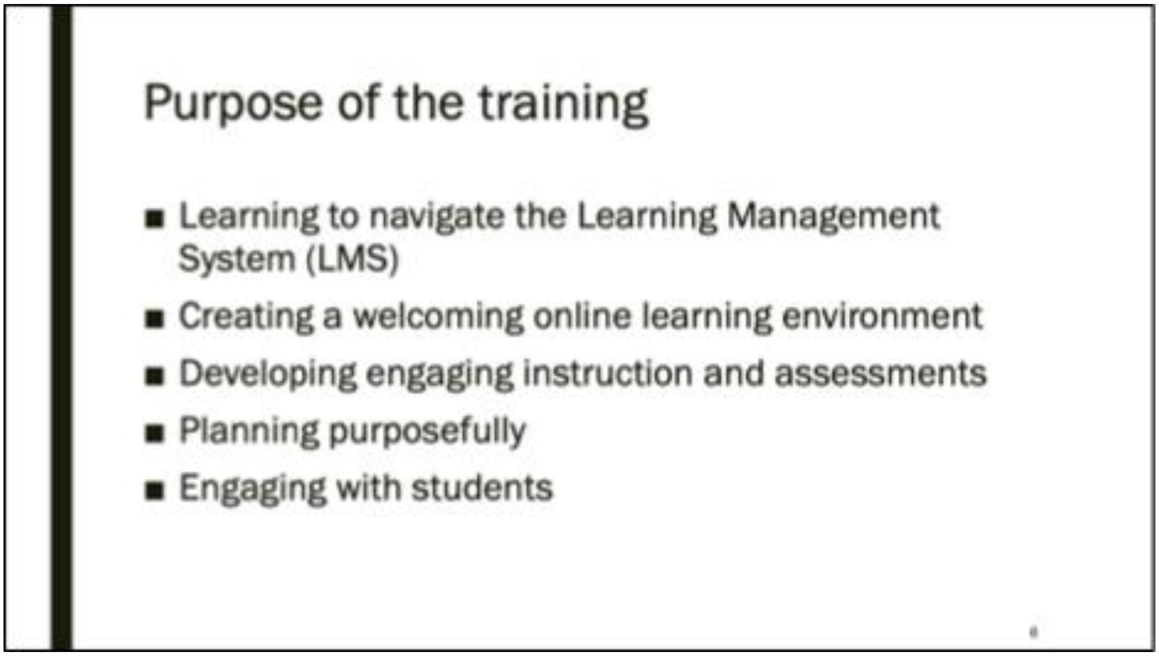
Sample Norms...

WE COMMIT TO....

- Learning:
  - *Help each other learn along with finding and sharing relevant resources*
  - *Participating with great attitude and own our performance*
- Collaboration:
  - *Being prepared*
  - *Being open and collaborating always*
  - *Measuring our learning and performance through reflection and evidence of the work*
- Results:
  - *Accepting constructive criticisms to sharpen our courses*

Slide 5: Would someone be willing to scribe as we develop the Norms during our allotted learning time? What Norms would we like to create?

Slide 6

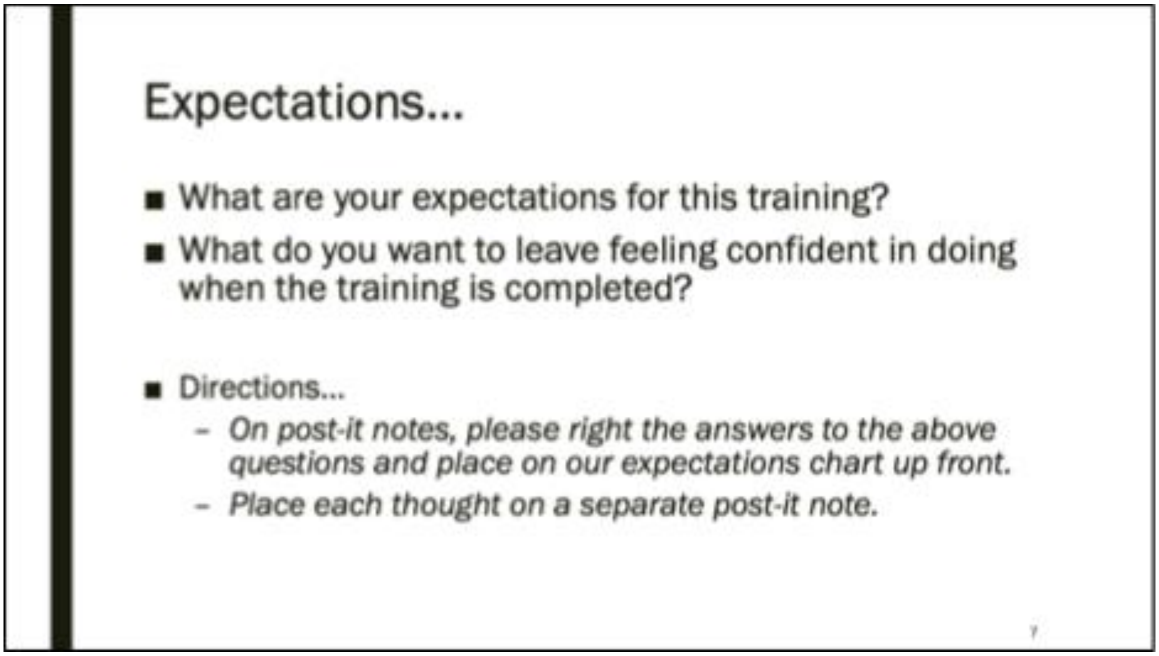


Purpose of the training

- Learning to navigate the Learning Management System (LMS)
- Creating a welcoming online learning environment
- Developing engaging instruction and assessments
- Planning purposefully
- Engaging with students

Slide 6: This training was developed to provide faculty with a formal training and support program to develop engaging online instruction. We will begin the training with talking about how to navigate the Learning Management System and followed by how we create a welcoming online learning environment when we don't see our students face-to-face. Then we will learn about planning engaging instruction and authentic assessments. We learn how to integrate instructional online tools to assist with purposeful planning and engaging the students in their learning.

Slide 7



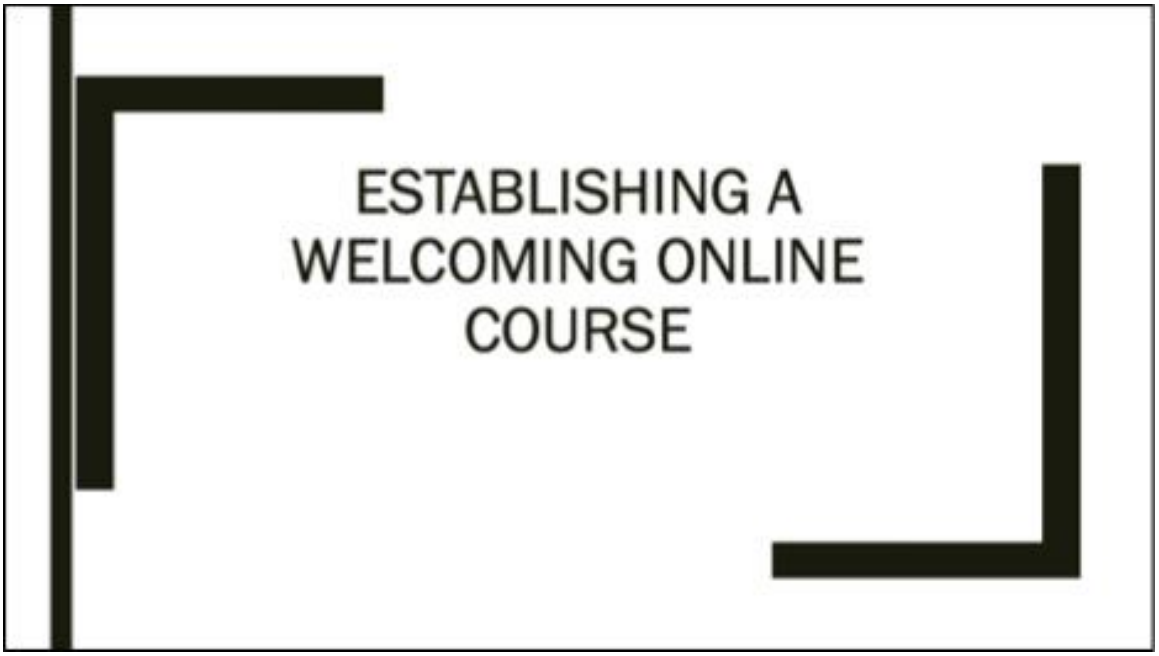
Expectations…

- What are your expectations for this training?
- What do you want to leave feeling confident in doing when the training is completed?

- Directions…
  - *On post-it notes, please right the answers to the above questions and place on our expectations chart up front.*
  - *Place each thought on a separate post-it note.*

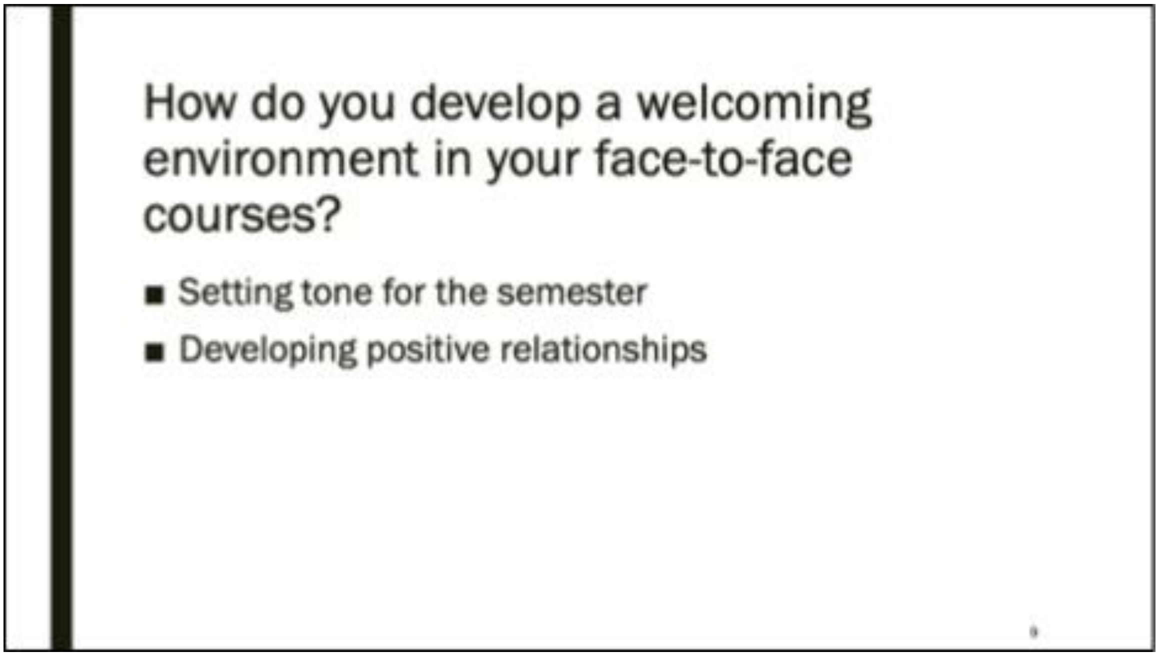
Slide 7: Expectations for the training

Slide 8



ESTABLISHING A WELCOMING ONLINE COURSE

Slide 9



How do you develop a welcoming environment in your face-to-face courses?

- Setting tone for the semester
- Developing positive relationships

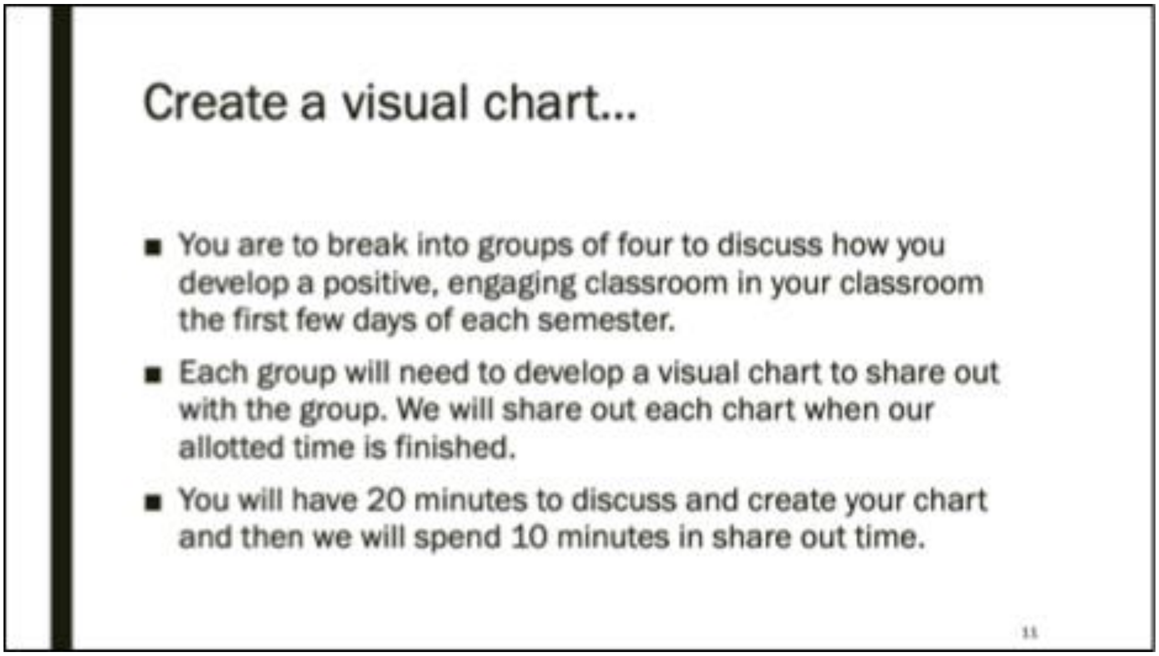
Slide 9: It is important for teachers to establish a welcoming environment in their courses (both face-to-face and online). How we develop this welcoming climate and culture in our classroom will set the tone for the semester together. Just like we spent some time learning about each other at the beginning of this workshop, we want to dedicate time each semester to developing relationships in the classroom. I want you to think about how you develop relationships with students in each of your classes. I want you to spend 5 minutes brainstorming those ways silently. Then when the five minutes is over, the timer will go off. You will then break into groups of four to develop a visual chart of how we develop welcoming climates in our classes and develop a positive culture each semester.

Slide 10

Break…15 minutes

Slide 10: Break – 15 minutes

Slide 11

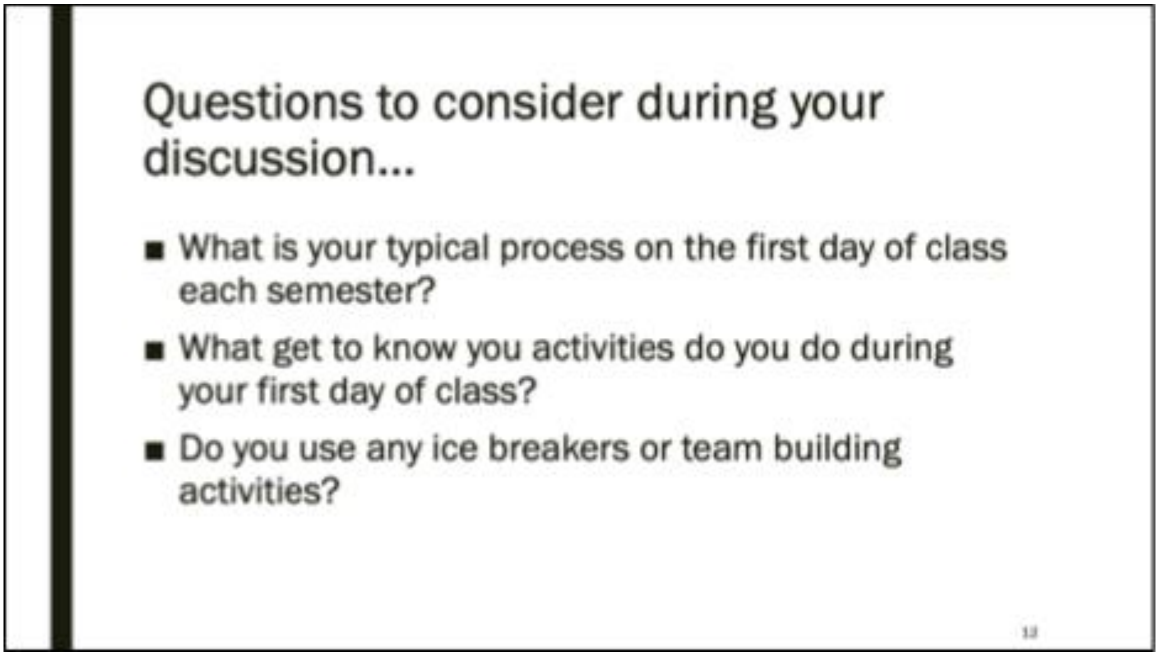


Create a visual chart…

- You are to break into groups of four to discuss how you develop a positive, engaging classroom in your classroom the first few days of each semester.
- Each group will need to develop a visual chart to share out with the group. We will share out each chart when our allotted time is finished.
- You will have 20 minutes to discuss and create your chart and then we will spend 10 minutes in share out time.

