

Strategic IT Leadership in Challenging Times

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Title

It's Not the Technology: Wrapping Technology Around the Teaching Method

Presenters

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Intended Audiences

Faculty, IT individuals responsible for faculty development, IT administrators

Track

Enterprise Information Systems

Part 1 Statement of Problem

Technology by itself does not change learning. Technology can create the environment by which the methods of instruction change; the changes in the methods can improve teaching and learning. This presentation will provide an overview of faculty development methods that change teaching and learning, and discuss how technology can promote the change.

Part 2 Description of activity, project, or solution

Online Teaching and Learning: In summer of 2000 Valley City State University (VCSU) implemented a campus-wide initiative of applying online software across the curriculum, not as a distance factor but as a tool to enhance student learning. Faculty were encouraged through workshops, a summer institute, and faculty development money to integrate the features of Blackboard into their face-to-face courses. This process created what is now known as hybrid (blended) courses.

In the fall of 2000, Ten (10) faculty or 16% used Blackboard in their courses. Only one faculty taught a totally online course. Current statistics on the use of Blackboard, as well as student satisfaction surveys, will be shared during the presentation.

E-Portfolios: Valley City State University implemented the innovation of digital portfolios in 1995. These multimedia portfolios put the educational focus on the learner, present what students know and are able to demonstrate, and promote student/faculty technology use. The portfolios also provide a structure for involving the students in the assessment process through reflective writings. The following statistics suggest that the digital portfolio initiative increased the use of technology by both faculty and students on the campus.

Data gathered in fifth year of the e-portfolio implementation, indicates that faculty technology adoption was successful.

- Ninety-four percent (94%) of faculty indicated they had portfolio projects integrated into their course requirements.
- Eighty percent (80%) reported their computer was essential to their teaching.
- Sixty-nine percent (69%) of faculty reported they required students to use 5 or more types of technology in their courses.

Data gathered over the five years of portfolio adoption process (1995-2000) indicated growth in the use of technology for teaching and learning.

- Percentage of faculty requiring student use of multimedia increased from 18% to 46%.
- Percentage of faculty using multimedia in their instruction increased from 21% to 66%.
- Percentage of faculty who included at least one technology requirement in their syllabi rose from 23% to 93%.

Each academic division assesses the individual student e-portfolios. A campus wide assessment initiative is under way using *Portfolio Management* software created by VCSU.

Faculty Forums: VCSU implemented two types of discussion forums to involve faculty in an examination of teaching, learning, and technology.

1. Roundtables: In the fall of 2000, VCSU established regular meetings for faculty concerning teaching and learning. Topic selection and emerging issues are determined by faculty input. Roundtables are venues not only to inform and promote faculty discussion, but also to identify topics for the Summer Institute.
2. Summer Institutes: In the summer of 2000, VCSU established its first annual Summer Institute. These one-week faculty development workshops bring together faculty from across the institution to work on an initiative. The institute is essentially divided up into three parts: pedagogy of teaching, methods of application, and time to develop what was learned. Previous Summer Institutes topic were: *Creating Successful Online Instructional Environments for On-*

Campus Students, Understanding Portfolio Assessment, and Tools and Strategies to Enhance Student Learning.

The Flashlight Current Student Inventory has been used to assess changes in students' perception of teaching and learning at VCSU. Elements such as active learning, collaborative learning, faculty-student interaction and application to "real world" problems were surveyed to determine changes in teaching as a result of the Summer Institute experience.

The survey results suggest that faculty are diversifying the learning experiences of the students with innovative teaching methods. Faculty development activities at VCSU influence these changes.

Part 3 Outcome:

Participants will be presented with examples of the use of online software, e-portfolios, survey instruments, and faculty forums that facilitated changes in teaching and learning with technology.

Part 4 Importance or relevance to other institutions:

Technology has become an important but expensive element for all institutions of higher learning. In the current environment of tight budgets, institutions can no longer afford to spend money on technology just because it is technology. This presentation offers different ways in which to think about the use of technology by faculty and student. This reflection may lead to better decisions on how an institution's technology budget is spent.

Abstract

The session concerns the role of technology in teaching and learning. Presenters will offer faculty development methods that change teaching and learning, and discuss how technology can promote the change. Methods will include: e-portfolios, online teaching and faculty forums.