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Learning to Teach by Being a Student

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Abstract

Centers for teaching and learning all face the same dilemma: In a context where faculty are not required to partake in our services, how do we provide transformative learning experiences to which faculty willingly give their limited time? The answer, Maria B. Hopkins and Rachel Bailey Jones propose, is to move away from a workshop model of faculty development and toward a model that supports the kinds of connections among faculty that lead to self-sustaining growth and development. This edited book provides a breadth of innovative alternatives to fixed-schedule faculty development workshops that faculty are rarely attending due to the increasing complexity of their professional lives. The audience for this book is higher education administrators, faculty, and staff responsible for faculty development related to teaching and learning. Each chapter provides a detailed description of a faculty development initiative in practice that provide opportunities for creativity, adaptability, and collaboration among faculty. Public, private, and community colleges, small and large, research-focused and teaching-focused institutions are represented. The editors have taken on this project because this is the resource they wish they had when they began their work as directors of the teaching lab at their institution.

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Comments

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Learning to Teach by Being a Student

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For many faculty it has been a number of years since they have been in a student role taking a course for credit. When most faculty look back on their own educational experiences, they do not see visions of computers on every desk, cell phones in every pocket or interactive whiteboards on every wall. It goes without saying that the classroom of today looks and feels very different than the classrooms many faculty frequented during their own educational journey. Classes offered online through the web may not have even been a possibility at the time faculty completed their degrees, and if it was possible, very few faculty have taken a course of this kind as a student. In the 2018 Survey of Faculty Attitudes on Technology conducted by Inside Higher Education, only 31% of all faculty respondents report having taken an online course as student, while an even smaller number of tenured faculty, 19%, report doing so (Jaschik & Lederman, 2018). It is understandable that faculty may show resistance to the incorporation of new technology into their classrooms as a response to

a lack of exposure to these types of teaching strategies and learning environments.

While incorporating technology into a physical classroom course may be a momentous change for some faculty, the idea of teaching a course fully online without any face to face interaction with students is something that can be even more difficult for many faculty to visualize in any tangible way. As seen with the mere-exposure effect (Zajonc, 2001), the phenomenon of showing preference for one option over another purely based on prior experience with that option, it follows that faculty would be inclined towards an educational setting that is more familiar to them and one in which they themselves have experienced success throughout their own educational career. If it worked for them and led them to the esteemed career they have today, why can it not work for their own students? This can be seen in the response on the Inside Higher Education survey that reports only 30% of faculty agree that online courses can produce the same learning outcomes as face to face courses (Jaschik & Lederman, 2018). Perhaps this is the same 30% with prior exposure to online learning? It is impossible to say, but it is clear that the majority of faculty hold strong reservations about the merits of online education.

This resistance to online teaching and learning is typically the result of a lack of confidence in two areas: with the technological tools necessary to create and deliver an online course and in teaching strategies that will be needed to create an engaging learning experience for students at a distance. Within the second area, faculty are often concerned that they will not have the same level of connection with their online students as they are accustomed to having with the students they see in their face to face courses day in and day out (Mitchell, Parlamis, & Claiborne, 2015; Vivolo, 2016). While it is clear faculty maintain a level of resistance to online learning, it is also clear that online learning is on the rise. While overall enrollment of students in higher education across the United States has continually decreased since 2010 (U.S. Department of Education, 2018), online learning enrollments have continually increased over this same period of time, with over one third of all students now taking at least one course online (Seaman, Allen, & Seaman, 2018). In order to assist faculty in the transition to online delivery of their courses, professional development is an essential component. The proper support for faculty during this vital time can make or break the future

success of an online course, and more broadly, an online initiative across an institution.