Slide 11: Creating a visual chart – directions are on the slide

Slide 12

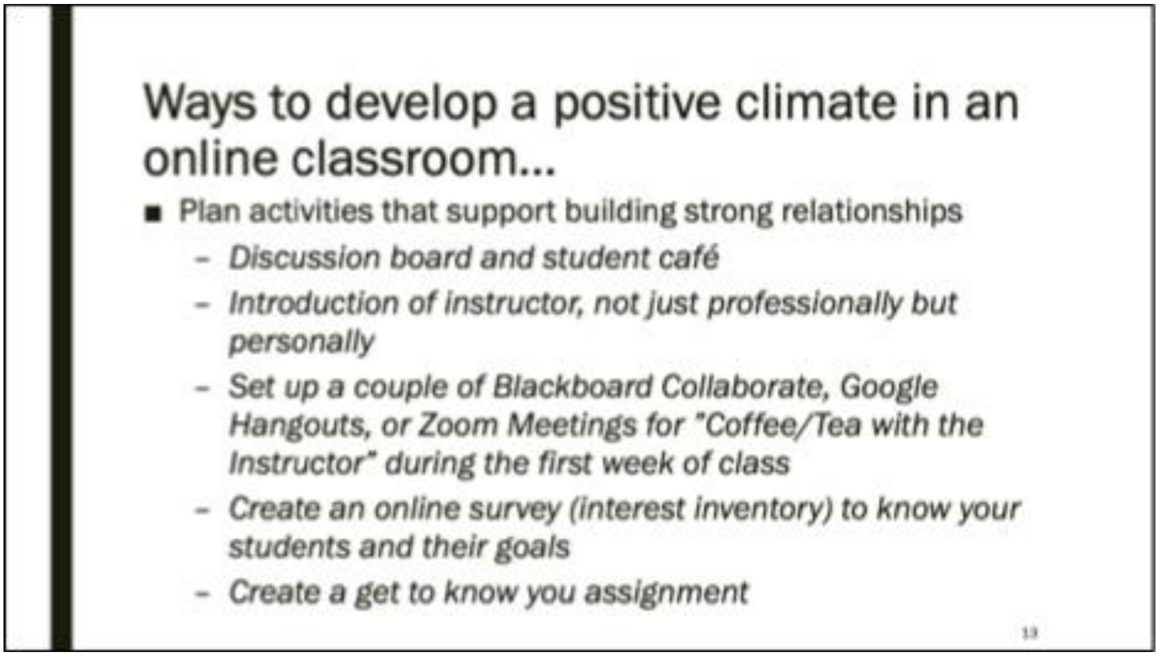


Questions to consider during your discussion…

- What is your typical process on the first day of class each semester?
- What get to know you activities do you do during your first day of class?
- Do you use any ice breakers or team building activities?

Slide 12: Questions to assist in guiding the discussion as you create a visual chart from the previous slide.

Slide 13

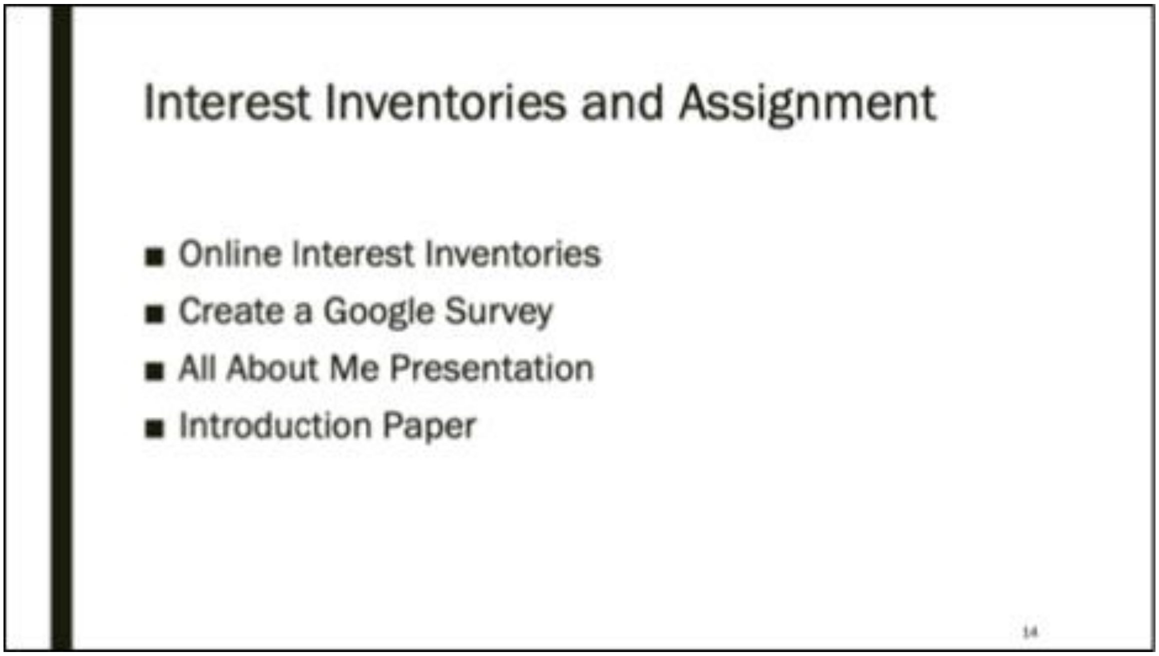


Ways to develop a positive climate in an online classroom…

- Plan activities that support building strong relationships
  - *Discussion board and student café*
  - *Introduction of instructor, not just professionally but personally*
  - *Set up a couple of Blackboard Collaborate, Google Hangouts, or Zoom Meetings for "Coffee/Tea with the Instructor" during the first week of class*
  - *Create an online survey (interest inventory) to know your students and their goals*
  - *Create a get to know you assignment*

Slide 13: Your success at creating a welcoming classroom environment depends more than anything else on the quality of the relationships that teachers develop with students. Student and teacher relationships influence everything—from the social climate to the individual performances of your students. We all know we want to be where we feel comfortable and can develop. When students have a positive working climate and culture with teachers, they feel more empowered to learn. I want everyone to think back to a class you disliked attending either in K-12 or college. What made you dislike the class? How did the teacher make you feel in the class? Now think back to a class you really enjoyed. What was different in this class? What type of classroom climate and culture was taking place? When students feel liked and respected by their teachers, they feel more empowered in school, academically and behaviorally.

Slide 14

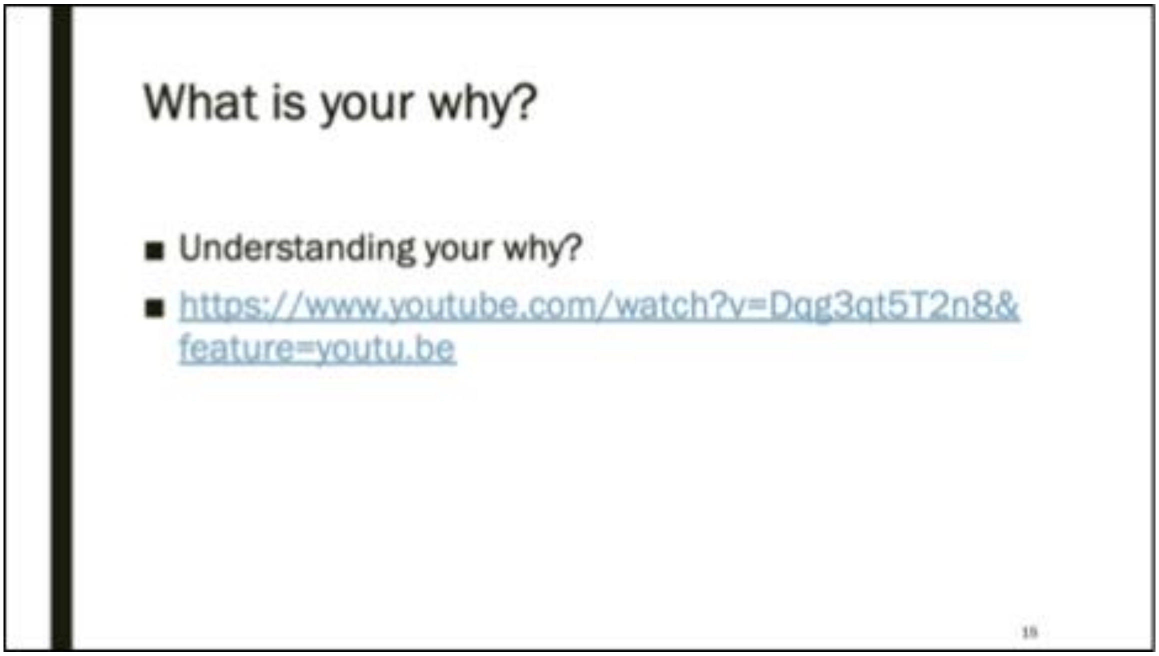


Interest Inventories and Assignment

- Online Interest Inventories
- Create a Google Survey
- All About Me Presentation
- Introduction Paper

Slide 14: Talk about how you can use an online interest inventory or create your own Google survey to gather information about students. As a class then brainstorm some things you might want to know about your students. When creating assignments, you can use the same type of questions brainstormed as guides for your presentation.

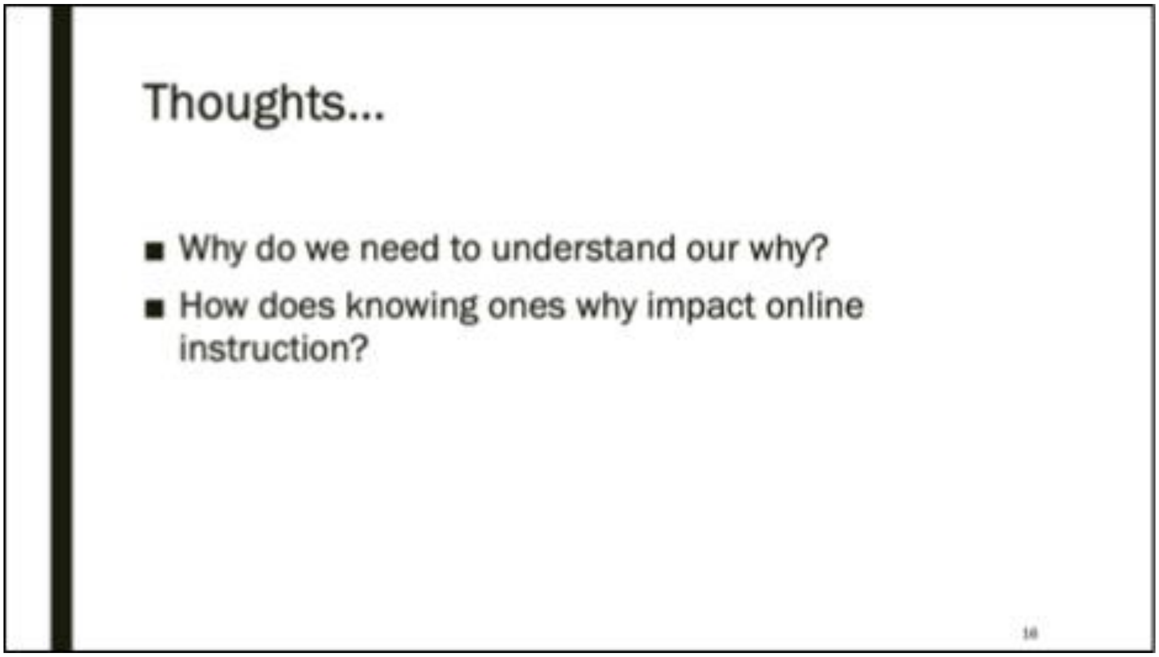
Slide 15



What is your why?

- Understanding your why?
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dqg3qt5T2n8&feature=youtu.be

Slide 16



Thoughts…

- Why do we need to understand our why?
- How does knowing ones why impact online instruction?

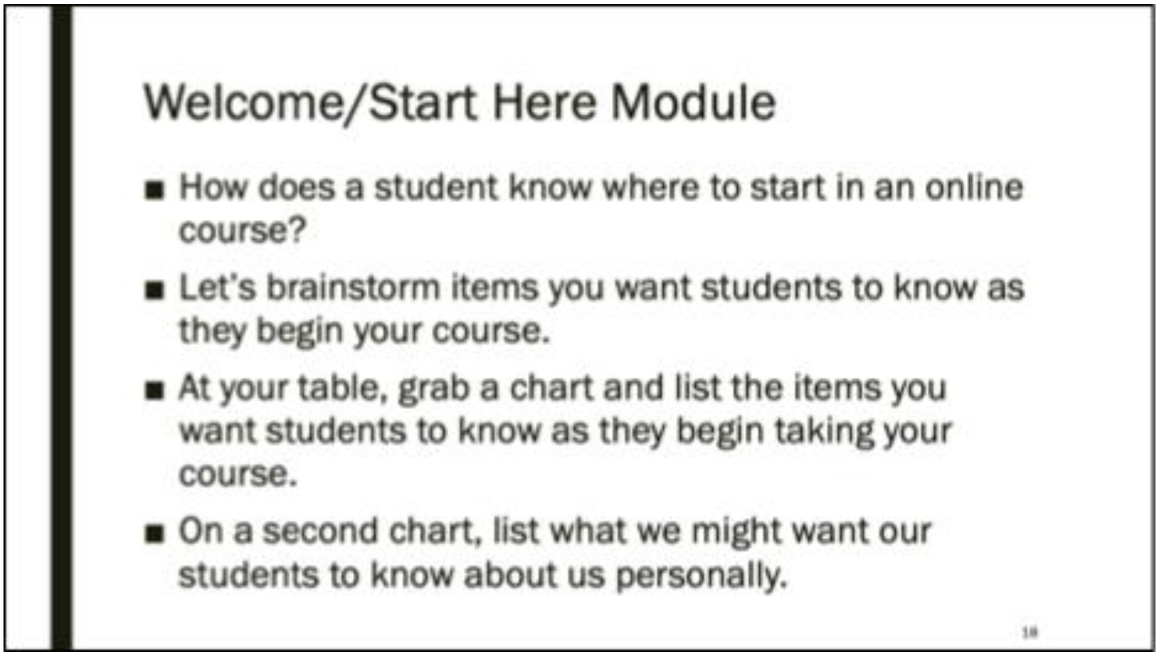
Slide 16: Discussion about your why

Slide 17

Lunch…30 minutes

Slide 17: Lunch – 30 minutes

Slide 18

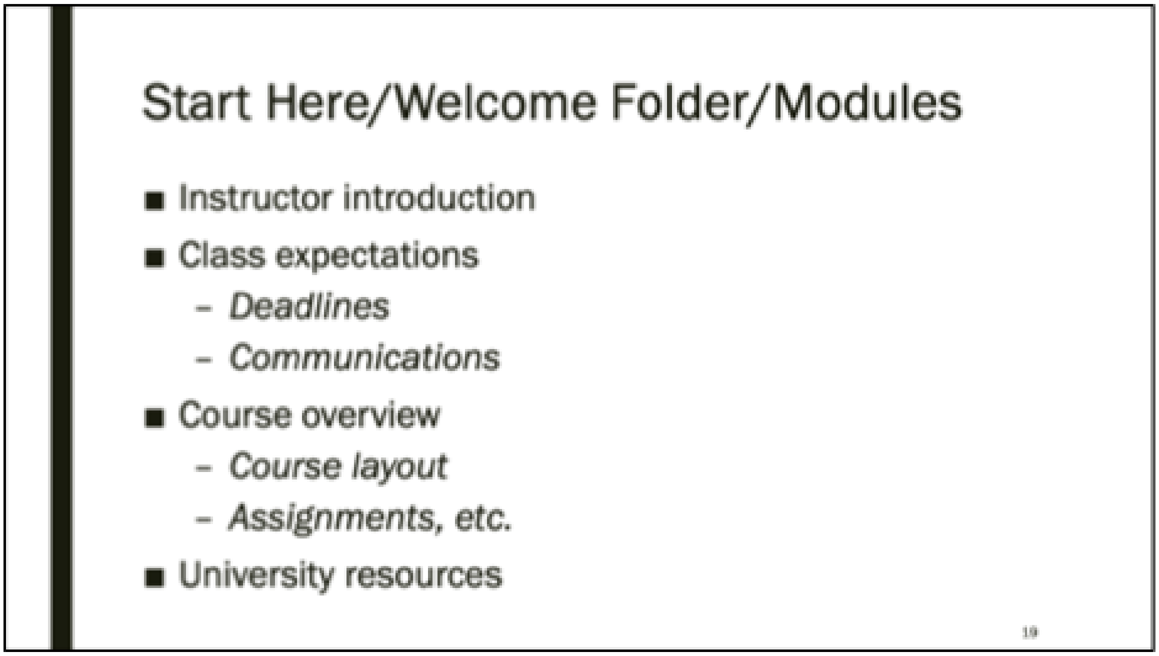


Welcome/Start Here Module

- How does a student know where to start in an online course?
- Let's brainstorm items you want students to know as they begin your course.
- At your table, grab a chart and list the items you want students to know as they begin taking your course.
- On a second chart, list what we might want our students to know about us personally.

