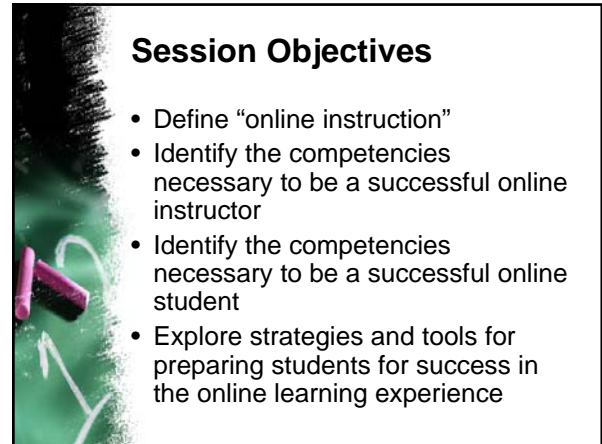


**Two sides of the coin:
Preparing students for
online learning**

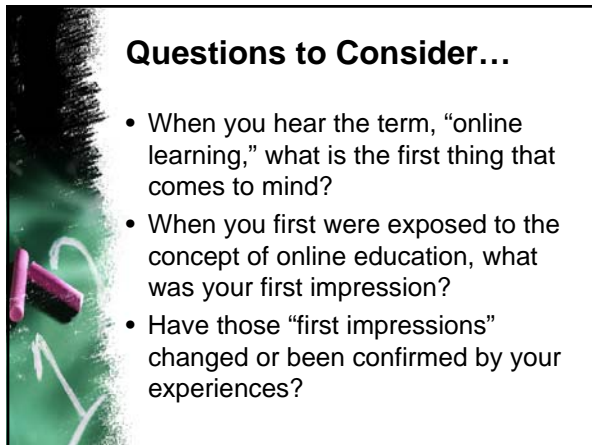
2005 SLATE
Conference

Friday, Oct. 28, 2005
1:30 pm - 2:15 pm



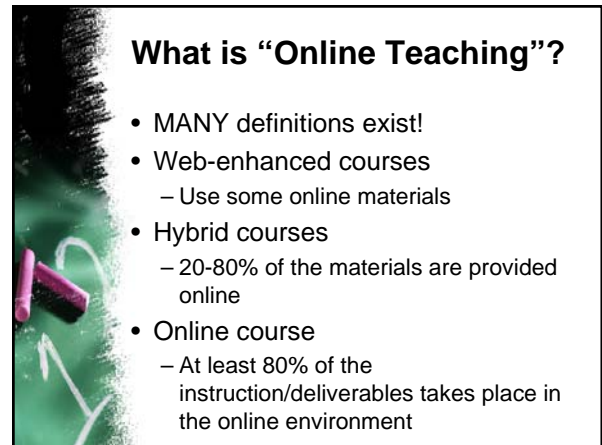
Session Objectives

- Define “online instruction”
- Identify the competencies necessary to be a successful online instructor
- Identify the competencies necessary to be a successful online student
- Explore strategies and tools for preparing students for success in the online learning experience



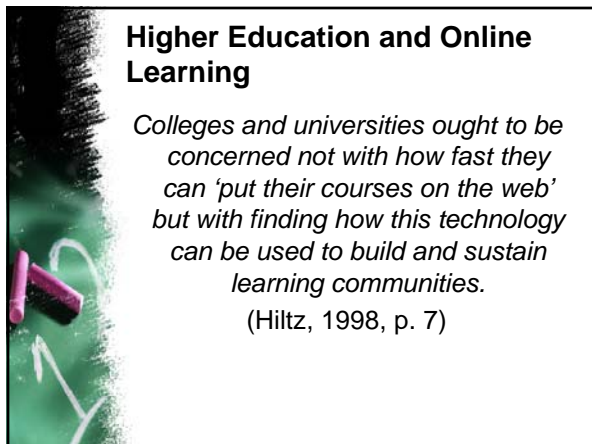
Questions to Consider...

- When you hear the term, “online learning,” what is the first thing that comes to mind?
- When you first were exposed to the concept of online education, what was your first impression?
- Have those “first impressions” changed or been confirmed by your experiences?



What is “Online Teaching”?