Professional Development Models

Varied techniques have been implemented by faculty developers, instructional designers, technologists and administration across higher education in order to support faculty in the transition to teaching styles that incorporate educational technologies and encourage more active, learner-centered teaching approaches. Specifically, related to the transition to online teaching, there have been a number of strategies used to help faculty learn to teach in the online environment. One of the longest running programs to offer professional development to faculty new to teaching and learning online is the Online Learning Consortium, formerly the Sloan Consortium, which was started in 1999 (“Our History - OLC”, n.d.). The Online Learning Consortium has offered online, asynchronous training programs for new online instructors and specialty training for instructional designers, those teaching in specific disciplines like science and nursing, and many other topics, over the past two decades. Their model of asynchronous, online professional development is one that many in the field have

modeled their own programs after, including St. John Fisher College, where I serve as an educational technologist. Quality Matters is another leading organization that offers professional development to faculty who teach online. While Quality Matters specializes in the review of online courses to ensure quality design and delivery, they also offer the Teaching Online Certificate as professional development to "enable instructors to demonstrate their knowledge and mastery of online teaching" ("Teaching Online Certificate", n.d.).

Institutions of higher education have deployed a number of other professional development strategies for new online instructors, including face to face workshops, intensive retreat-style training, online self-paced modules, technology focus training, one to one consultation, observation of other online courses, and mentoring (Baran & Correia, 2014; Batts, Pagliari, Mallett, & McFadden, 2010; Kerrick, Miller, & Ziegler, 2015). However, while resources abound, there are still a number of faculty who report receiving no training or support prior to teaching online for the first time. From the Inside Higher Education survey, only 45% of faculty report having received professional development related to the design of an online or hybrid course, while only 25% report having worked with an instructional

designer directly to create or revise an online or hybrid course (Jaschik & Lederman, 2018).

It is clear from the research that proper support for new online instructors improves the overall teaching and learning experience (Kerrick, Miller, & Ziegler, 2015; Chiasson, Terras, & Smart, 2015). It is also clear that faculty need support in a wide variety of topics to be successful in the online environment, not simply the technology training necessary to teach on a new platform (Baran & Correia, 2014; Mitchell, Parlamis, & Claiborne, 2015). Professional development initiatives that solely focus on technological aptitude are missing an opportunity for transformative learning to occur, where a faculty member must begin to question their own assumptions about learning, students, and teaching in an environment where the most basic cornerstones of education that have been present for hundreds of years—classrooms, chairs, podiums—are not present. While this process can be met with resistance, it is also a pivotal opportunity to truly encourage change in a faculty member, a department or program and possibly an entire campus.

Benefits of Internal Professional Development

While the institutional choice to seek training for online faculty outside of their own organization shows a strong commitment to quality online programming, these services do not come at a small price and may not maximize the opportunities available to a faculty willing to begin the transformation process that takes place when moving into online teaching. Many institutions opt to offer professional development services for their own faculty using internal resources. While this still requires resources, both human and technological, internally developed professional development can be directly tailored to the needs of the institution, program, and discipline, and designed to meet the needs of specific groups of faculty within an institution. Internally developed professional development can be designed with the specific technological tools and platforms that will be available to the faculty when they teach online and can build off of previously developed relationships of trust to build confidence in faculty related to their own abilities and their potential to expand their knowledge and skills moving forward. Internal professional development also has the ability to work with faculty over variable timelines, sometimes months, sometimes years, and to partner with the faculty members along their developmental

journey. Internal professional development opportunities have the potential to be so much more than a “one and done” type of learning experience. Successful online teaching is an iterative process and an internal resource can support faculty throughout their journey and continue to help them grow as online educators.

Our Model of Professional Development for Online Instructors

St. John Fisher College, a private, four-year institution in western New York, offers a specialized, internally developed, professional development opportunity for faculty who will be teaching online or hybrid courses at the college. Our model consists of a two-hour, face to face, kick-off workshop titled the “Online Education Workshop,” followed by a four-week, primarily asynchronous, online course experience titled the “Fundamentals of Online Teaching.” The workshop and online course are offered as part one and part two of a highly customized professional development experience. It is intended that a faculty member would complete both parts in the sequence back-to-back.

