Back to the Future

Lessons Learned in Online Course Development

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Background

- Jace Hargis presented a pre-conference workshop to the 2010 Council meeting entitled "Possibilities for Effective Teaching Online."
- Concurrently, Saint Xavier University received funding from the U.S. Department of Education, Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), # P116V090020:
  
  Project BEST: Bilingual English-Spanish Training for Speech-Language Pathology

Benchmark

January, 2012, the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders at SXU offers CSDIG 595 in trial mode – five students are enrolled, four as audits, one for graduate credit – as part of the build/refine process.

Project BEST Purpose

To create a 2-semester hour graduate course suitable for delivery to three groups of learners.

1. Resident students at Saint Xavier University (SXU),
2. Students enrolled at other institutions that may lack local resources for service provision to bilingual children, and
3. School-based professionals wishing to broaden their knowledge and skills in bilingual practice.

Agenda for Today

- Summarize steps in BEST course development.
- Identify challenges in course development.
- List lessons learned.

YWBATs

Based on the experiences of the BTTF Crew, you will be able to...

- Identify critical and not so critical design issues for online and blended courses.
- List tools worth consideration and otherwise.
- Describe skill sets needed to design, mount and test online courses.
- Identify likely problems and fall-back options.
Meta-analysis of Online Learning Studies

Abstract: A systematic search of the research literature from 1996 - 2008 identified more than a thousand empirical studies of online learning. The meta-analysis found that, on average, students in online learning conditions performed better than those receiving face-to-face instruction.


Follow the Leaders
1. Be present in the course.
2. Create a supportive online learning environment.
3. Set expectations of communication and level of effort.
4. Offer individual and group experiences.
5. Engage learners through synchronous and asynchronous activities.

Implications for Online Course Development
- Hybrid classes achieved even better results than purely online classes.
- Higher rates of achievement in learning when online classes were “collaborative or instructor-directed” rather than those that required independent learning.
- Online learning appears to be effective for several learner types and for varied discipline content.

Implications for Online Course Development
- Curriculum materials and instructional approaches had measureable impact on student achievement. Variations in materials and approaches impacted student achievement.
- Inclusion of elements such as videos or online quizzes did not typically impact student learning.
- Student self-control over “interactions with media” and opportunities for learner reflection enhance student achievement.


Follow the Leaders
6. Ask for feedback early and often.
7. Invite discussion and reflection.
8. Assure that resources are accessible to all learners.
9. Build on existing knowledge and move to next level.

Preliminary Considerations

- Contract with nationally recognized experts in bilingual (Spanish) service provision (Kayser, Langdon, Gildersleeve-Neumann) based on their longevity and history of contributions
- Brainstorm ideas for a course – at an appropriate level (What are the goals? What are the desired outcomes? What are the prerequisites?)

Course Goals

- Differentiate subgroups of Hispanics within the United States based on educational background, health, population demographics, economic status and English proficiency.

Stages of BEST

- Begin with a specific time window.
- Develop content in consultation with nationally recognized experts.
- Build on an evidence-based platform with regard to online learning.
- Use the most current technology, recognizing that it is likely to be modified across time.
- Employ contemporary methods of measurement to assure exemplary quality control.

Course Goals

- Discuss knowledge of Spanish phonological development and skill in speech assessment with children from Spanish speaking backgrounds.
- Compare various approaches to assessment of communication skills of bilingual children.
- Describe and discuss intervention techniques applicable to children learning a second language.
- Summarize "messages from the field" with frank discussions of the current realities of service provision to bilingual children.

Our Authors

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Course Structure: Modules
1. Exploring the Course
2. Hispanic Background and Culture
3. Speech and Language Development in Spanish Speaking children
4. Spanish Phonology and Speech Development
5. Assessment of Communication Disorders
6. Intervention – Current Best Practices
7. Workplace Issues

Course Structure: Units
Module 2: Hispanic Background and Culture
Unit 1: Hispanic / Latino Populations in the U.S.
Unit 2: Culture and Socialization
Unit 3: Language and Bilingualism

BEST Course Build

Pedagogy Plan
- Module & Unit structure
- Module-level introduction
- Module-level preliminary survey
- Unit-level learning objects
  - Presentations
  - Readings and supplemental sources

Pedagogy Plan – Cont.
- Unit-level instructional objectives
  - Real verbs
  - Capable of measurement

Pedagogy Plan – Cont.
- Unit-level self-check quizzes
- Unit-level learning activities
- Rubrics for assessment
- Unit-level references & links
- Module-level reflective survey
Pedagogy Meta Goals

- Engagement: students stay on task.
- Effectiveness: learning happens.
- Efficiency: time and other resources are conserved.
- Efficacy: unintended consequences are limited.

Content Sample

- The following screen shots illustrate course content.
- Modules are introduced with short audios.
- Power point presentations are narrated and available to students as note taker PDF downloads.
- Several Modules contain resources which include additional power point-based activities, MP3 audio files, and video files.
Looking Forward

✦ SimuCase Applications
✦ Course revision plans
 ✦ 2 SH version
 ✦ 3 SH version

Looking Back . . .

Fickle Tech

✦ Your Internet connection will sometime fail—
 ✦ In the middle of an upload.
 ✦ During the last week of the semester.
 ✦ When your students really need that link.
 ✦ When the dog eats your mouse.
 ✦ During sunspots.
Fickle Tech

- The perversity of diversity—
  - Not all browsers are created equal.
  - “It’s compatible” often means “We didn’t test it.”
  - Technology sometimes hits brick walls.

So read the handout

References