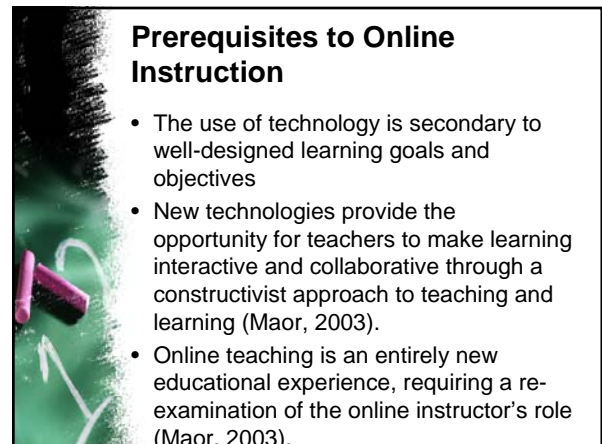
- MANY definitions exist!
- Web-enhanced courses
 - Use some online materials
- Hybrid courses
 - 20-80% of the materials are provided online
- Online course
 - At least 80% of the instruction/deliverables takes place in the online environment



Higher Education and Online Learning

Colleges and universities ought to be concerned not with how fast they can ‘put their courses on the web’ but with finding how this technology can be used to build and sustain learning communities.

(Hiltz, 1998, p. 7)



Prerequisites to Online Instruction

- The use of technology is secondary to well-designed learning goals and objectives
- New technologies provide the opportunity for teachers to make learning interactive and collaborative through a constructivist approach to teaching and learning (Maor, 2003).
- Online teaching is an entirely new educational experience, requiring a re-examination of the online instructor’s role (Maor, 2003).

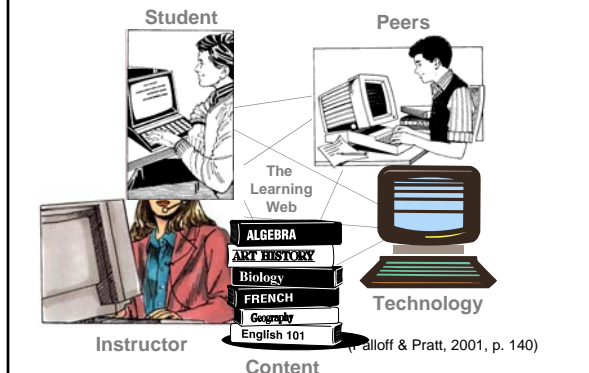
What is “Good Teaching”?

- Learners actively participating, reflectively thinking and collaborating with one another
- The teacher’s role in the online environment becomes a significant element in creating quality learning (Maor, 2003).

Types of Interaction in Learning

- Interaction with content
 - Textbooks
 - Instructional presentations
 - Projects, etc.
- Interpersonal interaction
 - With the instructor
 - With students

The Learning Web







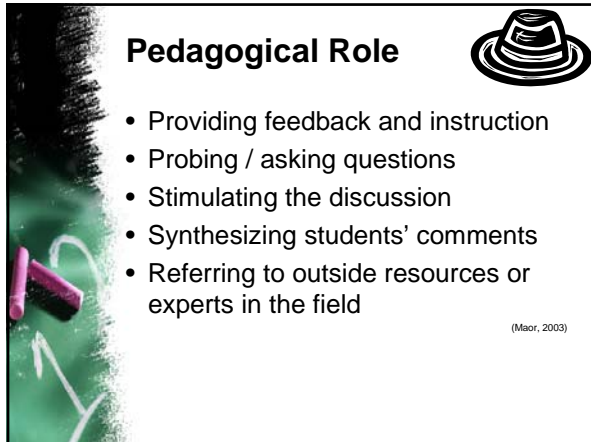
Two sides of the coin...

- Prepared instructors...
- Preparing students

What is the role of the online instructor?

“Four Hats” of the Online Instructor

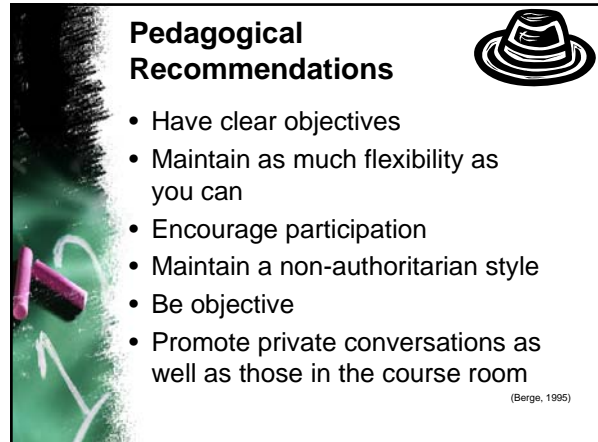
- Pedagogical 
- Social 
- Managerial 
- Technical 



Pedagogical Role

- Providing feedback and instruction
- Probing / asking questions
- Stimulating the discussion
- Synthesizing students' comments
- Referring to outside resources or experts in the field

(Maor, 2003)



