Building an Online Tutoring Program: A Blueprint for Success

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Many administrative decision-makers in higher education must deal with the results of the ongoing proliferation of instructional technology systems at their institutions. The result of this dynamic technological climate and the demands of “education consumers,” and the job market, is that these administrative decision-makers fall into the uncertain trap of needing to approve the expenditure of tens, perhaps hundreds, of thousands of dollars on equipment and services they may know little or nothing about. These people need accurate and useful information in order to make sound decisions. In the case of online tutoring they need at least a basic understanding of the hardware, software, delivery systems, costs, personnel, and the myriad of other items required to develop and operate such a program.

The reliability of information upon which this understanding is based is critical. It may well determine the eventual success or failure of their program. Administrative decision-makers are often faced with the prospect of having to rely upon inexperienced peers and over-eager sales people for advice and guidance when making decisions about instructional technology implementation. If this is the case, they ask, where can they get the reliable information they need to make these important decisions? Fortunately, there are other accessible sources they can use to gather needed information. These include the Internet, articles containing the recorded trials and errors of other institutions of higher education, paid consultants, workshops, and presentations like this. What is extremely valuable and useful is an understanding of the process of conceiving, developing, and operating an online tutoring program, a blueprint for success, if you will. The presenters use the examination of this process as a catalyst for thought and discussion on the topic and a means of providing education administrators and decision-makers with some insight and information that will help them better understand the issue when they are required to make decisions related to implementing online tutoring programs at their institutions.

This presentation provides a glossary of many of the terms, and an outline of the needs and activities required to plan, develop, and operate an online tutoring program. While it is not complete in every detail, it provides decision-makers with a starting point and enough information to ask intelligent questions. First, we will examine the shift from the elite to the universal system of higher education in America. Next, we will examine the role and definition of technology within higher education and how its dynamic nature has given rise to the popularity of online instruction. Then, we will examine how the development of online courses led to the addition of online tutoring. Next, we will examine the reasons it is important that administrators and decision makers within higher education need to understand basic needs of an online tutoring program before implementing their own. Finally, we will outline the major steps involved in conceiving, developing, and operating an online tutoring program.
ABOUT THE PRESENTERS

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