The specific goals of this unique professional development model include the exposure of each faculty member who will be teaching online to experience a high-quality online learning experience from the student perspective, while modeling for faculty the specific technologies and strategies that will be available to them as they design their own courses in the future. We believe the initial exposure to online learning from a student perspective opens the eyes of faculty to technological literacies, time management skills and self-directed learning that students must possess to be successful online. This in turn allows each faculty to design a more student-centered learning experience from the start. Instead of first focusing on how to move certain content online, which is where faculty often would like to begin, they are forced to step back from their own content and look at the online learning environment through the student's eyes.

The sequence of the workshop and online course are offered three times per year, once during each academic semester fall, spring and summer. An announcement is sent to campus to solicit participation and faculty register for a given cohort that will progress through the training experience as a group. Once a faculty member has completed the entire experience, they are certified to teach online or

hybrid courses at the institution. While it is a requirement for faculty to complete the training prior to teaching an online or hybrid course at the institution, just under half of those faculty who complete the course do so purely out of their own interest and desire for professional development in this area of their teaching and to enhance the teaching techniques they bring to their classroom courses.

Professional Development Grounded in Research

The premise for the design for our professional development initiative is grounded in a number of pedagogical frameworks and learning theories. Our primary design feature, exposing faculty directly to the experience of being an online student, is based on experiential and constructivist learning design (Kolb, 1984). As stated earlier, most faculty have little to no experience with online education from the student perspective. Without exposure to this learning environment, it can be hard for faculty to design their own courses to take full advantage of the modality and in turn can make it difficult for faculty to understand the distinct experiences their online students may encounter in their courses.

In addition, the nature of the cohort model itself creates a strong community of practice, where faculty from a variety of disciplines with a varying amount of technological or online teaching experience come together to share, discuss, explore and evaluate the issues and possibilities related to online education (McDonald & Cater-Steel, 2017). The community of practice model is based on a number of learning theories, including situated learning (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989), where learning occurs through real life experiences and social development theory (Vygotsky, 1978), where learning takes place through interactions with others, which is also fundamental to our design. Our program is also influenced heavily by Vygotsky's (1978) "more knowledgeable other" theory, the idea that the presence of a skillful tutor, or someone with experience and knowledge to share on the topic in which the learner is focused, is key to the learning experience. In this case, both the facilitator of the professional development experience and possibly other members of the cohort can fill the "more knowledgeable other" role by sharing their own personal experience both learning and teaching in the online environment.

Finally, the design of the four-week online course experience is influenced by Bandura's (1977) social learning theory in the way that it models for learners a well-designed and delivered online course experience. Since faculty have little prior experience with online learning environments, there is great potential to influence their first experience with this new learning environment. The online course experience they encounter in this professional development opportunity is one that should open their eyes to the possibilities of teaching and learning online, challenge their preconceived notions and give them a solid base in which to form their own mental model of what a successful online course can look like.

Online Education Workshop

The "Online Education Workshop" is a two-hour face to face workshop that sets the stage for the members of a given cohort on what is to come in the full online course training experience. Since many of the faculty members who enroll in the cohort have very little prior experience with an online learning environment, we find it best to help orient the group through this first session in a familiar setting of a face to face classroom. This may be similar to the type of

orientation experiences we want to expose our own online students to in order to make sure they are as successful as possible in the online courses they are about to begin.

The goals of this workshop include three main items: discussion of online education broadly, discussion of online education specifically at our institution, and a discussion of what is coming next for them in the four-week online course they are about to begin. First, we employ the technique of consciousness raising and dramatic relief, as outlined by Mitchell, Parlamis and Claiborne (2015), by listening to the concerns and fears that faculty have related to online learning and allowing them to share those concerns with others through in-person discussion during the Online Education Workshop and again online through the course introduction activity in the Fundamentals of Online Teaching course. We fully realize that many faculty, though willingly enrolling in the program, come to this session with a number of fears, concerns and reservations about online education. They also have preconceived notions about how online learning works and the roles that faculty and students play in the environment. Listening and acknowledging these feelings and ideas is the first to step to allow faculty to begin to see online learning through a new lens.