Pedagogical Recommendations

- Have clear objectives
- Maintain as much flexibility as you can
- Encourage participation
- Maintain a non-authoritarian style
- Be objective
- Promote private conversations as well as those in the course room


(Berge, 1995)



Pedagogical Recommendations

- Find unifying threads
- Use simple assignments
- Make the material relevant
- Required contributions
- Present conflicting opinions
- Invite visiting experts
- Don't lecture
- Request responses

(Berge, 1995)



Social Role

- Affective support
- Interpersonal communication
- Setting a positive tone
- Keeping the communication flowing

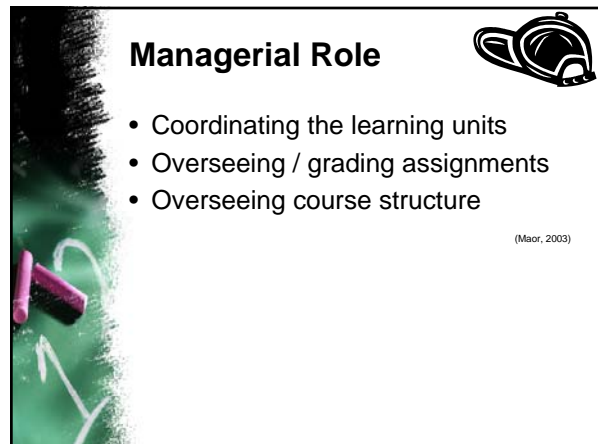
(Maor, 2003)



Social Recommendations

- Guard against fear
- Watch the use of humor or sarcasm
- Use introductions
- Facilitate interactivity
- Praise and model the discussant behavior you seek
- Do not ignore bad discussant behavior
- Expect that flames may occur


(Berge, 1995)



Managerial Role

- Coordinating the learning units
- Overseeing / grading assignments
- Overseeing course structure

(Maor, 2003)



Managerial Recommendations



- Informality
- Distribute a list of participants
- Be responsive
- Be patient
- Request self-reflection
- Be mindful of the proportion of instructor contribution

(Berge, 1995)

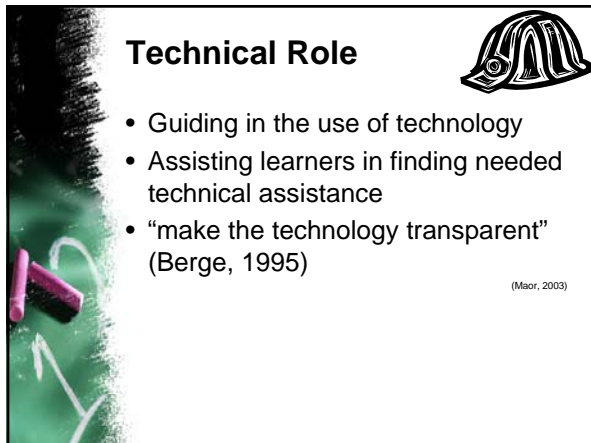


Managerial Recommendations




- Use private email for prompting
- Be clear
- Don't overload
- Handle tangents appropriately
- Vary participants' amount of contribution
- Student leaders
- Preparation time
- End the sessions

(Berge, 1995)

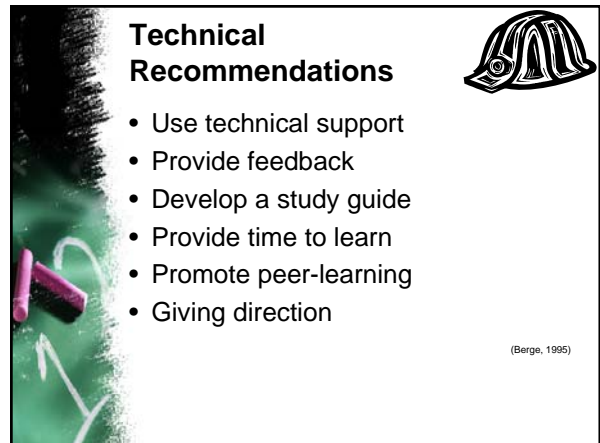


Technical Role




- Guiding in the use of technology
- Assisting learners in finding needed technical assistance
- "make the technology transparent" (Berge, 1995)

(Maor, 2003)