Slide 18: We are going to start working on your course. The goal is as we go through the rest of the training, you will begin to develop a brand-new course or redesign an existing course. How do students know where to begin when they log into Blackboard? Do you have a place that says start here or Welcome? If you don’t, then the students may be confused from the first moment they log into the course. Best practices say that students need a Start Here Folder/Module for every course. So, we are going to begin working on our Start Here Folder/Module. So, what needs to be in this Start Here folder. Let’s start with brainstorming items you want students to know as they begin taking your course. Individually, I want you to take a sheet of paper and bullet out things you want your students to know as they begin taking your course. I am going to give you 5 minutes. (Set timer) When the time is up, ask for a volunteer to scribe the ideas onto a large chart paper for the room. Let everyone popcorn out their list so we can create a comprehensive list for the group. With a second large chart paper, let’s brainstorm things we might want our students to now about us. Now we have a good start to some ideas to begin our Start Here Folder/Module.

Slide 19



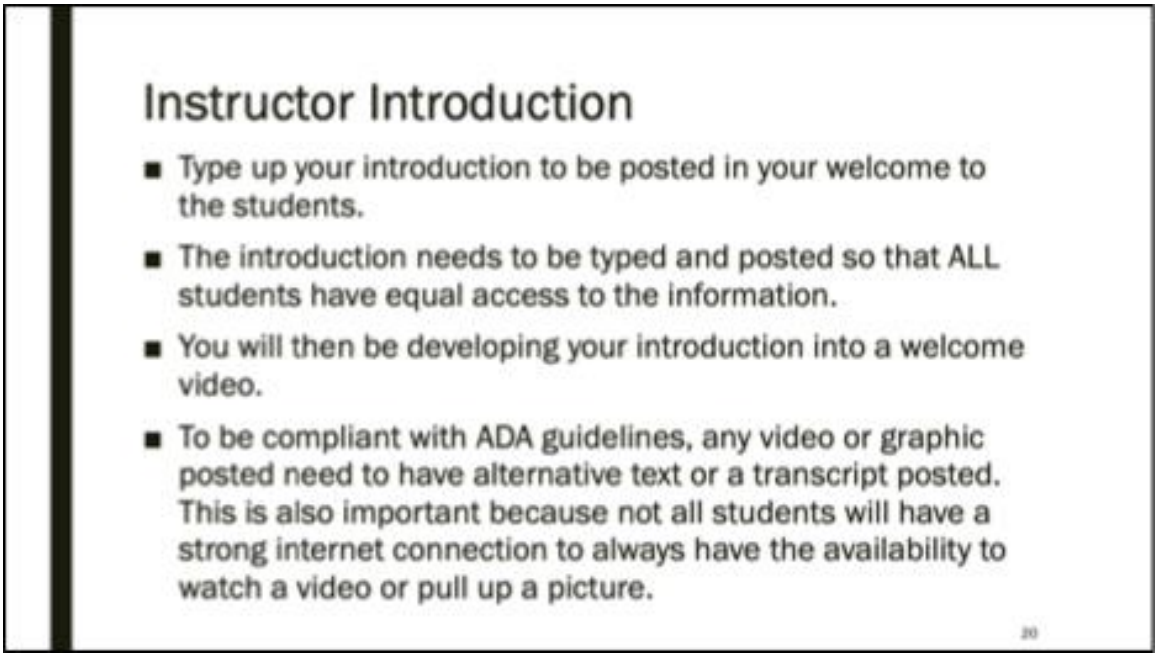
Start Here/Welcome Folder/Modules

- Instructor introduction
- Class expectations
  - *Deadlines*
  - *Communications*
- Course overview
  - *Course layout*
  - *Assignments, etc.*
- University resources

19

Slide 19: When organizing your course, how do kids know where to start? You want to have a clear starting point. Right now, I want you to write down all of the questions you have students ask you about at the beginning of each semester. We want to make sure in the start here/welcome folder you cover the questions you typically receive, introduce yourself, set class expectations, overview the course, and link to university resources. Let’s begin by brainstorming what we should cover in the instructor introduction. Now take your syllabus and highlight the class expectations you want to emphasize in the folder. Now we want to prepare to discuss the course overview (layout, assignments, etc.). Lastly, let’s brainstorm all of the university resource links that need to be included in our folder and the course. Now that we have our lists, we want to begin working.

Slide 20



Instructor Introduction

- Type up your introduction to be posted in your welcome to the students.
- The introduction needs to be typed and posted so that ALL students have equal access to the information.
- You will then be developing your introduction into a welcome video.
- To be compliant with ADA guidelines, any video or graphic posted need to have alternative text or a transcript posted. This is also important because not all students will have a strong internet connection to always have the availability to watch a video or pull up a picture.

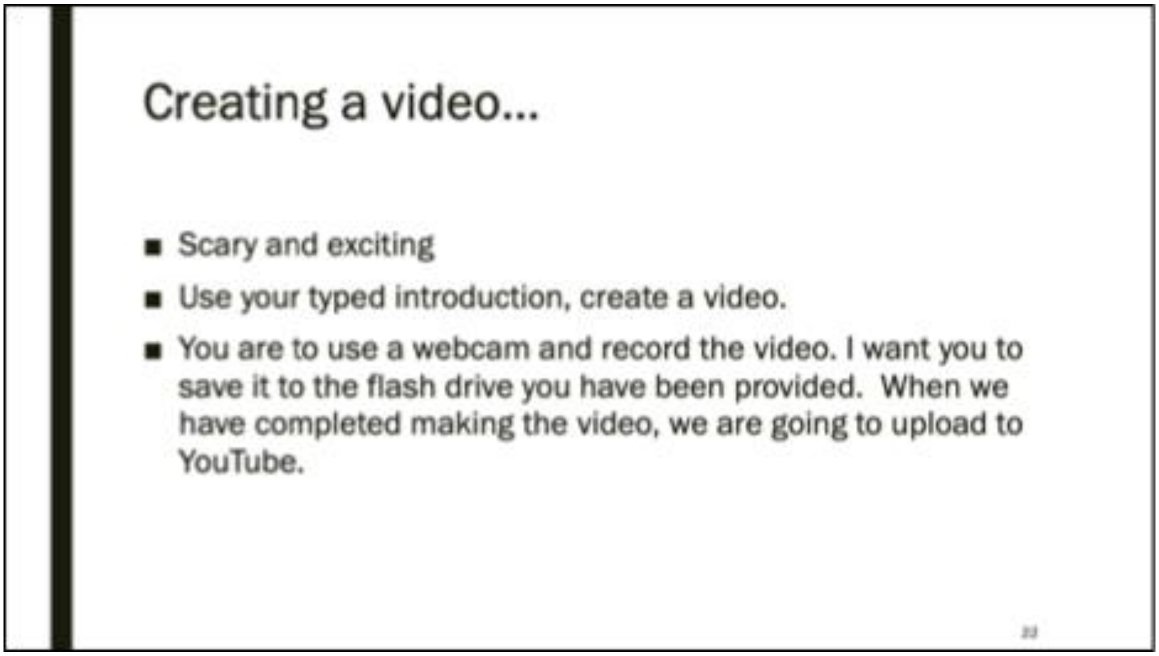
Slide 20: Type up your introduction to be posted in your welcome to the students. The introduction needs to be typed and posted so that ALL students have equal access to the information. You will then be developing your introduction into a welcome video. To be compliant with ADA guidelines, any video or graphic posted need to have alternative text or a transcript posted. This is also important because not all students will have a strong internet connection to always have the availability to watch a video or pull up a picture. You have about 10 minutes to type up your introduction for your course. Save it in Microsoft Word so you can copy and paste into your courses.

Slide 21

Break…15 minutes

Slide 21: Break – 15 minutes

Slide 22

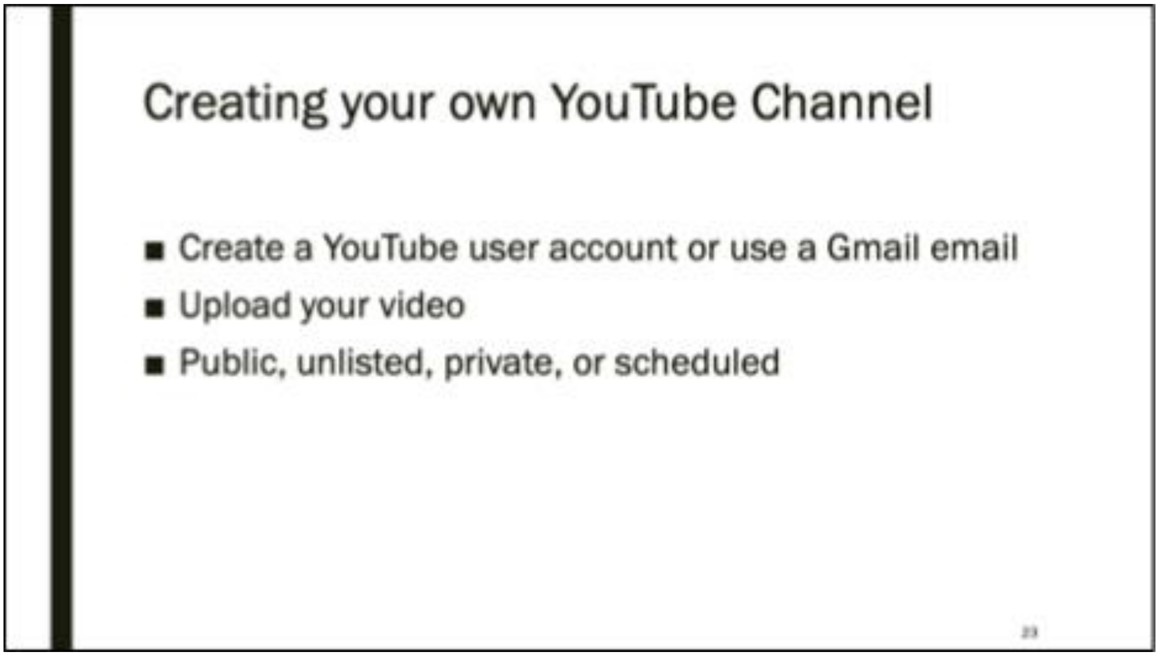


Creating a video…

- Scary and exciting
- Use your typed introduction, create a video.
- You are to use a webcam and record the video. I want you to save it to the flash drive you have been provided. When we have completed making the video, we are going to upload to YouTube.

Slide 22: It is scary and exciting to develop your first video to post online. Just learn that you will mess up, but you do that every day in face-to-face courses. Just be yourself. Now that you have developed your introduction, we want to turn this into a video to post with the introduction. To do this, you are going to use your webcam. You will go in and turn on your webcam, then click the record button. You want to do this in a quiet and professional looking location. Your office is a great location. Once you have finished, you want to save your video. You will want to keep the video to less than 10 minutes if possible. The smaller the video size the easier it is for students to stream to watch. I have now modeled for you how to create your video using your webcam. We will upload that video along with the written introduction to your Start Here/Welcome Folder/Module.

Slide 23



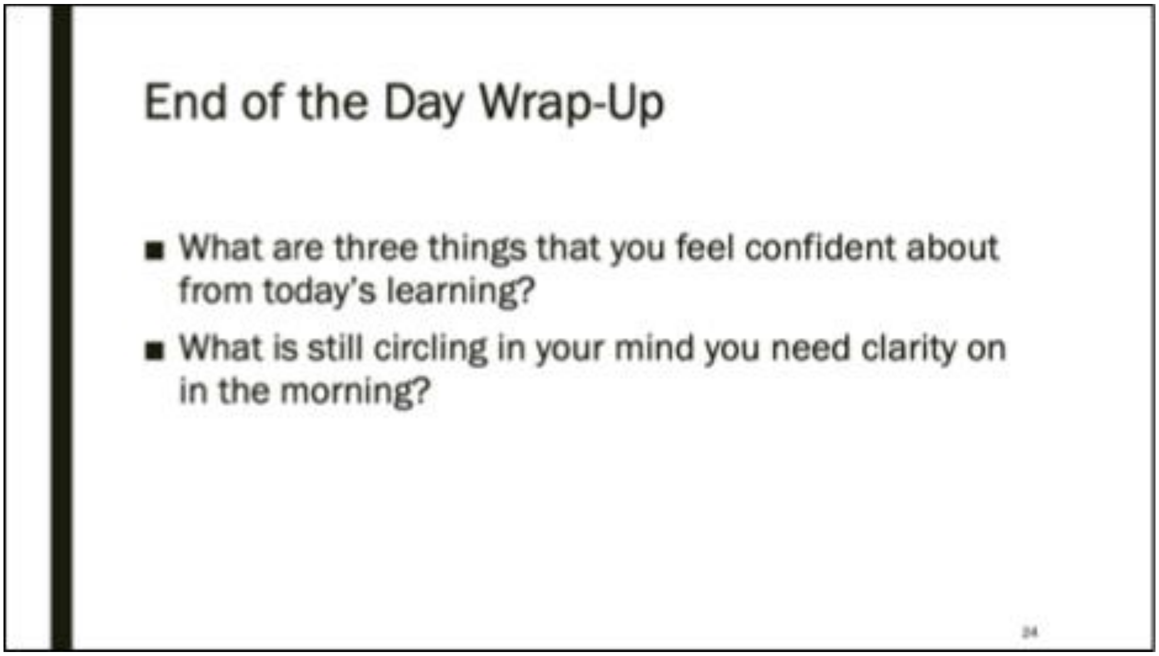
Creating your own YouTube Channel

- Create a YouTube user account or use a Gmail email
- Upload your video
- Public, unlisted, private, or scheduled

23

Slide 23: The easiest way to help the students who may not have strong internet access is to link your videos from YouTube. However, posting the videos online can be scary. You can create your YouTube account either by creating an account or linking to a Gmail email. So, let’s go to YouTube and either create an account from scratch or link to your Gmail. Give time...Now that you have been able to log into YouTube, we are going to upload the video. Now when we upload, we have four options when we upload (public, unlisted, private, or scheduled). If I choose pubic, anyone can find the video and view. If I use unlisted, I will have to share a link to the video, but the person will not have to have a password to view. If I use private, I must provide a link and a password for someone to view. Then scheduled, let’s me schedule a timeframe for the video to be viewed. The recommendation is to use unlisted for our purpose with your module. Now we want to upload the video.

Slide 24

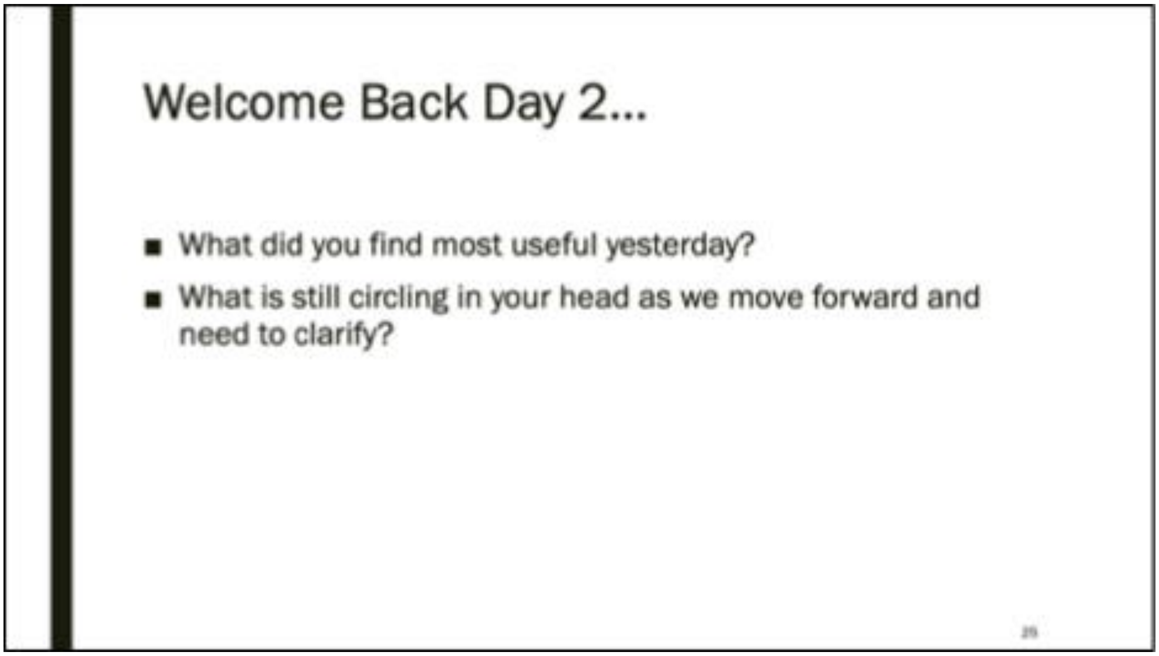


End of the Day Wrap-Up

- What are three things that you feel confident about from today's learning?
- What is still circling in your mind you need clarity on in the morning?