Figure 7.1: Here

We use the majority of the time discussing some key themes that make online/hybrid courses unique from traditional face to face courses, including the roles of learners and faculty, the nature of asynchronous and non-linear communication, the basis of communication being the written word, the changes in learning resources, and the adjustments to course assessments to ensure student progress and feedback (Figure 7.1). While some of these items may be obvious, based on the necessary changes that arise when transitioning a course to the online format, others are more nuanced and may be things the faculty have never considered before. The goal of this conversation is not intended to persuade faculty of the benefits of online education, but instead to open the conversation and begin to allow them to challenge some of their own assumptions through an increased awareness of what may be possible in this new environment.

Next, we move into a discussion on how online education works at our institution. This includes a conversation about the types of online courses we offer, the scheduling of those courses and the asynchronous vs. synchronous learning options. We also review the policies and procedures our online instructors are required to follow,

as well as the tools and resources available to our faculty in order to be as successful as possible in this environment. Our last topic to cover in this workshop includes the logistical details of what comes next after the workshop in the fully online four-week training course. Since this experience can be new for many, we review carefully how faculty will access the course, the layout and organization of the content and we discuss expectations for time commitment and the level of participation required. This often becomes an open conversation where faculty feel comfortable to ask questions and address any last concerns they have related to engaging in the online environment.

While one of the key goals of our professional development model includes providing faculty first-hand experience with online learning through the student perspective, we do find this initial face to face meeting to be key to gain buy-in from the faculty, allow them each to voice their concerns and begin the discussion about those ideas and assumptions that may or may not be accurate. Discussing as a group some of the common misconceptions related to online learning can help to move the conversation toward a more open mindset on the possibilities online learning may bring to certain

populations of students and the best practices that can be followed to avoid some of the pitfalls of online learning. As this professional development experience may also be the first time for many faculty taking an online course, the face to face session acts as a mini-orientation to the course experience, the technologies they will be using and the expectations of their engagement online with their classmates and with the instructor. The Online Education Workshop sets the stage and tone for the next steps in the experience for faculty and aims to provide a solid foundation on which they can feel comfortable exploring the world of online learning.

Fundamentals of Online Teaching

Following the Online Education Workshop, usually only a few days later, faculty dive into the fully immersive online course experience of the Fundamentals of Online Teaching. Faculty in this course experience first-hand what it is like to be an online student while completing readings, participating in online discussions and submitting assignments related to the design and delivery of online courses. The format is flexible and encourages participants to explore online education strategies, issues and ideas among an

interdisciplinary group of colleagues, all while being exposed to an exemplary online course experience. Many of the negative connotations associated with online education can arise from ill-designed experiences. In this situation, we hope to expose faculty to a variety of well-designed techniques and allow each to find aspects of the course they can use in their own online course development in the future.

The course focuses primarily on the pedagogical strategies related to online education. It is not intended to be a technology specific training experience, but faculty are exposed to a wide variety of technologies that will be available to them in the offerings of their own online courses so they can better design and plan for what platforms may be the best fit for their discipline and teaching style. We provide an outline of the activities within each of the four weeks, which usually require approximately five to seven hours of work per week in the College's course management system, Blackboard (Table 7.1). While much less than a traditional online course, this is a large amount of time to dedicate to professional development over a four-week period for faculty who are already busy with their everyday teaching, service and scholarship activities.

Table 7.1 Here

Week 1: Getting Started, Introductions and Small Group Activity

During the first week of the online course experience, we model for faculty many of the first week activities they will design for their own courses. We begin with an overview of the course and an orientation to the course requirements. As found in almost all college-level courses, the syllabus provides much of this information. However, we employ some specific strategies in an online course syllabus that we encourage faculty to use in their own courses. First, we create a separate Welcome page to the course to set the right tone for the start of the course and help learners know where to go first to get started. Second, we create a Faculty area, where learners can see a photo, short biography and best ways to contact the instructor of the course. Third, there is a separate section of the course dedicated to the course syllabus. This makes it very easy to find and get back to later in the course when it is not nested within Week one course content. We also specifically organize the syllabus for optimal online viewing. This means designing it for online delivery, which reads almost like an

online book broken into discrete pieces for easy consumption and searchability, while also providing a PDF version for those who would like to make a print copy.

