ABSN and ORBIS Partners in Providing Online Instruction

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Author Note

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Abstract

Partnering with an outside agency to deliver online education became a reality at Roseman University in 2010. The College of Nursing (CON) initiated an online Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing (ABSN) curriculum in cooperation with Orbis Education. The university partnership with Orbis Education offered a unique way to teach online. Instead of developing an in-house course management system or purchasing a license Roseman decided to collaborate with Orbis for the course management system (Herrman, 2008). Orbis Education provides infrastructure development for online education, instructional designers, computer programmers and other support to deliver online education. In addition to technical support, Orbis Education manages the online learning management system ANGEL that is used for course delivery.
ABSN and ORBIS: Partners in Providing Online Instruction

ABSN students first day of online class was October 5, 2010. All twenty-seven students were automatically enrolled in the Library Course. A face-to-face orientation by ORBIS, nursing faculty and the reference and instruction librarian was conducted in October 2010. During this orientation the librarian introduced the Library Course and explained the module structure briefly. For five of the six modules pre-tests and post-tests were created to evaluate student learning. The pre-tests and post-tests developed for these modules were not assessed for validity and reliability, generalizing any results may not be appropriate for other populations (Jacobs, Rosenfeld, & Haber, 2003). Data was collected on pre-test and post-test items from October – February for the first cohort of ABSN students. Keeping track of submissions was challenging Schulte (2008) stated similar concerns:

Tracking data submissions for an integrated online research course proved challenging due to the online environment offered. Our university was using Blackboard for our online course, however quizzes and tests loaded into the course were not entered correctly in the grade center and this skewed the collection of data.

ANGEL tracks the number of accesses to modules and elements within those modules. ANGEL also tracks the number of submissions for pre-tests and post-tests. An overview of total access to the library course was gathered to determine how often modules were assessed. Between October, 2010 and February, 2011 there were 275 accesses this also includes submissions of learning activities and pre-test and post-test accesses.

Method

Developing Captivate lectures for an e-learning course differs significant from developing short instructional tutorials. Creating a full library course required creating lecture
content to mirror what students receive in the classroom. Thus, all lecture content delivered in face to face teaching had to be converted to voice for online delivery. In 2009, Schutt and Hightower recommended that shortened lectures capture and maintain the attention of adult learners. Therefore each PowerPoint Captivate lecture in the course did not exceed thirty-minutes in recorded time. In addition to recording PowerPoint lectures, recordings of website demonstrations were also made for several of the modules.

Participants

Twenty-seven baccalaureate students were enrolled in the initial ABSN initial cohort. All enrolled students had previous higher education experience and had earned bachelor degrees in fields ranging from art and design to occupational therapy. The accelerated nature of the program was highly suitable to these already accomplished student scholars.

Procedure

Students were assigned to the Library Course and there was no control group. Each student was assessed on their participation in the Library Course modules. Students were provided with an informed consent handout created by the Librarian with approval from the Institutional Review Board of Roseman University. Students did not receive compensation for their completion of activities in the Library Course.

Discussion

Overall the experience of creating and developing an online library course was informative, and eye opening. Working with an outside vendor to create an online course offered challenges and an opportunity to learn new software and exposure to a new learning management system. Several of the key challenges of this project have been mentioned throughout the paper. For now no firm conclusions can point to why there was such low participation with learning activities. The Library Course is available and
fully integrated in the online environment however content for the course not included in any assessment within the CON curriculum. Konieczny (2010) discussed the concept of student buy-in, low student participation in this study points to the idea that ultimately, students may be asking what is in it for them. In other words if material covered in the Library Course will not appear on exam little attention maybe given to the content as evidenced by the low numbers of learning activity submissions and pre-test and post test scores. Further consideration with CON integrating library course test questions on student assessments to correspond with blocks is the final recommendation.
References