Slide 24: As we conclude today's work, we want to reflect on our learning today. Take your exit slip and complete three things you feel confident about from today and then what is still circling in your mind that you will need clarity on as we begin tomorrow.

Slide 25

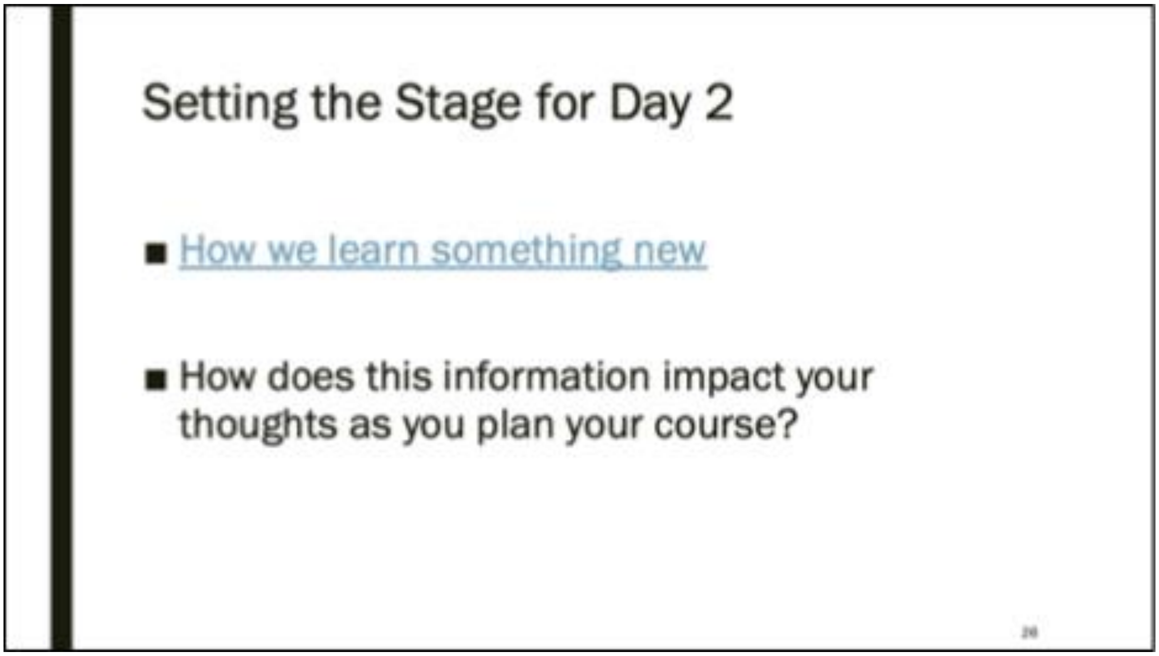


Welcome Back Day 2…

- What did you find most useful yesterday?
- What is still circling in your head as we move forward and need to clarify?

Slide 25: As we reflect on the morning’s learning, we want to think about what we have found most useful. Please turn to your neighbor and discuss what you found most useful from our morning of learning. You will have 5 minutes to share with your partner. Our 5 minutes are up, let’s popcorn out our thoughts to the whole group. Next, is there anything that is not clear and needs to be revisited prior to us moving forward.

Slide 26

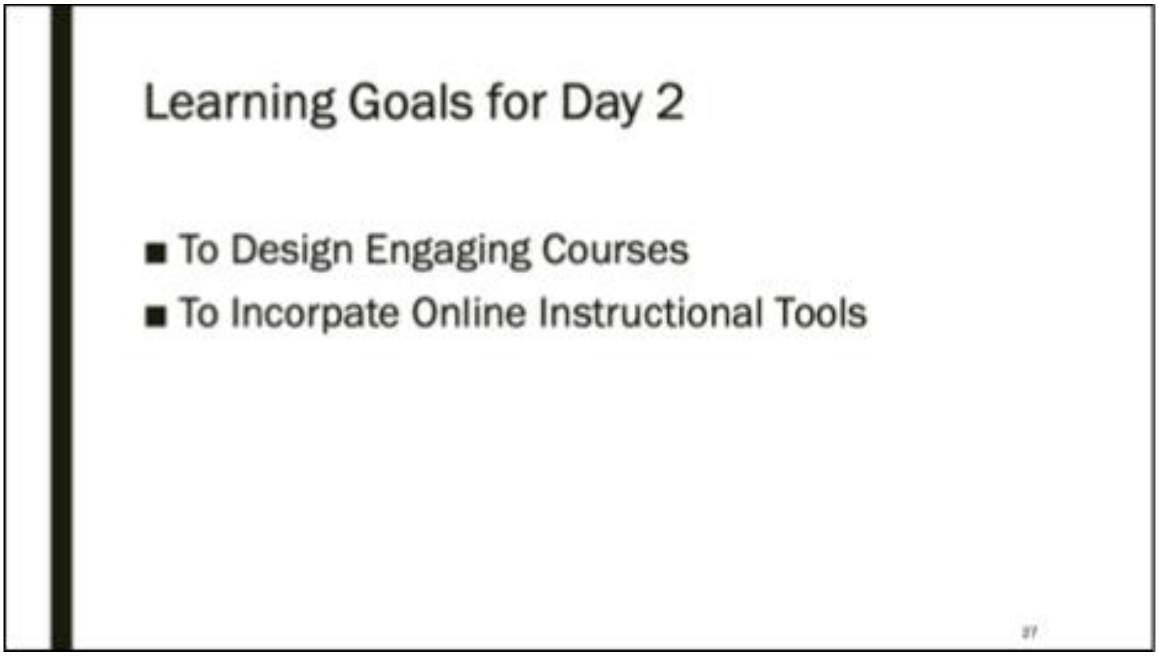


Setting the Stage for Day 2

- How we learn something new
- How does this information impact your thoughts as you plan your course?

Slide 26: As we move to teaching in an online format, we must keep in mind how people learn and plan our courses for student success. Let’s watch this video to open our morning discussion. https://youtu.be/3LdEwYDDJBg

Slide 27

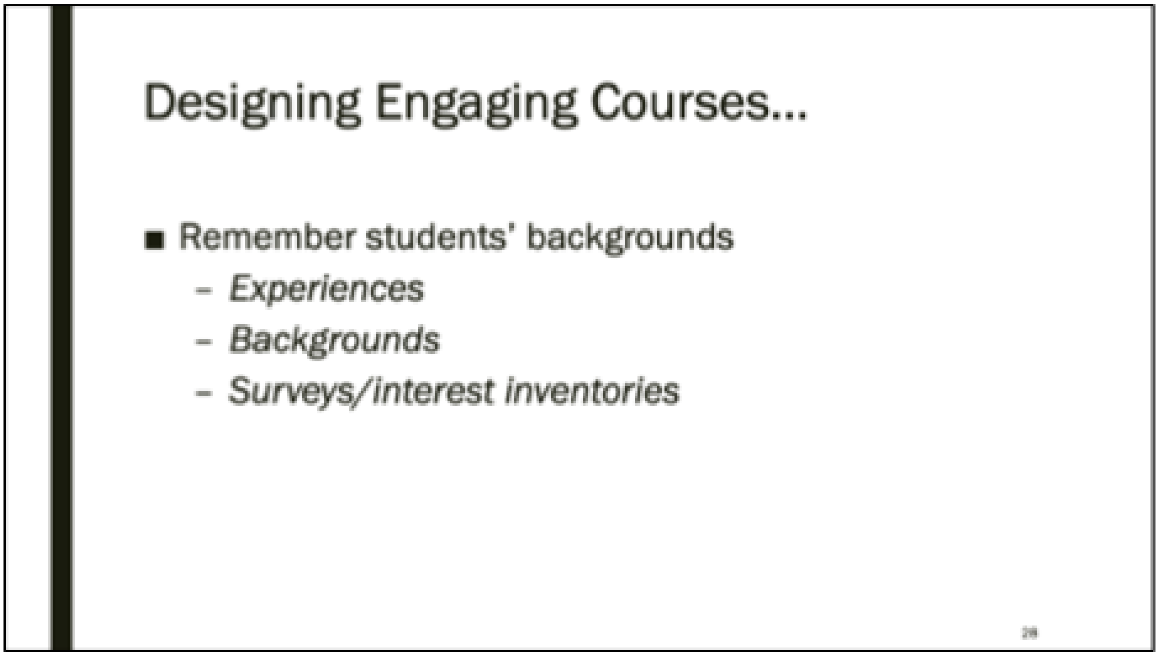


Learning Goals for Day 2

- To Design Engaging Courses
- To Incorpate Online Instructional Tools

Slide 27: Our learning today will focus on designing engaging courses and using online instructional tools to support learning.

Slide 28

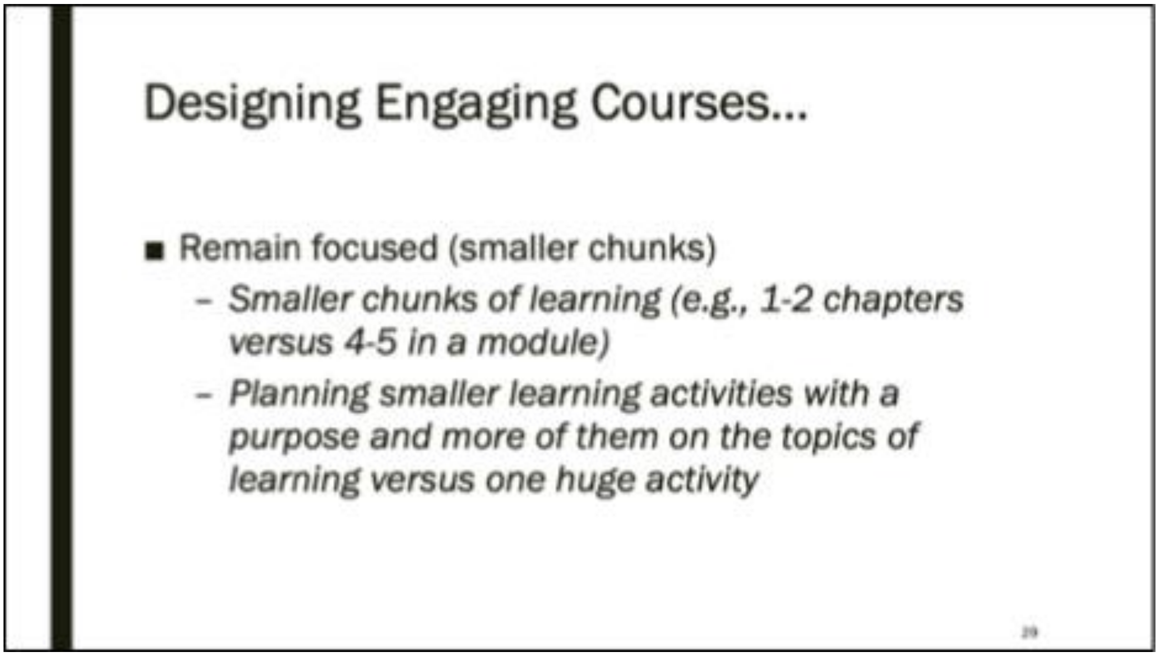


Designing Engaging Courses...

- Remember students' backgrounds
  - *Experiences*
  - *Backgrounds*
  - *Surveys/interest inventories*

Slide 28: As we design an engaging online course, we need to remember we must connect with our students. So, as we prepare the learning modules, we need to remember to either draw on our background of experiences or we must build in the background as part of the learning. So, if the course is a topic that most students will not have had exposure to or background experience with, we must design learning to build the background for understanding. We must remember it is about what students should know, understand, and do with learning.

Slide 29

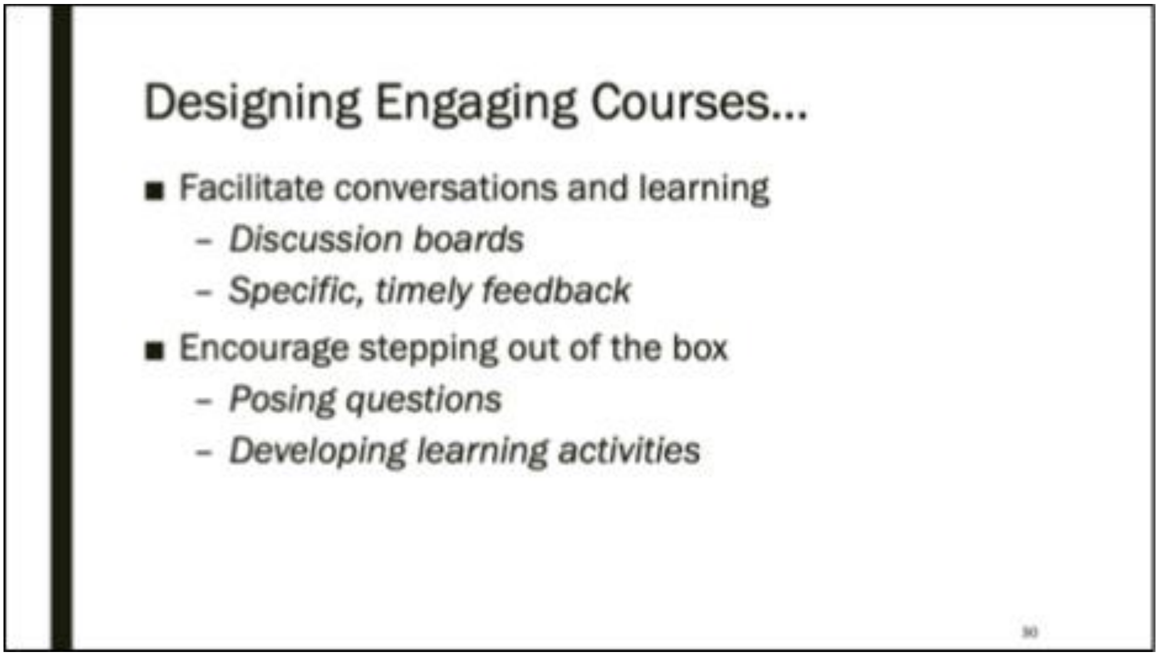


Designing Engaging Courses…

- Remain focused (smaller chunks)
  - *Smaller chunks of learning (e.g., 1-2 chapters versus 4-5 in a module)*
  - *Planning smaller learning activities with a purpose and more of them on the topics of learning versus one huge activity*

Slide 29: Next, we need to remember the modules should be focused and relevant. You are better having several smaller modules more focused so the students can connect learning than to spread out four or five topics of learning together.

Slide 30

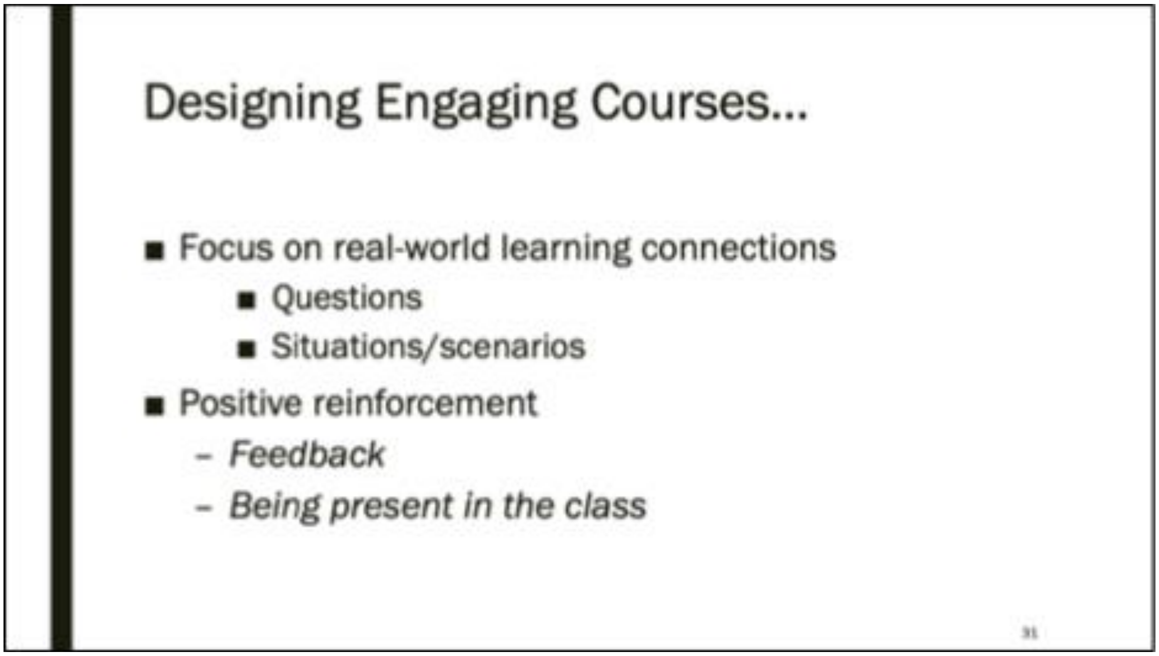


Designing Engaging Courses…

- Facilitate conversations and learning
  - *Discussion boards*
  - *Specific, timely feedback*
- Encourage stepping out of the box
  - *Posing questions*
  - *Developing learning activities*

Slide 30: Our job as instructors is to facilitate learning through discussions, learning activities, and authentic assessments. Facilitators of learning need to be active on the discussion boards each week. Being present in a discussion board is powerful for student learning. Providing timely and specific feedback is crucial in an online class as well as face-to-face. With being online, students cannot see your visual response as you give them feedback (unless you record and send). So being specific on how they can improve or clarifying any misconceptions is important. As you design lessons step outside of the box to pose questions with a different stance or even provide learning activities that take a different approach.