After the learners have worked through these sections, we move on to the Week one content, organized in its own folder. Faculty are then encouraged to participate in a course introduction activity using VoiceThread. This activity models best practice in course introductions for online courses, and shows it is possible to do this type of work in an asynchronous way while still seeing and hearing your students using audio/video technology. This is one of the first eye-opening experiences for faculty as they must post their introduction and view and reply to their colleagues. In many cases faculty reporting learning something new about someone who has worked just down the hall for a number of years.

From this point, faculty move into more traditional course activities: completing course readings, viewing posted videos and synthesizing their ideas in response to a discussion prompt. The first of these discussion activities is organized in a traditional online discussion model using the LMS provided discussion board tool, where each learner is required to post their own original response to

the question, as well as read and reply to others throughout the week. A second discussion activity is also posted, but in this case the learners are broken into small groups and given specific roles to play within their group discussion. For many of our faculty who teach larger class sizes, this models how they might go about handling online discussion by breaking their classes into these smaller groups.

While the organization of the course provides faculty with a model for design, the content of the course, specifically the videos and readings, are also focused on the topic of online course design. In the first week, faculty read about the community of inquiry model (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000), including the many important ways to facilitate instructor presence in the online environment, as well as thoughtful piece titled, "Considerations of Online Course Design" by Creasman (2012). Both of these pieces allow faculty to begin to think more broadly about the advantages the online environment may provide to them and the types of courses they teach. The discussion prompts encourage faculty to post their thoughts about the readings and how they relate to their own teaching styles and what might they be able to adapt for their own course designs. On faculty evaluations following the entire professional development experience,

89% of respondents report that they agree or strongly agree that review of the community of inquiry model and following discussion activity are useful to allow them to begin to think about their own presence in the online environment.

Week 2: Learning Objectives, Asynchronous vs. Synchronous and Time on Task

In the second week of the course faculty begin to explore alternative activities and complete their first individual assignment. Following a reading, each faculty member is asked to post a blog entry including the learning objectives of the course they will be teaching online and how those learning objectives can be met in the online environment. The use of a blog here is intended to show faculty that not all course wide conversation needs to take place in a discussion board. A blog is a useful tool to give each learner the space to share with the class and write about content that they personally take more ownership over, rather than a discussion where no one person owns the conversation any more than another. A blog is an effective tool for showcasing individual work, ideas, or thoughts, but can still be used to solicit feedback or generate conversation.

Next, faculty complete a reading on a study of asynchronous and synchronous learning environments and the best situations to use one over the other (Hrastinski, 2008). Faculty are then asked to assess in which ways they will use each of the communication modalities and why they have selected one over the other. They do this in a discussion, but utilizing a specialized LMS tool where they cannot see the posts of anyone else in the cohort until they have posted their own response. Once they do so, all other messages become visible and they can respond as normal to their colleagues. This activity encourages faculty to think deeply about what types of work they ask their own students to complete asynchronously and synchronously, as these decisions are often not made with student learning in mind, but instead convenience and flexibility. This activity, based on the specific set up of the discussion, also allows faculty to see how they can ensure they are hearing the original thoughts of their students and not just the reiterated thoughts of classmates.

