Title: Course Creation and Faculty Training for Online Delivery

Abstract: Training faculty to teach online is paramount for the success of any Distance Learning Program. In this paper the author will present best practices in faculty training and course design in the Distance Learning Programs at Goucher College. The practices are drawn from the author’s own research and from the Quality Matters Guidelines. The vision for training faculty is discussed and the process of course design is introduced. Earlier practices and why they were introduced are evaluated and a reason for the change in model is highlighted.

Vision for training faculty at Goucher:
Training faculty to teach online is paramount for the success of any online program, therefore it is needed to:
1. Empower faculty to create and deliver their own courses online
2. Train faculty in online best practices
3. Create courses that are consistent in layout and design for student optimum performance
4. Create high quality courses for online delivery
5. Rely on best practices and guidelines derived from our own research and from Quality Matters in course creation and faculty training

Earlier Practices:
The Distance Learning Team at Goucher operated from its inception on the premise that faculty members need to be empowered in the creation, design, and delivery of their courses online. We created a series of training courses that will guide the faculty through the course design, management, and pedagogy. The training included:
1. Introduction to Blackboard (the LMS at Goucher): In this course the faculty learned how to use the basic features of the LMS.
2. Advanced Online Instruction: In this course the faculty members were introduced to advanced features of Blackboard and all its building blocks, as well as any other software or hypermedia that was available and crucial to the success of their course. We also introduced tools for creating lectures through PowerPoint / Impatica, Captivate, or the Wimba Presenter available as a building block in the LMS.
3. Pedagogy & Management of Online Instruction: In this course the faculty members were guided through the course design, including activities, group work, projects and Learning Objects. They were also guided through the best practices of course management and feedback.

Very few of our faculty completed the program due to time constraints and fear of the technology. We were forced to work one on one with each member, creating the course for them, while they supplied the content and the appropriateness of any activity chosen. We also designed the courses and uploaded the content to the system.
Results:
The Distance Learning Team realized that the technology involved and course creation and training was overwhelming and time consuming to our faculty, many of whom are adjunct. This prompted us to change our vision from total empowerment of faculty to assistance and guidance in the process.

Current Practices:
In this presentation I will outline our latest venture in online training and course design.
1. A team was established for course design and faculty training.
2. Members of the team include an Instructional Designer, the Distance Learning Director, the faculty member, 2 technologists, a member from Information Technology and the Director of the Program.
3. The training courses were modified to fit the faculty needs. The pedagogy principles and course management are highlighted and the use of the needed technology to manage the course is introduced. The design and content of the training course will be briefly discussed.
4. The team creates, designs, and uploads courses with faculty input. We will discuss the duties of each of the team members and present the Instructional Design Model followed, as well as best practices in e-learning applied at Goucher.
5. A mentor from the team will shadow each faculty member the first time he/she teaches online and as needed thereafter.

The results be discussed and evaluation of the new model presented. With this model we ensured quality of courses, alleviated the burden from faculty members of having to create the course from scratch and ensured consistency in course layout and design in order to facilitate student learning.