Slide 31

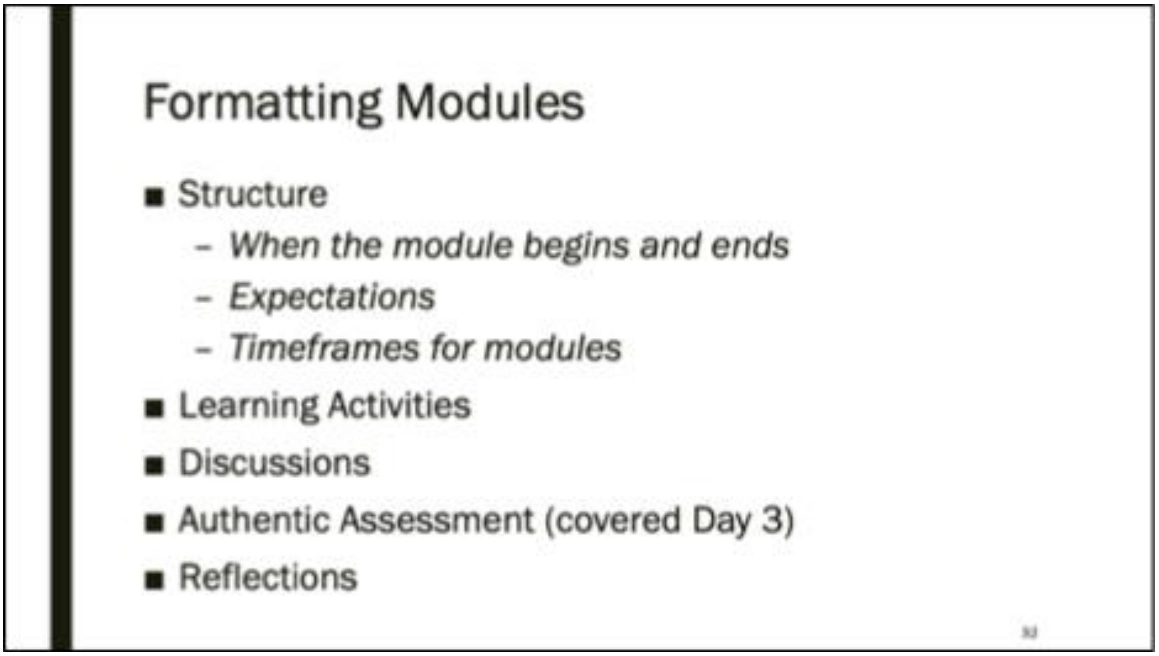


Designing Engaging Courses…

- Focus on real-world learning connections
  - Questions
  - Situations/scenarios
- Positive reinforcement
  - *Feedback*
  - *Being present in the class*

Slide 31: It is important as you design instructional lessons that you make the lessons real- world and not busy work. Students and you hate nothing more than busy work. Pose questions or create scenarios for the students to use in learning that are real. Providing quality feedback, being present in the classroom, and developing positive student-teacher relationships are part of the reinforcement that provides an engaging learning experience.

Slide 32

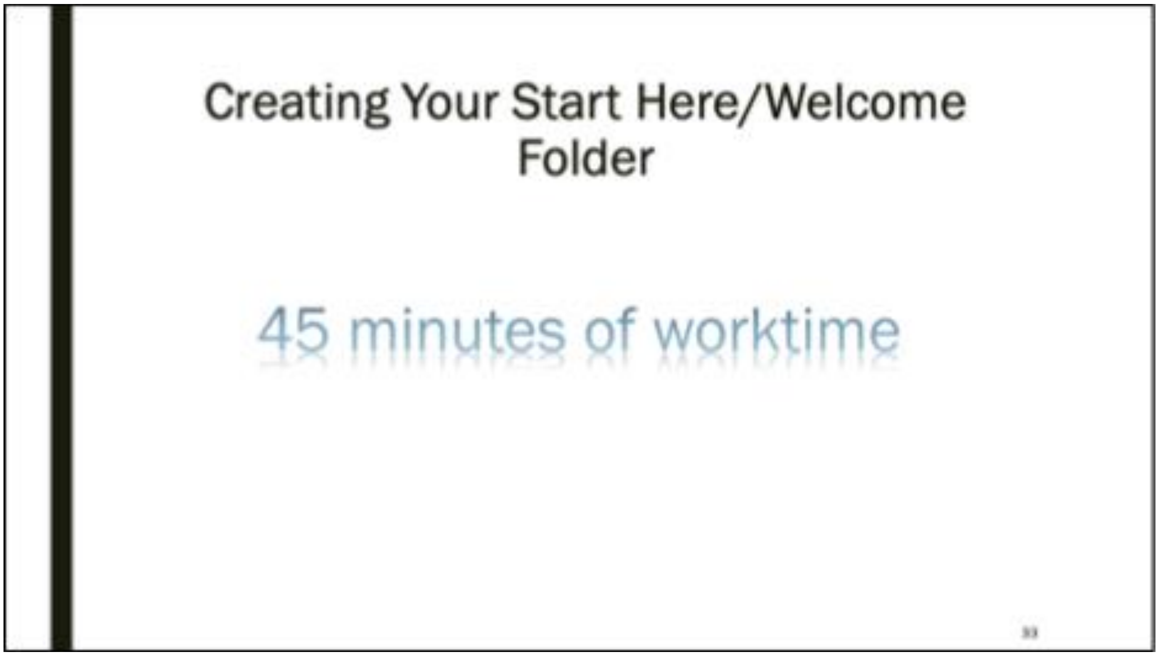


Formatting Modules

- Structure
  - *When the module begins and ends*
  - *Expectations*
  - *Timeframes for modules*
- Learning Activities
- Discussions
- Authentic Assessment (covered Day 3)
- Reflections

Slide 32: As we think about creating our learning modules, we want to think about a structure for how to best support student learning. So, what structure works well in face-to-face courses? Using folders to arrange each module works best for students. They then become accustomed to going to that week's folder for all assignments. Within the folder, you list and be specific about the contents of the learning for the week. The learning does not have to be just for one week it could go longer but your structure needs to be the same in all modules. For example, are you going to open all the learning modules on the first day of class so students can move through the learning faster if they desire or are you going to have time frames for the modules to be open? Let's discuss the benefits of open from the beginning and time frames. (allow 10 minutes for discussion) As a facilitator of learning for your students, you have to decide what you feel is best. There is no right or wrong answer but consider what is best for your students. You want each module to have close dates. If not, grading and progress monitoring will be difficult. If you chose to open modules for time frames, you need to have the same time frames for opening and closing. For example, open the learning module on Monday morning at 12:05 a.m. and closes at 11:55 p.m. on Sunday evening. Then within the week there could be guidelines on participation. But again, these guidelines need to be consistent from module to module. After structure, every module should have learning activities, discussions, some form of an authentic assessment, along with time for reflection.

Slide 33

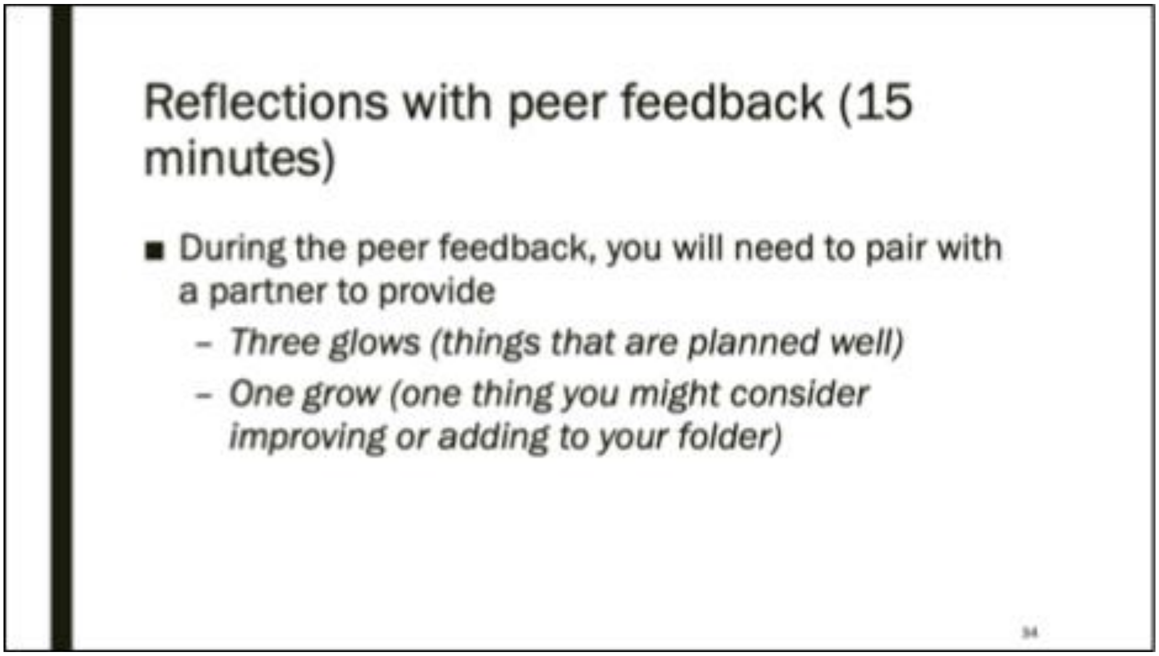


Creating Your Start Here/Welcome Folder

45 minutes of worktime

Slide 33: We have brainstormed the different components we need to place in a Start Here/Welcome Folder. We are now going to move into work time, and I will be checking with each of you to assist you as needed, to bring clarity on the reasons for a beginning folder, and how you will engage the learners. Just grab me if you have a question or need assistance before I get to you to talk.

Slide 34



Reflections with peer feedback (15 minutes)

- During the peer feedback, you will need to pair with a partner to provide
  - *Three glows (things that are planned well)*
  - *One grow (one thing you might consider improving or adding to your folder)*

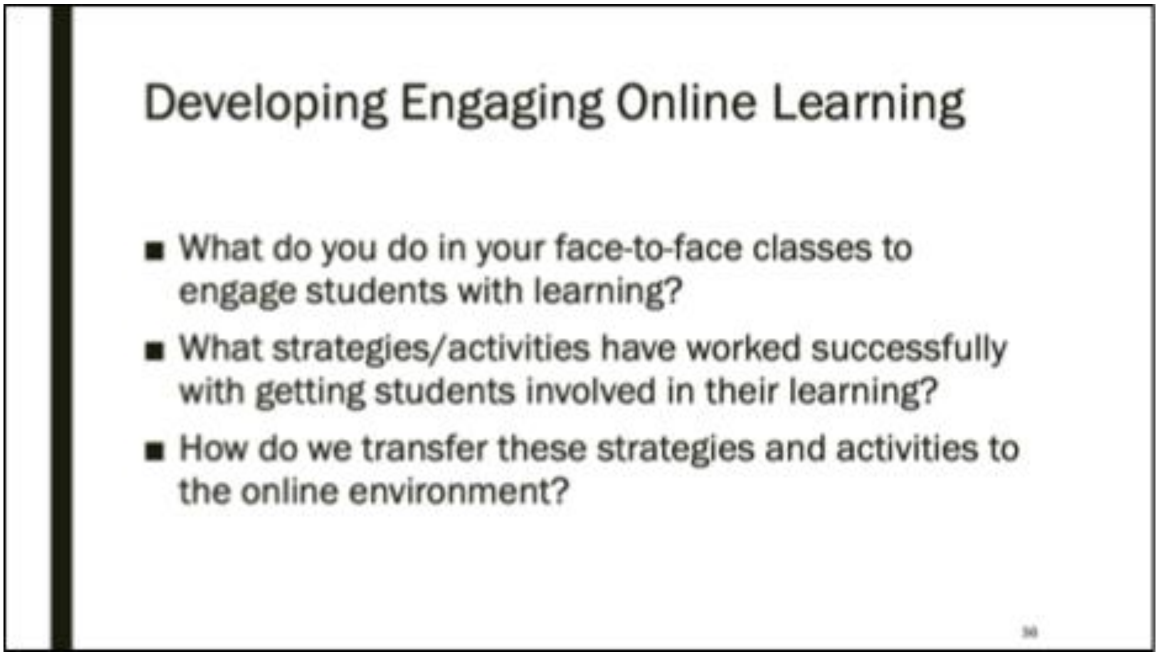
Slide 34: During the peer feedback, you will need to provide three glows (things that are planned well) and one grow (one thing you might consider improving or adding to your folder).

Slide 35

Break…15 minutes

Slide 35: Break – 15 minutes

Slide 36

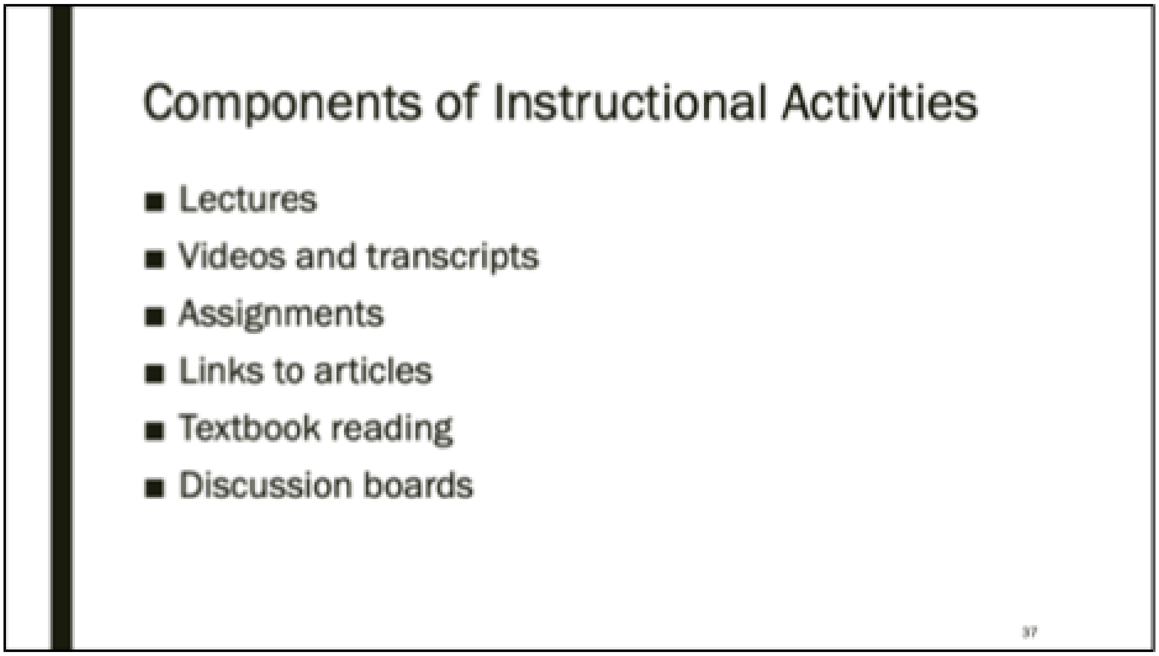


Developing Engaging Online Learning

- What do you do in your face-to-face classes to engage students with learning?
- What strategies/activities have worked successfully with getting students involved in their learning?
- How do we transfer these strategies and activities to the online environment?

Slide 36: Discussion on this slide will focus at the beginning how we engage students in face- to-face classes and gather ideas on posters for the room. Then move the discussion to online engaging strategies and how we transfer classroom strategies to online strategies.

