Teaching Online Courses: Faculty Experiences

by

Radha Ganesan
IDD&E, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY  13244 USA, rganesan@syr.edu

Today, the Internet is a part of a new educational culture with its own unique characteristics. Online education is attempting to fill a niche in the changing nature of education around the globe specifically in the area of higher education. Consequently, many traditional educators are either considering or making the transition to the online medium. Educators are coming under increasing pressure to adapt their teaching to accommodate the new technologies.

This study focuses on a single, but arguably the most important area – teaching via the Internet. Towards this focus, faculty members from various universities and departments were interviewed to look at the many different ways the Internet is being used for teaching, and faculty experiences in that regard. The lessons they have learned over the years provide valuable insight into new, more effective ways of teaching students in the online environment. The term ‘Online teaching’ here means teaching and learning that takes place over a computer network of some kind (e.g. an Intranet or the Internet) in which interaction between people is an important form of support for the learning process (Goodyear, et. al. 2001).

This study is an investigation of the perceptions of higher education instructors about teaching courses via the Internet. Qualitative methodology was used to determine issues important from the perspective of the participants (Bogdan & Biklen 1992). Analysis was conducted using the grounded theory methodology, also referred to as constant-comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Through this study, several themes emerged - Time, Instructional tools, and student-faculty relations. The findings and possible implications in teaching will be presented at the Conference.

References