In addition to the interactive work this week, faculty are also asked to complete their first individual assignment, following their own viewing of a mini-lecture posted by the instructor on the topic. This work is done like a homework activity and only shared with the

instructor of the course. Feedback from the instructor is also shared privately with the faculty member. In this work, faculty complete a time on task analysis for the course they will be teaching online. This work allows the faculty to begin to think about the activities that students will do in their online course, how much time they will spend in given area and put together a very rough outline of the entire course from the student perspective. This task encourages faculty to do two things: first, think about the course from the student perspective and where students will be spending their time; and second, think about the total learning time, not just time traditionally spent in class or out of class, since those boundaries no longer exist in the online environment. Faculty often begin this activity with an outline of topics or chapters to cover, but realize quickly that a time on task analysis is a very different type of outline than they may have ever built before. However, once done, this activity is one of the most noted items that faculty find useful and eye-opening as they move forward in the course development process.

Week 3: Activity Planning, Library Module and Exploring Synchronous Learning

In the third week of the course, faculty explore a variety of topics. First, following a number of readings to spark ideas, faculty draft their own interactive activity that they will use in their online course. This can be a discussion activity, blog, interactive VoiceThread conversation, or another tool that they choose to implement in their own course design. It must be an activity where they encourage participation from the whole class, as a whole or in small groups. They provide both the prompt, the goals of the assignment, and the logistical instructions they will share with students. This is a helpful activity for faculty to put to paper their own ideas, but also to see what others have drafted and provide feedback to each other to make the activities even better.

During this week, faculty also engage in what we call the Library Module. This module is intended to model for faculty how they might go about working with their respective librarians and embed library activities into their online courses. The module includes an overview of the services the library offers to online faculty and students, as well as examples of how other faculty have incorporated Librarians and library activities in their courses. This culminates in a discussion activity where faculty can interact directly with our Online

Program Librarian. Based on feedback from two specific cohorts, "over 90% of the faculty indicated the library module was an exemplary model of how an embedded librarian might be involved in the delivery of an online course" (Hillman & Sabourin, 2016).

In addition to these activities, the third week is the time when the only synchronous event takes place. Based on the availability of members of the cohort, a common time is found during this week to meet synchronously using the college's supported web conferencing system. While this is a time to explore the technology, it is also a time to discuss the specific types of activities faculty plan to conduct in their own classes in this format. The meeting often becomes an open conversation and brainstorming session about how the technology can best facilitate the types of interactions that faculty hope to create in the synchronous portions of their own courses.

Week 4: Time Management, Course Reflection and Online Syllabus Design

The fourth and final week of the course includes a variety of activities that aim to pull main topics together and provide some closure to the work faculty have done over the prior weeks. First, faculty view a

video montage from other faculty sharing their thoughts about time management in the online environment, from both a student and faculty perspective. This topic is a major concern early on in the course experience and now that faculty have a number of weeks being an online student themselves, they can comment on their thoughts on the topic, what strategies worked well for them, and what they want to consider in the design of their courses. This conversation among the cohort is facilitated through an online discussion activity.

Faculty are also asked to complete a course reflection blog. They asked to complete two posts in total. First, they outline their top eight takeaways that they want to remember from this course experience. They are told the list should be written to their future self, to be read either months or years from now, when they may not remember every detail of the course. It should focus on the key pieces they want to ensure they do not forget and tips to build into their own online courses in the future. Second, faculty are asked to go back and watch the course introduction video they posted in week one and reflect, now four weeks later, on the comments they made. Many provide comments how their thoughts of online courses have expanded and the possibilities for course activities has become more

concrete for them. Many also comment that if they ever felt online courses were not rigorous, they were sorely mistaken. It often happens that faculty at this point have cultivated a fear of the workload associated with online courses.

Lastly, faculty view a posted mini-lecture on the topic of online syllabi and complete their second individual assignment where they draft key components unique to online syllabi, including an explanation of the course mechanics, online participation policies and guidelines, a description of where students will spend their time in the course, as well as a description of expectations of students and faculty members in the course. These items may or may not appear on a face to face course syllabus, but are essential components of an online course syllabus. These are often items that may be described during the first day of class, but are rarely written down. However, when teaching online we must articulate these logistics and expectations to students in written form and be as clear as possible. This activity is extremely helpful for faculty to get their thoughts on paper and a second set of eyes on the work, through instructor feedback on the assignment, often illuminates where a faculty member can be more concise, clear or organized in their written instructions for students.