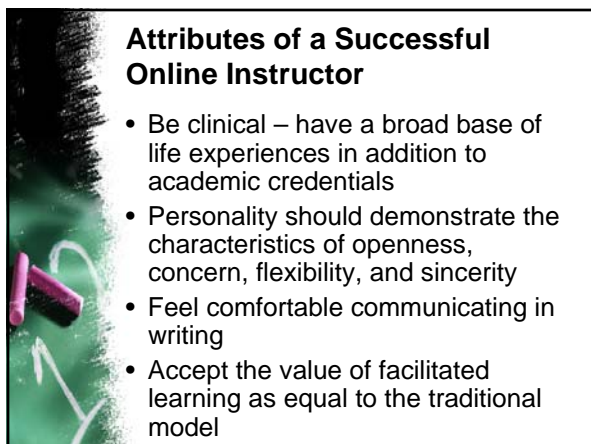


Technical Recommendations



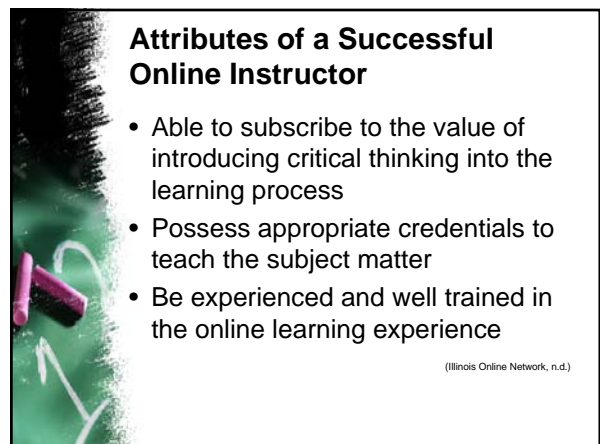
- Use technical support
- Provide feedback
- Develop a study guide
- Provide time to learn
- Promote peer-learning
- Giving direction

(Berge, 1995)



Attributes of a Successful Online Instructor


- Be clinical – have a broad base of life experiences in addition to academic credentials
- Personality should demonstrate the characteristics of openness, concern, flexibility, and sincerity
- Feel comfortable communicating in writing
- Accept the value of facilitated learning as equal to the traditional model



Attributes of a Successful Online Instructor

- Able to subscribe to the value of introducing critical thinking into the learning process
- Possess appropriate credentials to teach the subject matter
- Be experienced and well trained in the online learning experience


(Illinois Online Network, n.d.)



Enhancement of Pedagogical Outcomes


- Creating a shift from individual to collaborative learning
- Promoting reflection and creating reflective practicum among teacher and students
- Changing the role of the lecturer from an “expert” to that of a co-learner
- Promoting and facilitating a student-centered approach to learning in which students become responsible for their own learning and others learning

(Maor, 2003)




Attributes of Successful Online Students: ION

- Open minded
- Able to communicate through writing
- Self-motivated and disciplined
- Will speak up
- Understands time commitment
- Meets minimum course requirements



Attributes of Successful Online Students: ION (cont.)


- Accept critical thinking as part of learning
- Have access to computer with Internet connection
- Think before responding
- Embrace the fact that good learning can occur online (attitude)



Wang and Newlin

“Predictors of Performance in the Virtual Classroom” T.H.E. Journal, May 2002.


- No reliable demographic predictors of online performance among people taking college-level online courses



Two self-efficacy predictors:

Wang and Newlin

1. Self-efficacy for understanding course content
2. Self-efficacy for meeting the technical demands of course



Risk Indicator Questions

Wang and Newlin
Does student have:

- External locus of control?
- Low self-efficacy re: computer skills?
- Low self-efficacy re: course content?
- Previous experience with online learning?
- Low login rate?

Risk Indicator Questions (cont)

Wang and Newlin

Did the student:

- Enroll only because of course availability?

Is the student:

- Reading and writing few messages in discussion boards?
- Quiet or non-responsive in online chat

Diagnosis and Adjustment

- Provide an online survey in which students indicate their skill level and learning style preferences.
- Help students interpret their results.
- Offer your opinion as to whether this student is a good candidate for your course.
- Outline course and instructor expectations and requirements.
- Be certain students understand the demands.

Sample Faculty Surveys

- [Is online teaching for me?](#)
- [Teaching style & online compatibility](#)

Sample Student Surveys


- [Three levels of readiness](#)
- [Self-review for students](#)
- [Example technology checklist](#)
- [Technology skills survey \[Word / Bb\]](#)
- [Student self-assessments \(NIU\)](#)

Provide Rules

- How do you expect students to perform?
 - [Netiquette](#)
 - [Core rules of netiquette](#), [netiquette book](#), [netiquette quiz](#)
 - Interaction with course materials, fellow students, and you
 - Course objectives
 - Performance standards / [Learner support agreement](#)

Be Flexible

- And remind students that they, too, need to be flexible.
- This does NOT imply that there are no standards. Means to that end, however, may need periodic adjustment.



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Session Notes & Links

www.niu.edu/~jrhode