Slide 37



Components of Instructional Activities

- Lectures
- Videos and transcripts
- Assignments
- Links to articles
- Textbook reading
- Discussion boards

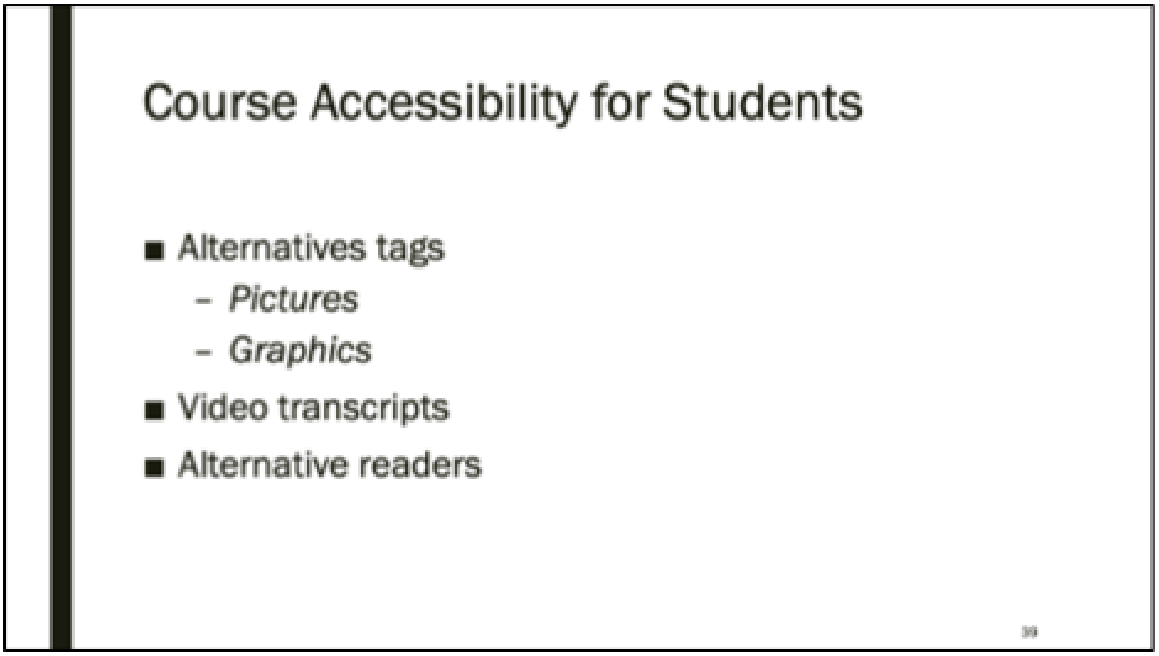
Slide 37: During this slide, we want to discuss all of the components an instructor can include in a module for each unit of learning. Each of the components will be discussed in length and how best practices support learning: lectures, videos and transcripts, assignments, links to articles, textbook reading, and discussion boards.

Slide 38

Lunch – 30 minutes

Slide 38: Lunch – 30 minutes

Slide 39

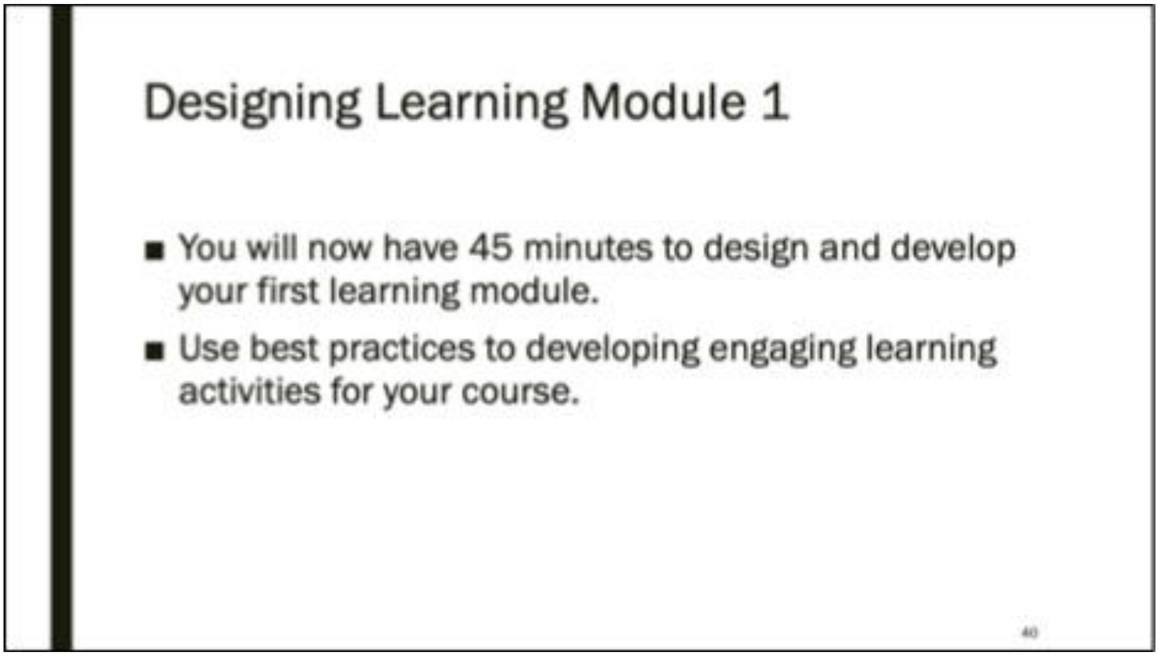


Course Accessibility for Students

- Alternatives tags
  - *Pictures*
  - *Graphics*
- Video transcripts
- Alternative readers

Slide 39: This slide will discuss how important it is to make a course accessible for all learners. In addition, the importance of the accessibility when students may not have quality internet access at their home or with their service provider. Each picture/graphic should have alternative tags linked through the courseware tools. Then any video should have a transcript attached. Lastly, discussion will focus on how alternative readers work with the learning management system.

Slide 40



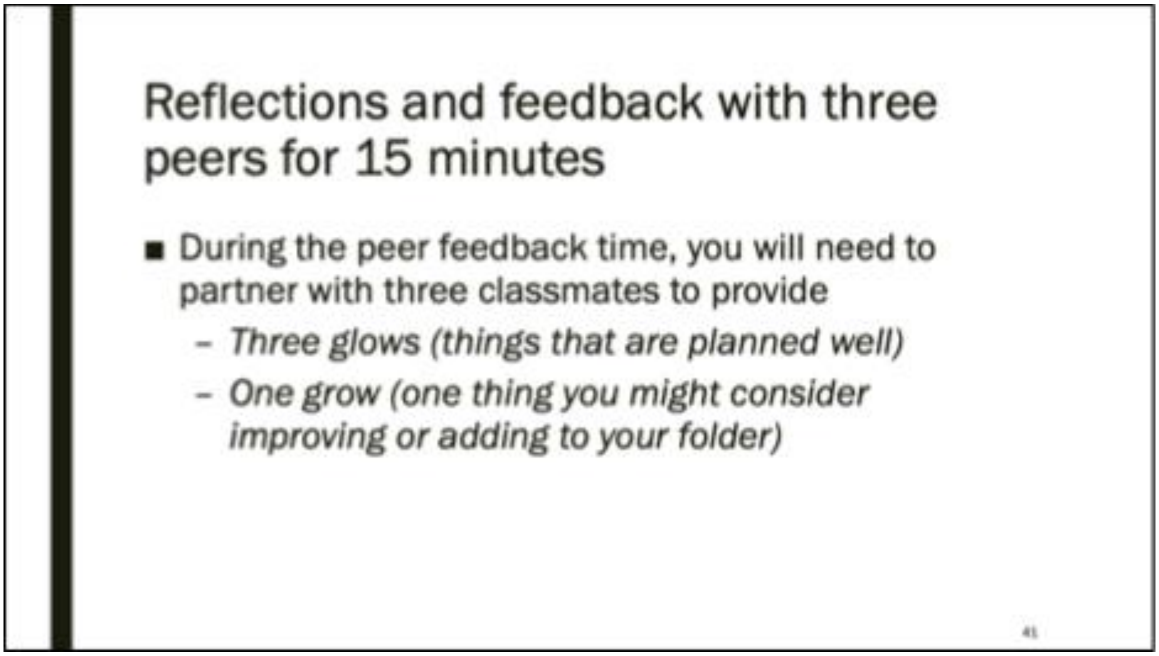
Designing Learning Module 1

- You will now have 45 minutes to design and develop your first learning module.
- Use best practices to developing engaging learning activities for your course.

40

Slide 40: Participants will have time work on developing their first module and incorporating engaging learning activities. I will work one-on-one with participants to incorporate strategies that promote student engagement and active learning.

Slide 41



Reflections and feedback with three peers for 15 minutes

- During the peer feedback time, you will need to partner with three classmates to provide
  - *Three glows (things that are planned well)*
  - *One grow (one thing you might consider improving or adding to your folder)*

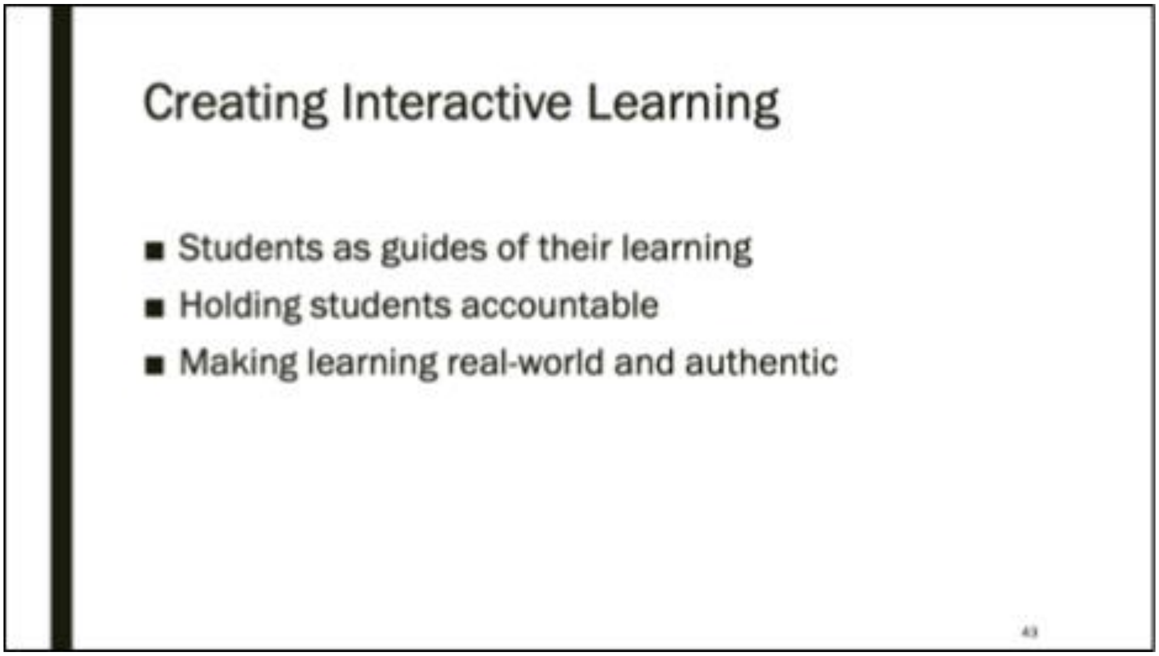
Slide 41: In groups of three peers, you will be providing feedback within your group. Feedback should include: three glows (things that are planned well) and one grow (one thing you might consider improving or adding to your folder).

Slide 42

Break…15 minutes

Slide 42: Break – 15 minutes

Slide 43

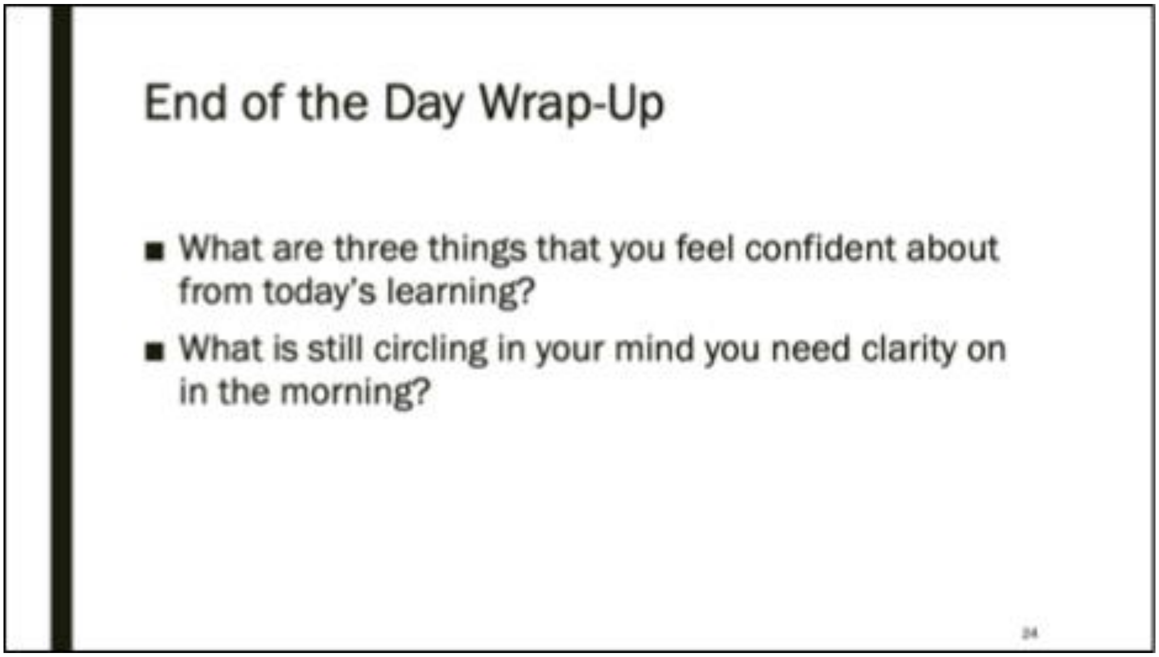


Creating Interactive Learning

- Students as guides of their learning
- Holding students accountable
- Making learning real-world and authentic

Slide 43: This slide will discuss and clarify what interactive learning is in an online learning environment. Key points to consider are students as a guide of their learning; holding students accountable; and making learning real-world and authentic.

Slide 44

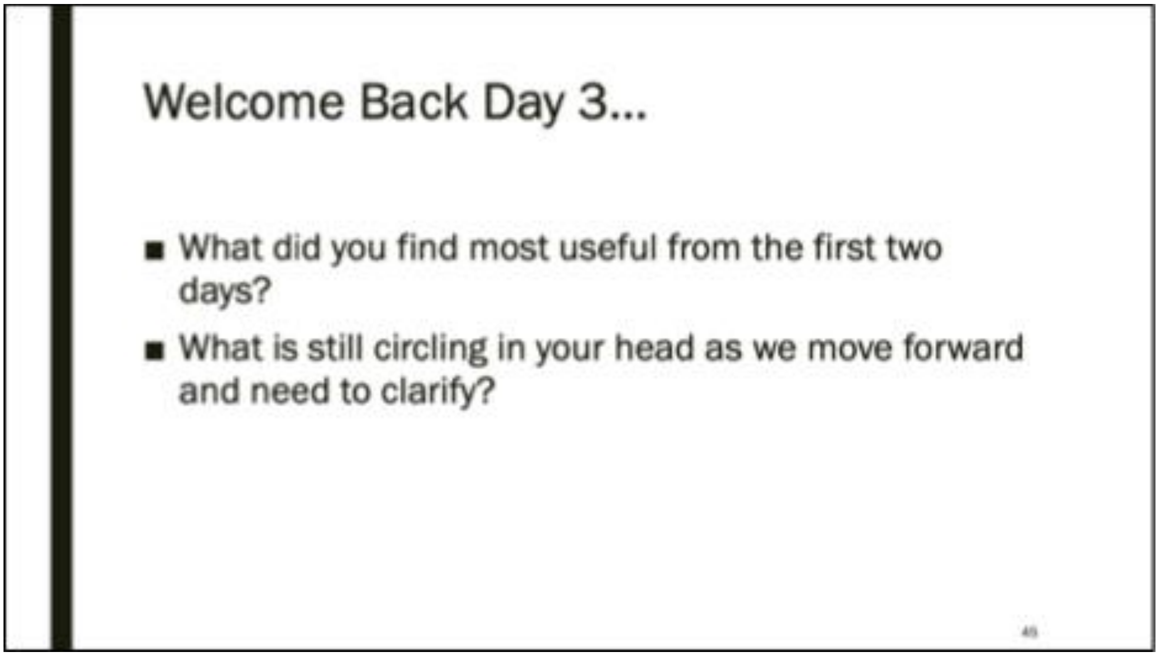


End of the Day Wrap-Up

- What are three things that you feel confident about from today's learning?
- What is still circling in your mind you need clarity on in the morning?

Slide 44: As we conclude today's work, we want to reflect on our learning today. Take your exit slip and complete three things you feel confident about from today and then what is still circling in your mind for which you will need clarity as we begin tomorrow.

