

Online venue transformation

Literature, Russian Literature



Online Venue Transformation The purpose of this paper is to provide a case regarding the issues surrounding the transformation of traditional room based courses to the online environment. As a second point, this paper will cover some strategies regarding the implementation of online components to a traditional classroom setting. The format that this paper will utilize is to first provide a discussion on the wide possibility of e-learning strategies and issues surrounding transformation, followed by a discussion of some of the weaknesses and strengths of the e-learning environment. After this point possible implementation strategies will be covered. Without question the learning environment of today is vastly different from that of previous years. The use of new technologies such as computers and the internet effectively creates increased access for many people to more academic resources. Through the usage of E-learning the higher education process means that people that previously unable to attend classroom lectures are now able to get a quality higher education on their own terms. People with careers or perhaps part time parents are now able to access educational instruction on their terms. E-learning can be a complicated subject to analyze insofar as there is a wide spectrum of possible ways to transform a classroom into an e-learning environment. On one end of the scale there is (more or less) the same classroom instruction but can be supplemented through the incorporation some e-learning mechanisms. Some examples of these e-learning mechanisms would be twitter, online academic journals, collaborative efforts on assignments through wiki's, online discussions etc. On the other end of the spectrum comes a full e-learning environment in which student's sole academic experience for a course comes through online

output. The first issue that arises is finding the right fit to accommodate the needs of the particular classroom content. However according to Nichols & Anderson (2005) there is no 'perfect' approach because of the plethora of learning tools and expected outcomes. According to Sanchez (2009) through the use of 'Second Life' (A program in which users create Avatars and are free to interact with other users through client programs) was put to good use to help with collaborative assignments. However two major difficulties arose from this program which were steep learning curves and interface difficulty. In regards to steep learning curves, many people simply are not familiar with this style of learning and as such it will be difficult for them to make the adaptation to this process as it is so unfamiliar. In regards to interface difficulty it may simply be the case that the content may be abstract to some users and this carries with it certain hindrances. It could also be argued that some additional weaknesses are that some students simply do not work well in a self directed (unstructured) environment. Moreover it could be argued that exclusive e-learning may allow for the opportunity for plagiarism. Without, physical interaction between educators and students it may be that whole courses or even degrees could be farmed out to professional students. In regards to strengths to e-learning environment is according to the New York Times (2009) students who gain information online tend to perform better than those receiving a traditional instruction. With a range of possibilities for delivering online classroom content it can be that a mix is struck that ultimately best accommodates the unique learning characteristics of an individual. In terms of implementation strategies Nichols & Anderson (2005) highlight that the first consideration for

implementing an e-learning strategy is to consider effective coordination of e-learning activities. By performing a thorough analysis of what the expected learning outcomes are and contrasting that with how the students will effectively reach these outcomes, educators are better prepared to handle any mishaps that might occur, and identify any possible educational shortcomings. By coordinating efforts between software developers, professors/instructors, admin, services, quality assessment groups and the student information system (library, CD ROM etc.) the overall process becomes much less 'disjointed'. From this perspective all strategies should be implemented wisely (Based on sound educational theory) and should be flexible through allowing for adding new opportunities. A final point that should be highlighted by Nichols & Anderson (2005) is the difference between core and custom implementation strategies. Core strategies incorporate four factors which are effective course design (Learner focused and utilizes appropriate group size and accommodates different learning styles), effective virtual Student (Has access to appropriate technology and is flexible), effective online facilitation (Which is carried out in an honest and respectful manner) and effective student support (Which offers advising and appropriate student services). Any custom strategy would incorporate a factor that is not listed in the core strategy. In conclusion, it is the case that e-learning is here to stay, it is just question of ensuring that the course is designed appropriately enough to best accommodate the students needs to achieve the desired course outcomes. References New York Times (2009) Study Finds That Online Education Beats the Classroom. Business-Innovation-Technology-Society. [online] Available at <http://bits.blogs>.

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