Feedback and Results

This professional development experience has been run nineteen times in the last seven years with a total of 236 participants. Of those participants, 83% go on to fully complete all required components of the experience. Following each offering of the professional development experience, cohort members are asked to complete a program evaluation. Faculty rate the overall experience very highly, with 97% responding that they agree or strongly agree that they feel more prepared to design, develop and teach their first online course than they did before completing the course experience. The feedback received also confirms that the goals of this professional development experience are met, including the exposure of faculty to the online student perspective through first-hand experience and the modeling of online education best practices through a well-designed online course experience.

Table 7.2 Here

While the quantitative feedback is reaffirming, the qualitative feedback received on open-ended questions and through comments in the courses themselves, we see faculty reporting first-hand the impact this professional development opportunity has had on them.

Many faculty report the benefits they found by experiencing the course through a student perspective, including a greater appreciation for what challenges online students face both with the technologies necessary to participate in class activities and understanding the expectations of engagement in the online environment. The experience of learning online allows faculty to think about the organization and structure of their online course design from the student perspective. Instead of posting content and resources in a way that is logical to them as experts in the field, faculty can view the course through the eyes of a novice and decide how best to present the material from that viewpoint. Since most of the faculty who complete this professional development experience have prior teaching experience in the classroom, it is important to allow faculty time to think about the similarities and differences of the two learning environments, not in a way to decide which is superior to the other, but instead to take full advantage of the key benefits of each platform. Faculty have reported this experience has allowed them the time to do this comparison. As another faculty stated, “The first-hand experience with an online course was extremely helpful. The varied experiences gave me wide exposure to the potential features of an online course,”

showing that the modeling of best practices is key to the success of this professional development model.

Faculty also report that this course experience allowed them to think differently about their courses, their content and the typical delivery style they commonly use and had a positive impact on their own confidence to use these techniques on their own. As one faculty noted, “This course opened my eyes to all the options for designing my own online course.” And another said, “I feel much more equipped to teach an online course than I did when I started.”

It was also a common comment from faculty that they discovered a new appreciation for the work that is required to design and deliver an online course for the first time. As one faculty mentioned, “Before taking this class, I did think that a lot of online teaching was putting course materials up on [Blackboard] and using the Discussion Board. This class has really opened my eyes to the work that goes into preparation and teaching, as well as all the tools available to make the content meaningful and engaging.”

One unintended, but wonderful outcome from this offering is the amount of faculty who report that what they have learned through this experience is not only something they will use in the development

and delivery of their own online or hybrid courses, but they will also utilize many of the techniques and strategies in their traditional face to face courses as well. As many faculty participate in this professional development experience during an academic semester where they are also teaching face to face courses, it is not uncommon to hear feedback like, “In addition to preparing me for online teaching, I have also gained numerous ideas that I am excited to try out in my non-online courses as well.” As one faculty commented, “Overall, just a good immersion into the world of online education, conventions and best practices.” We feel this experience provides faculty with a solid grounding in the techniques, technologies, and best practice for high-quality online education.

Benefits and Possibilities

The benefits of the professional development experience outlined above are many. The cross-disciplinary nature of the cohorts of faculty who participate in each offering bring the course experience to life in a unique and meaningful way. The asynchronous nature of the design allow faculty to participate and engage in a deeper way than may be possible in a face to face workshop, and the transparency and

online record of conversation allows for the course to become a resource to faculty long after the experience is over.