Slide 45

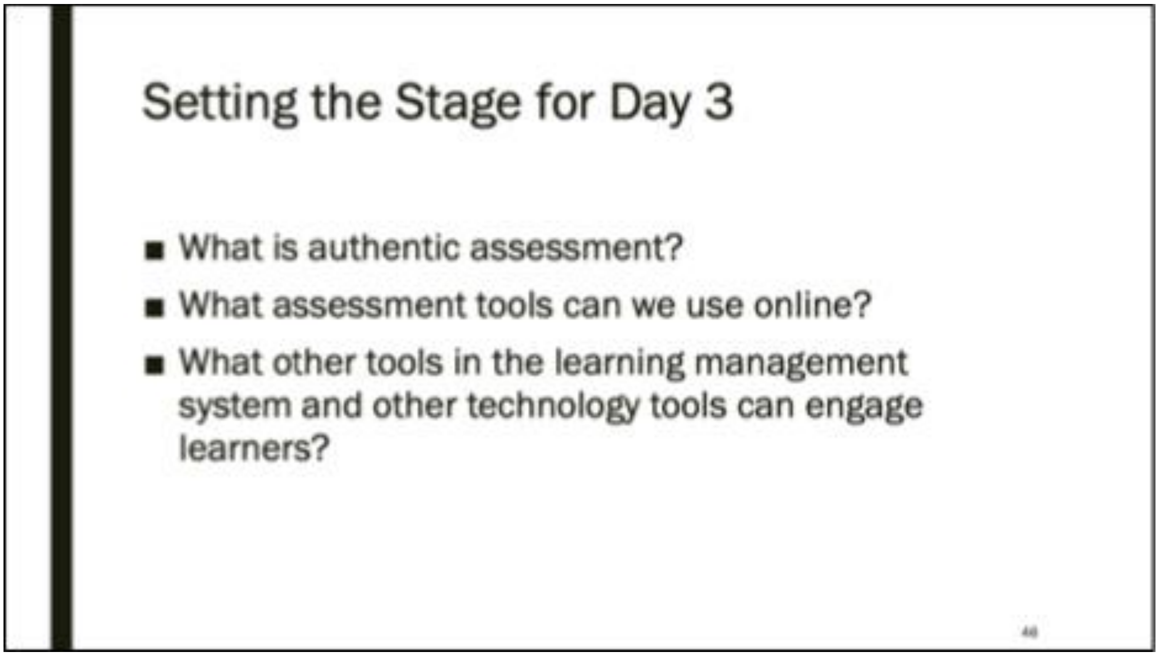


Welcome Back Day 3...

- What did you find most useful from the first two days?
- What is still circling in your head as we move forward and need to clarify?

Slide 45: As we reflect on the Day 2 learning, we want to think about what we have found most useful. Please turn to your neighbor and discuss what you found most useful from our first two days of learning. You will have 5 minutes to share with your partner. Our 5 minutes are up, let’s popcorn out our thoughts to the whole group. Next, is there anything that is not clear and needs to be revisited prior to us moving forward.

Slide 46

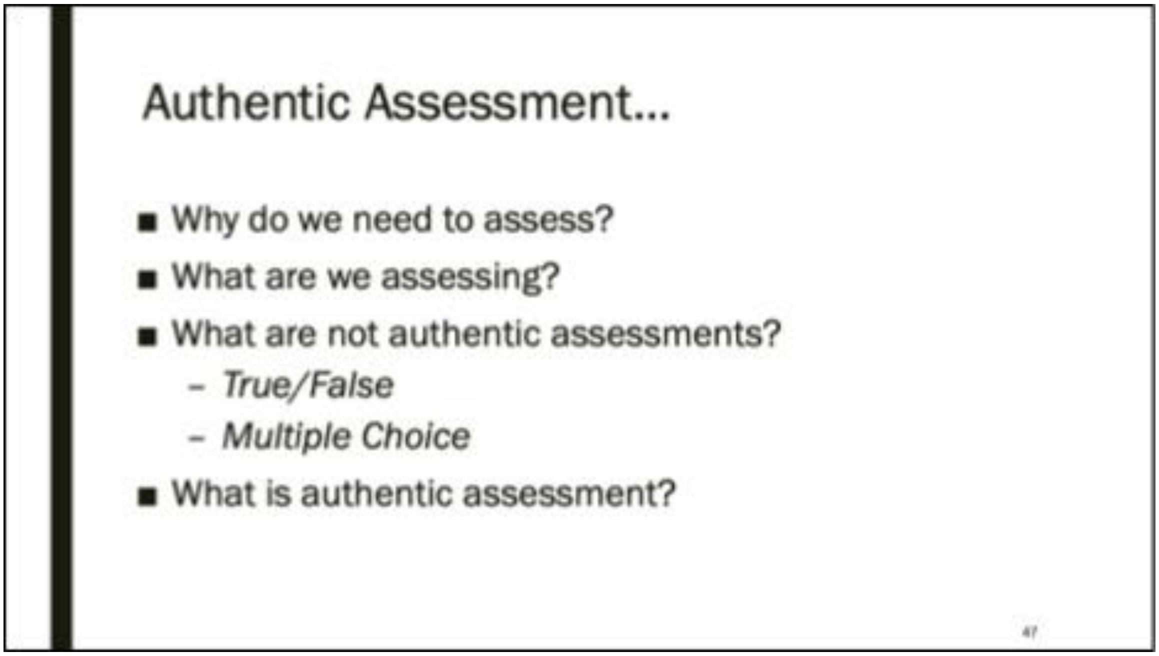


Setting the Stage for Day 3

- What is authentic assessment?
- What assessment tools can we use online?
- What other tools in the learning management system and other technology tools can engage learners?

Slide 46: Set the focus for the third day of learning with the goals for the day.

Slide 47



Authentic Assessment…

- Why do we need to assess?
- What are we assessing?
- What are not authentic assessments?
  - *True/False*
  - *Multiple Choice*
- What is authentic assessment?

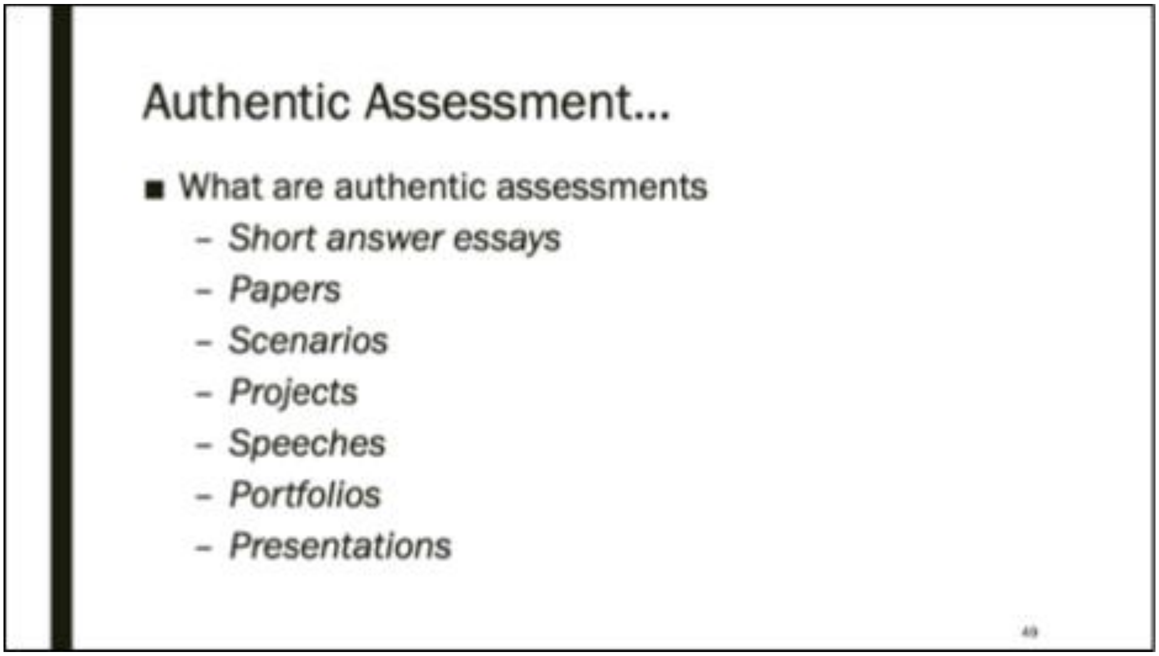
Slide 47: The information for this slide will take time. We will begin by discussing how faculty are assessing student learning currently in their face-to-face learning. Then we will transition into how we guarantee the learning is mastered in the classes. After this discussion, we will then talk about how we want to make sure our assessments are focused on the goals of the module and what students should know, understand, and do with the learning. This is where we begin discussing authentic assessments and how these types of assessments really assess and measure learning that is real-world and authentic.

Slide 48

Break…15 minutes

Slide 48: Break – 15 minutes

Slide 49

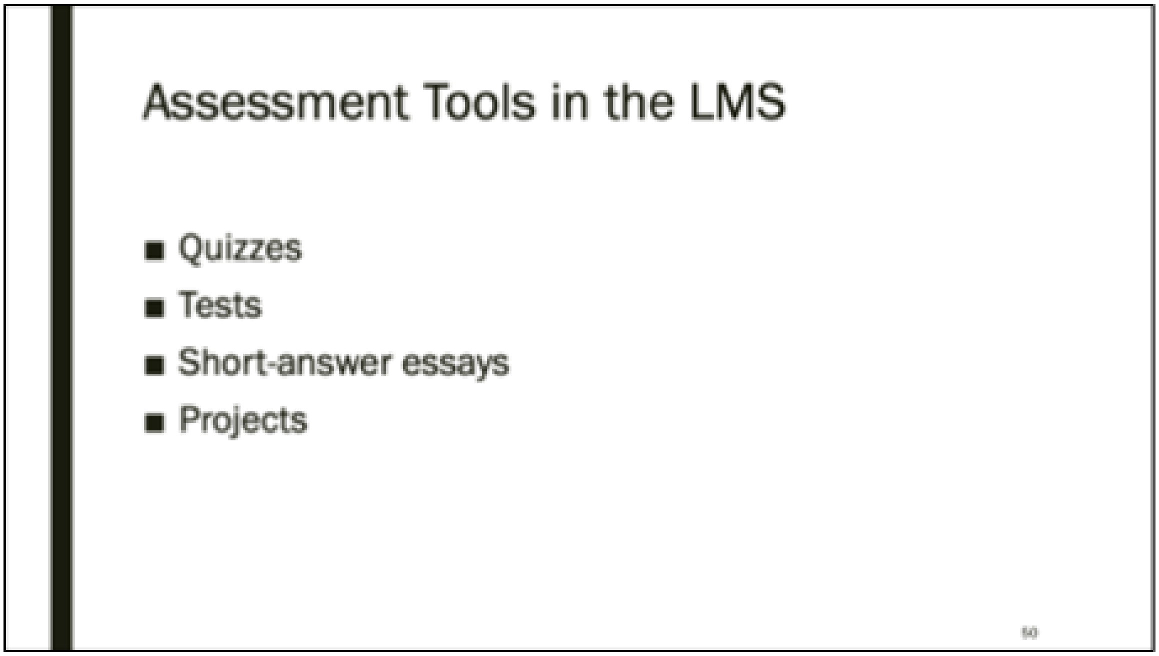


Authentic Assessment…

- What are authentic assessments
  - *Short answer essays*
  - *Papers*
  - *Scenarios*
  - *Projects*
  - *Speeches*
  - *Portfolios*
  - *Presentations*

Slide 49: This is where we begin discussing authentic assessments and how these types of assessments really assess and measure learning that is real-world and authentic.

Slide 50



Assessment Tools in the LMS

- Quizzes
- Tests
- Short-answer essays
- Projects

Slide 50: This section of the training will discuss the different assessment tools that can be incorporated into a learning module and how you would incorporate and use the learning management to set up the assessment tool. In addition, the discussion will focus on any grading concerns and how to share feedback with students to help with learning of the content.

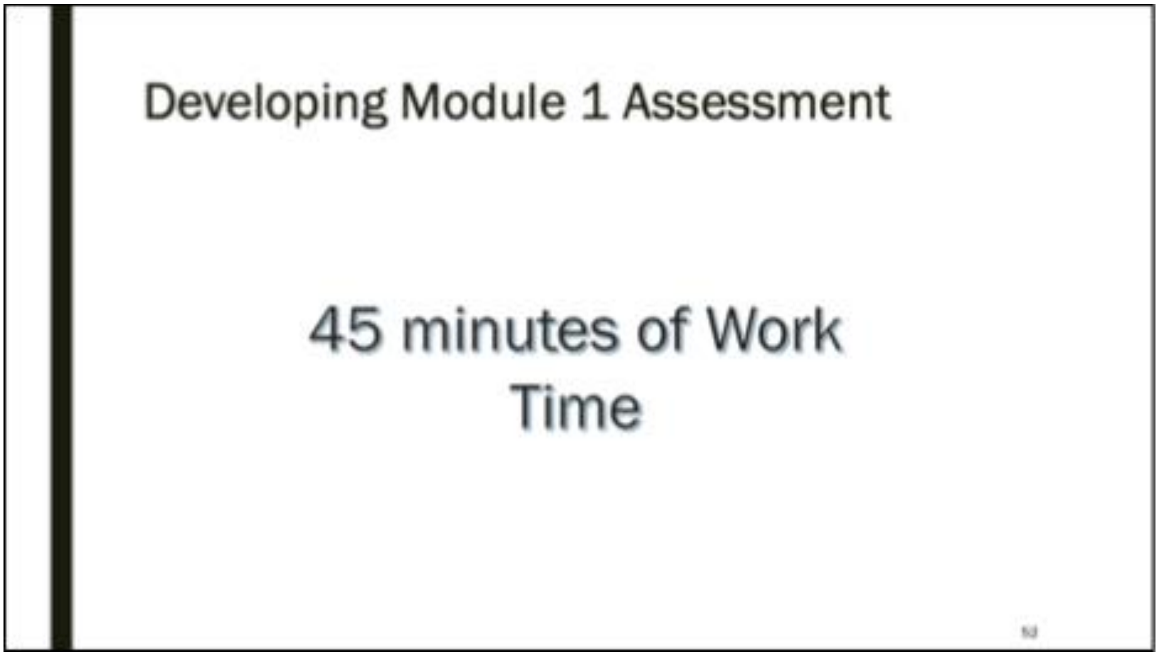
Slide 51

Lunch...30 minutes

51

Slide 51: Lunch – 30 minutes

Slide 52

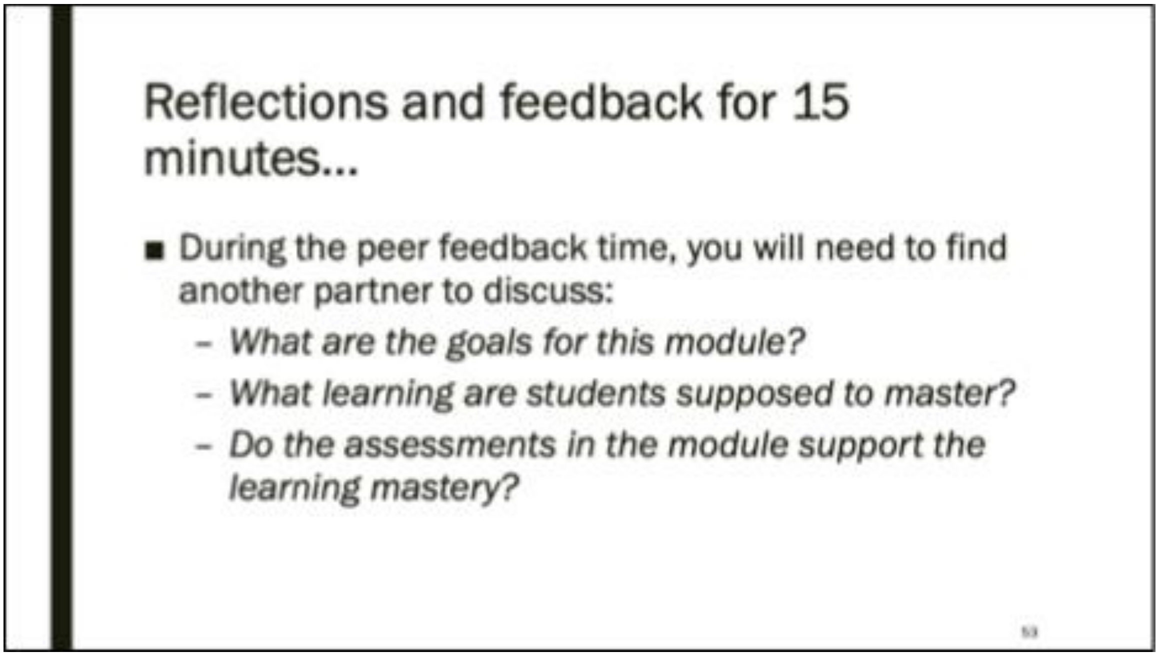


Developing Module 1 Assessment

45 minutes of Work Time

Slide 52: We have discussed many different assessment tools that can be incorporated into any learning module. We are now going to move into work time, and I will be checking with each of you as to assistance you as needed, bring clarity as you create assessments for your first module, and how you will engage the learners. Just grab me if you have a question or need assistance before, I get to you to talk.

