

Chapter 41

Professional Development Course for Online Teaching and the Production and Use of Instructor–Produced Video

Neal Shambaugh

West Virginia University, USA

ABSTRACT

This chapter outlines how online professional development can assist higher education faculty in their move from F2F teaching to online instruction. The use of instructor-produced video is proposed as the major instructional approach for online teaching. To support this teaching approach, an online professional development course is described using six modules: challenges of teaching online, course design decisions using systematic re-examination of course learning outcomes and pedagogy, video production skill-building, and how to teach online with instructor-produced video. The course can be delivered asynchronously but requires expert feedback of course design decisions, module structure, and video production and use. A hybrid approach is suggested scheduled across a 5-day week. In F2F morning sessions, participants examine online course teaching decisions and screencast product use, while afternoon sessions are devoted to course modules and video production. Recommendations for administrators, support staff, and faculty are provided. Research questions are suggested.

INTRODUCTION

College instructors are increasingly faced with moving from teaching face-to-face (F2F) to an online environment, usually through a course management system (CMS). The use of instructor-produced video is suggested as one way to deliver the content within a CMS, a means that provides customized and personalized instruction for content but also media that supports marketing, orientation, formative assessment, and course closure purposes. The chapter provides a design for a hybrid online professional

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-7998-8047-9.ch041

development course with instructor feedback on how to produce and use instructional video in online courses. Instructional design prompts are used to re-examine assumptions behind course teaching decisions.

This section briefly issues behind online higher education PD in higher education and the use of video for instruction. The chapter describes six online PD modules to be delivered within an institution's CMS. An introductory module briefs participants on the online course and their responsibilities. Module 1 summarizes the challenges faced by instructors who have little or no experience teaching online. The module discusses opportunities provided by the use of video in online settings; in particular, re-examining learning outcomes, the nature of content, the range of students, and the contextual realities of the learning setting. Module 2 addresses key instructional design decisions that need to be made before designing and implementing any teaching. Module 3 focuses on participants producing video using a screencast product to record video and audio, video editing, and post-production. Module 4 discusses how to use self-produced videos in both blended and online courses. Module 5 suggests features for sustained professional development beyond this online course. The chapter concludes with suggestions for administrators, staff, and instructors who will be taking the course. Research opportunities are suggested.

Online Professional Development

The research on professional development (PD) indicates that isolated workshops often fail to deliver their intended changes in teaching for both public school and higher education institutions (Borko, 2004). Technology use in teaching frequently focuses on the technology, which is easier to deliver than the re-examination of teaching for appropriate use of the technology. Online professional development for higher education instructors has involved courses, webinars, and online resources, such as links, books, and video clips. Typically, online deliveries of PD, such as those found on commercial textbook-supported sites or disciplinary groups, have involved asynchronous, self-paced delivery for individuals or group use. Online PD for public school teachers is commonplace but varies considerably across school districts and counties, depending on whatever initiative or innovation is in vogue at the time. Online PD offerings from universities for public school teachers may provide some benefit owing to the closer relationships teachers may have with credential programs offered by universities (Kurshan, 2015). At all educational levels, PD needs to be long-term, made a part of the expectations for teaching, and supported by administrators (Mintzberg, 2004). Furthermore, most educational settings lack a PD agenda that systematically reports details for its design, implementation, and evaluation, including information on participants, setting, research questions or purposes/goals, and any research or program evaluation plan (Dede, Jass Ketelhut, Whitehouse, Breit, & McCloskey, 2009). What is needed is a documented commitment by instructors, staff, faculty, and administrators to life-long learning and long-term collaboratively-developed professional development plans (Adams Becker, Cummins, Davis, Freeman, Hall Giesinger, & Ananthanarayanan, 2017). A commitment to ongoing collaborative learning improves the ability to scale up PD offerings to a larger audience.

Online PD is relatively new for college instructors. This delivery approach provides college program administrators with low-cost support for targeted groups. F2F workshops on technology-topics are typically used in short, less than a week long, periods shortly after completing a semester when faculty are still on contract. The use of a blended approach to online professional development has been recommended by Vaughan and Garrison (2006) to obtaining the benefits of F2F attention and engaging in online discussions on the practices of teaching in higher education settings.

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