As stated in our own feedback and results, as well as through the findings of other researchers, one of the main benefits of a professional development experience such as this is not only the increase in quality related specifically to online courses at an institution, but also more broadly to all courses offered by the faculty that complete the full experience. Andrews Graham (2019) reports faculty finding themselves using more learner-centered teaching strategies in their face to face courses following their experiences teaching in the fully online realm. Chiasson, Terras, and Smart (2015) also report this finding, noting "upon reflection, faculty postulated that online teaching made them more efficient and effective teachers, even with their role shifting to facilitator" (p. 237). Findings from the Inside Higher Education survey support this idea as well, as nearly three-quarters of faculty members who have taught online courses (74%), say the experience has taught them skills that have improved their teaching, both online and in the classroom (Jaschik & Lederman, 2018). It is clear from our findings that our faculty have the same opinion following their experiences as an online student in the

"Fundamentals of Online Teaching" course. The experience of being a student again, coupled with the exposure to a well-designed online course and increased awareness of many techniques and technologies available to them, has allowed faculty to reimagine the experience they create in all of their courses for their own students. Though the pretext for the professional development experience is readiness to teach online, everything provided in the training that is available to each faculty member in the delivery of their face to face courses as well. This is just another example of the "spread of effect" (Condon et al., 2016), as the positive outcomes and impacts on faculty and students may reach further than we may ever be able to fully judge.

Faculty development has a changing and expanding role on many college campuses as the types and modalities of courses within higher education grow and the technological landscape expands into every facet of our lives. The type of professional development opportunities created and offered in this changing landscape must also evolve in order to support the needs of faculty and students. As described by Grupp and Little (2019), this puts faculty developers in a unique position to create change at both a micro and macro level, including the change of an individual faculty member and their

courses, a group of faculty members across a program, and possibly at the system level across an entire campus.

Similarly, Schroeder (2011) describes the faculty development role as that of a change agent, one that includes not only individual faculty development and instructional development, but also more broadly organizational development through the support for change and improvement as part of larger campus-wide initiatives. This opportunity, coupled with the ever-decreasing amount of time faculty have to spend on professional development activities, means we must create professional development opportunities that provide flexibility to faculty on when they engage and maximize the value for them to use what they have learned in more than just one potential outlet. The professional development opportunity we provide to our faculty meets both of these objectives, by allowing faculty the flexibility afforded through online, asynchronous learning and the exposure to teaching strategies and technologies that are applicable to both their online and face to face courses. We have also encouraged faculty to rethink the learning experiences they create by taking them back into the student role, which can be a refreshing reminder for those who may be long removed from that experience. It is the combination of all of these

design features that have created a successful professional development program that continues to draw attention and recognition from our faculty and the College as a whole.

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Figure 7.1: Online Course Attributes. Source: Author

Table 7.1 Course Outline

Week 1	• Review of course welcome, syllabus, and instructor information • Course introductions conducted through VoiceThread using audio/video comments • Assigned readings and videos • Two discussion activities, one as whole class and another in small group based on readings and video content
Week 2	• Assigned reading followed by creation of a blog post, including review and comment on their colleagues' thoughts • Assigned reading followed by whole class discussion forum

	• Watch video recorded mini-lecture from instructor • Individual Assignment #1—Time on Task Analysis
Week 3	• Assigned readings • Discussion board posting to share with colleagues their own potential discussion board activity, including review and comment on their colleagues' work • Completion of the Library Module • Attendance at synchronous event using Blackboard Collaborate
Week 4	• Assigned video followed by whole class discussion activity • Assigned video followed by reflection blog activity • Watch available mini-lecture from instructor • Individual Assignment #2—Online Syllabus Design

Table 7.2: End of Course Survey Questions and Results

End of Course Survey Question	**% of Respondents**

	Answering Strongly Agree & Agree
I found the communication, presence and availability of the instructor throughout the course experience to be helpful and a model for my own courses.	**98%**
I found the course to be well organized, easy to find materials and understand class expectations.	**100%**
I found the collaboration and communication of class members through the discussion activities to be enlightening in both the topics that were discussed and the cohesion of the group.	**86%**
I feel this course gave me a greater understanding of the experience of an online student and I will be able to use this experience to better design my own course to meet their needs.	**98%**
I feel confident in my ability to take the course outline that was created in this course and continue to expand its content into a fully online course syllabus in the coming months.	**91%**
Overall, I feel more prepared to design, develop and teach my first online course than I did before this course experience.	**97%**