Slide 53



Reflections and feedback for 15 minutes…

- During the peer feedback time, you will need to find another partner to discuss:
  - *What are the goals for this module?*
  - *What learning are students supposed to master?*
  - *Do the assessments in the module support the learning mastery?*

Slide 53: With a partner, you will be providing feedback to your partner. During the peer feedback time, you will need to discuss:

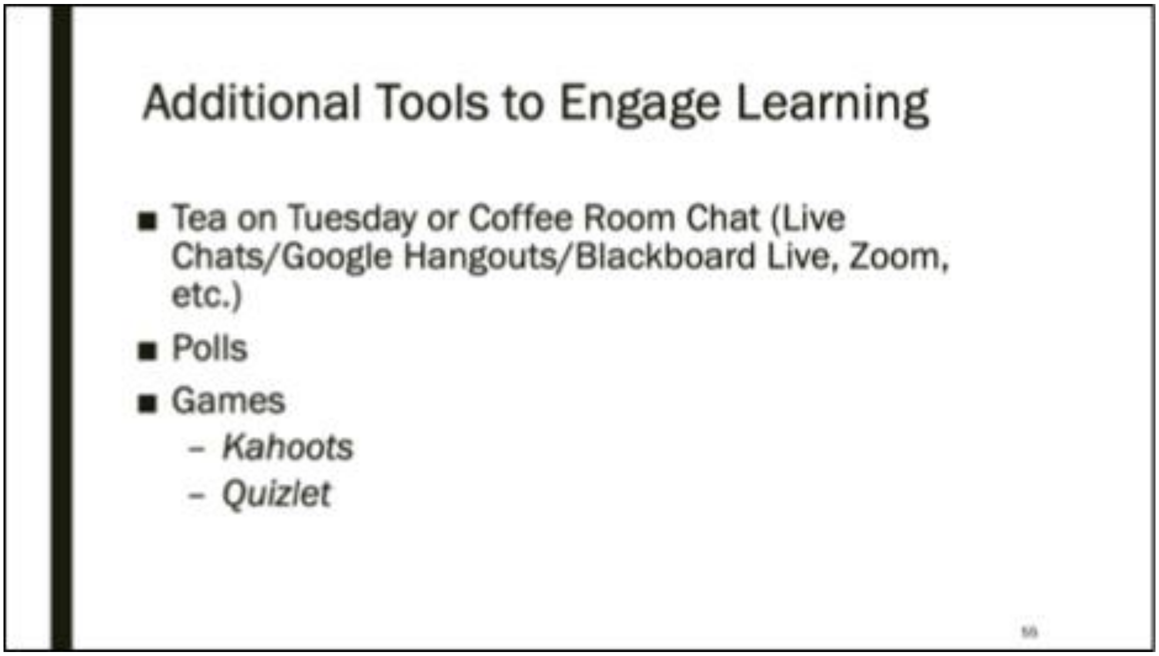
- What are the goals for this module?
- What learning are students supposed to master?
- Do the assessments in the module support the learning mastery?

Slide 54

Break…15 minutes

Slide 54: Break – 15 minutes

Slide 55

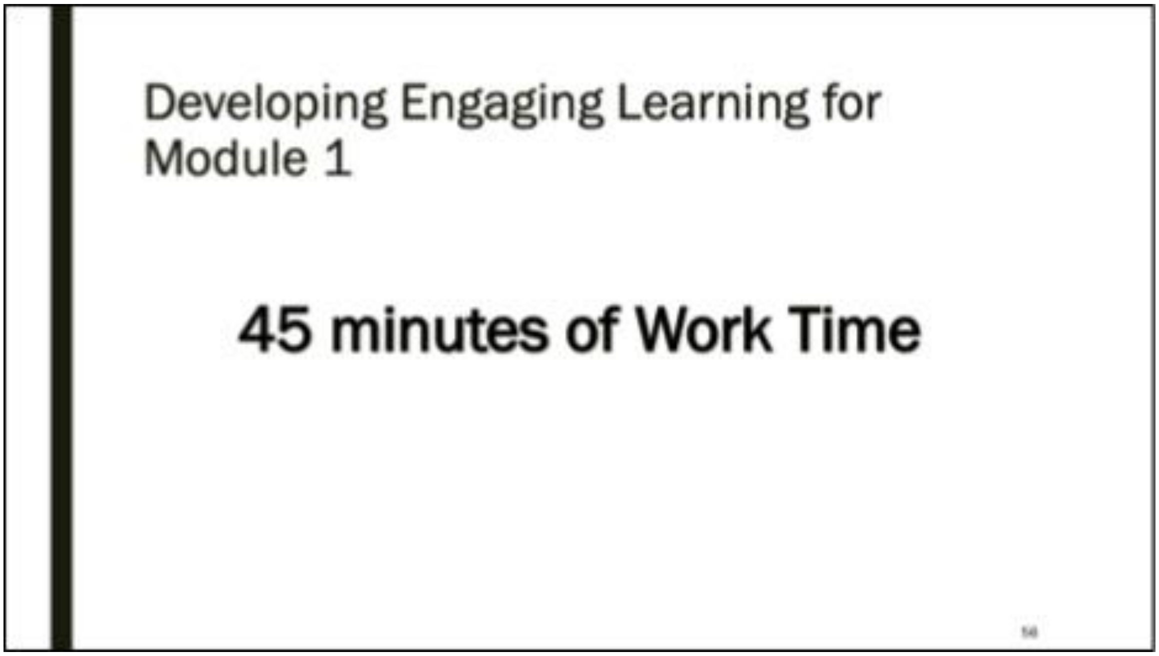


Additional Tools to Engage Learning

- Tea on Tuesday or Coffee Room Chat (Live Chats/Google Hangouts/Blackboard Live, Zoom, etc.)
- Polls
- Games
  - *Kahoots*
  - *Quizlet*

Slide 55: During this section, the emphasis is on engaging the student with other learning activities. Many online faculty incorporate time each week, each module, or a couple of times during the course to have live chat times. Some call them “Tea on Tuesday or Coffee Room Chat”. These learning activities use some type of interactive tool to do chats and/or video meetings. Then you have games and polls that can be set up within the learning activities for students to share thoughts and review their learning. Time will be spent exploring these tools and how to use them.

Slide 56

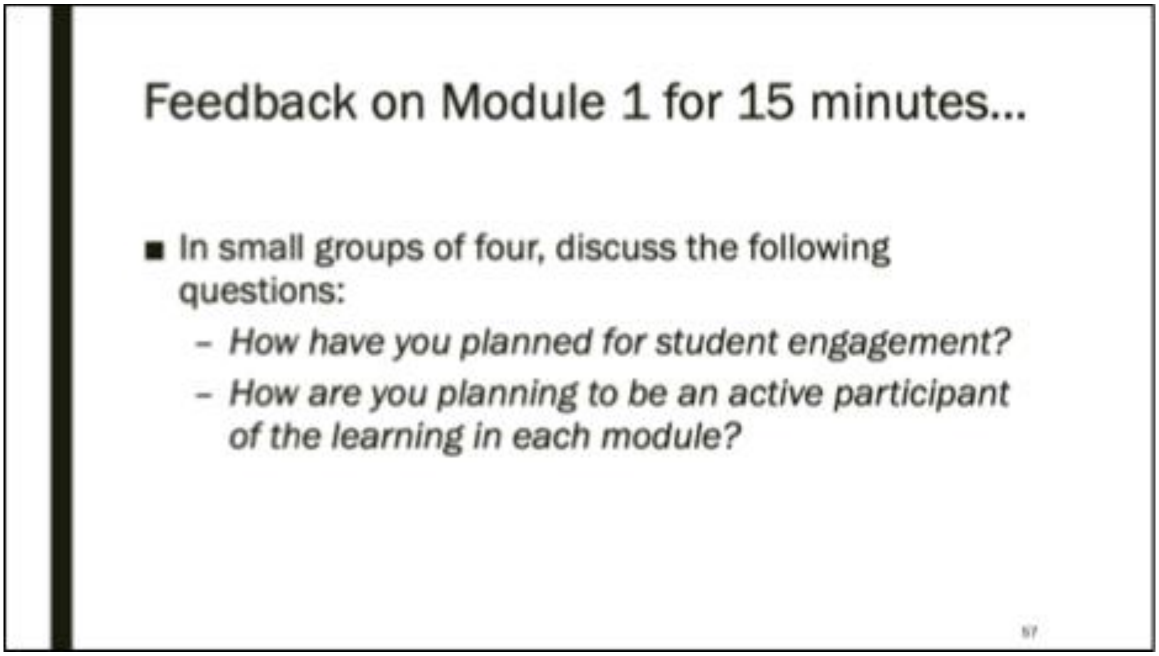


Developing Engaging Learning for Module 1

45 minutes of Work Time

Slide 56: We have discussed some of the different tools to engage students in their learning. As we move into work time, I will be checking with each of you to provide any assistance or clarification you might need. Just grab me if you have a question or need assistance before, I get to you to talk.

Slide57



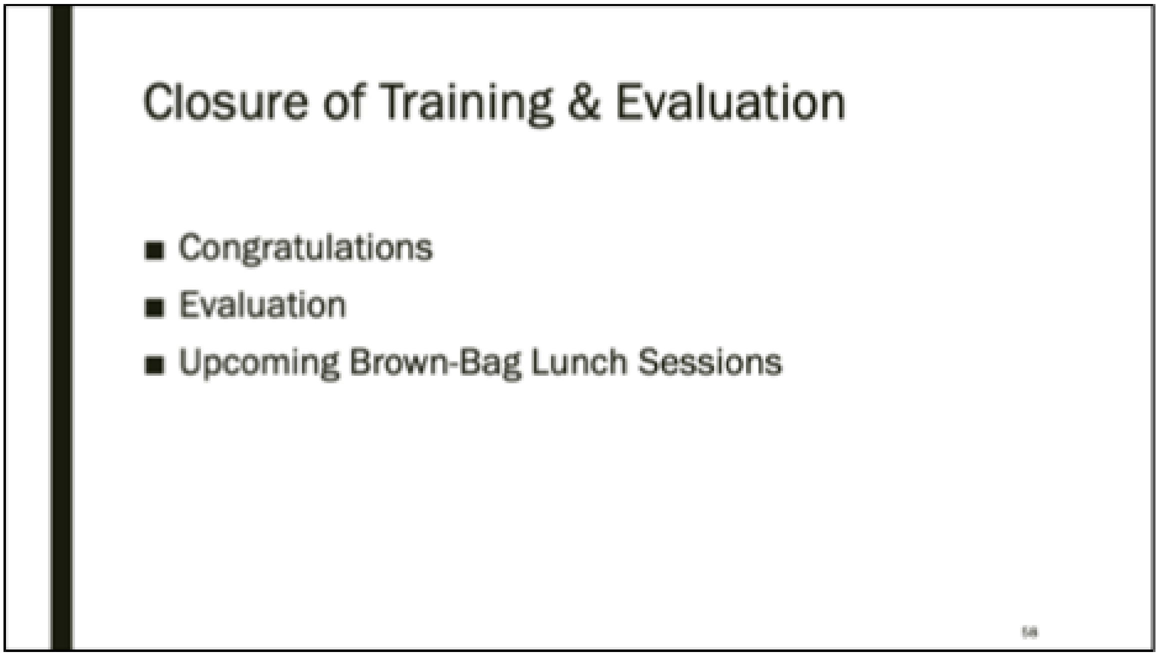
Feedback on Module 1 for 15 minutes...

- In small groups of four, discuss the following questions:
  - *How have you planned for student engagement?*
  - *How are you planning to be an active participant of the learning in each module?*

Slide 57: In small groups of four, discuss the following questions:

- How have you planned for student engagement?
- How are you planning to be an active participant of the learning in each module?

Slide 58

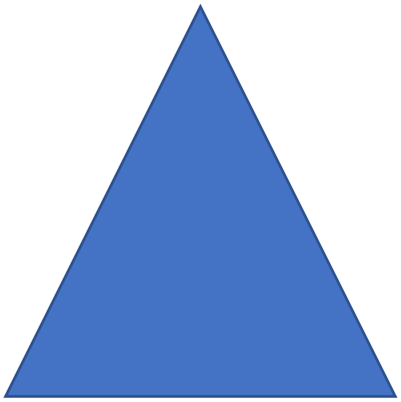


Closure of Training & Evaluation

- Congratulations
- Evaluation
- Upcoming Brown-Bag Lunch Sessions

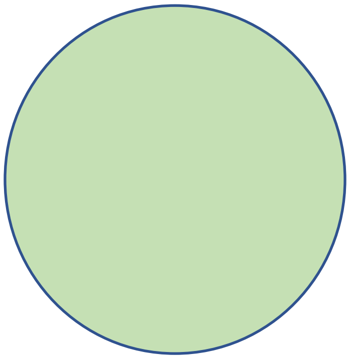
Slide 58: We have now completed our three days of learning about the basics of teaching online. As you continue preparing your course, there will be brown-bag lunch sessions offered each week on different topics. In addition, I will be available to meet with you one-on-one as you encounter questions, concerns, and technical issues. As we conclude, I need your assistance by completing an evaluation to help guide the revision of this 3-day workshop and the brown-bag lunch sessions.

Developing Engaging Online Courses
Exit Ticket



Three things that you feel comfortable about from today’s training:

1. ____
   ____
2. ____
   ____
3. ____
   ____



What is still circling in your mind about which you need clarification or additional support?

____

____

Developing Engaging Online Courses Evaluation

1 = unsatisfied 2 = satisfied 3 = neutral 4 = agree 5 = strongly agree

The workshop was informative.

1 2 3 4 5

The workshop assisted with gaining knowledge to develop an engaging online course.
1 2 3 4 5

I learned information and concepts that will assist me as I transition to teach online courses.

1 2 3 4 5

I learned instructional tools that can be incorporated into online courses.

1 2 3 4 5

I would recommend the workshop to my colleagues.

1 2 3 4 5

Topics for a Brown-Bag Lunch Workshop ________________________________
____

Suggestions for improvement ____
____

Additional Comments ____
____

Follow-Up Evaluation

Since you participated in the training workshop to assist you with developing your online course and have now taught that course, your feedback is needed to help guide future trainings for other faculty members.

1. As you reflect on the 3-day training and teaching your online course you developed are there any skills, topics, or content that needs to be modified, removed, or added to the training to better prepare others in transitioning to teach online?

2. What advice would you like to share with another faculty as they transition to teach online?

3. As you continue to teach online, what are some topics that you would like training developed to support your professional learning and pedagogy?

Appendix B: Interview Protocol

Higher Education Faculty Training for the Online Environment

Time of Interview:
Date:
Place:
Interviewer:
Interviewee:
Position of Interviewee:

The participants for the study will be faculty from the local university. There will be 6-9 participants interviewed. Participants will be selected based on three criteria. I plan to interview one or more faculty from each of the following three categories: (a) those who have never taught online, (b) those who have taught less than 2-years online, (c) those who have taught over 2-years online. To understand the perceptions of the faculty at the local university, this study will focus on gaining insight into the online pedagogy training needs as faculty transition to teaching online coursework.

[Have the interviewee read and sign the consent form that was sent through email. Turn on the audio recorder and test the machine.]

Interviewer: I want to thank you for volunteering to participate in this research study. I am recording the interview today for transcribing and analysis purpose. Do I have your permission to record our interview? In addition to recording, I will be taking notes in my journal to record my observations and thoughts. If at any time you want to stop the interview, please let me know. You have the right to remove yourself from the study at any point simply by letting me know. Are you ready to begin? Please state your name your position.

Research and Interview Questions:

Background Interview Questions:

- How long have you been teaching face-to-face?
- How long have you taught online or hybrid?
- What is your background with online courses?
- What is your personal philosophy about online education?
- What is your responsibility as an online instructor in student success?

Research Question 1: What are the faculty members perceptions of their needs as they transition to teaching online?

Interview Questions:

- What is your perception of online courses?
- What is your attitude about teaching online courses?
- What do you feel are your biggest concerns and barriers to teaching online?
- What do you consider your unmet needs as you teach online?

Research Question 2: What resources did faculty use to support themselves as they transitioned to teaching online?

Interview Questions:

- What training did you receive here at the university as you began to teach online?
- Do you feel the training was adequate to prepare you to teach an engaging and high-quality online course?
- What training and support do you wish you had received as you began to teach online?
- What other resources did you use in your transition to teach online?

Interviewer: This concludes my interview questions. Is there anything else you would like to add to this interview or clarify? I want to thank you for your time today. I will be transcribing this interview within the next three days. At that time, I will send you a copy of the document for your approval.