



Trends in Professional Development for Online Courses

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May 17, 2006



Have you ever taught an online course?

- A. Yes, for K-12 students
- B. Yes, for college-level or above
- C. Yes, for both
- D. No, but I plan to soon
- E. No

Virtual schools:

Some important distinctions

- Virtual schools
 - Students take only online courses
 - Examples are charter schools (for example, K-12, Inc. schools), schools for special students (for example, athletes)
- Virtual schooling
 - Students take a few courses online while attending f2f school
 - Examples are state- and district-sponsored virtual schools (Michigan, Florida, Illinois, VHS)

Virtual courses: Some useful distinctions

- Virtual resources
 - Delivered online but may be used in both f2f and online courses
- Virtual courses
 - Delivered online
 - Include virtual resources
 - But main interactions are one-on-one, teacher-student
- Virtual classrooms
 - Virtual courses that include virtual resources and teacher-student interactions
 - But stress student-student interactions (usually in discussion forums)

Professional development: The structure

- Varies in length, content, what happens when
- Varies in pedagogical theory depending on model (i.e., one-on-one or virtual classroom)
- Mostly online (“modeling the model”)
- Some f2f (communities of practice)
- Mostly geared toward particular course but increasingly generic

Professional development: The course

- Course design
 - Individual teachers vs. teams (instructional designers and teacher advisors)
 - In-house vs. vendors
- Course adaptation
 - “Teacher-proof” vs. adapted by teacher
- Preparation
 - Review the course vs. study the course



Professional development: The pedagogy

- Use of pedagogy appropriate to approach
 - VHS: Inquiry learning; problem-based learning (PBL), appropriate for virtual classroom
 - FVS: Differentiated instruction, appropriate for one-on-one virtual schooling
 - MVHS: Learning styles
- May be a (re)introduction to pedagogy for many teachers
 - Backward design
 - Bloom's taxonomy
 - Multiple intelligences



Changes and trends

- Less focus on technology, more on pedagogy
- Longer overall preparation time
 - Mentoring and monitoring
 - “Student teaching” and shadowing
- More levels of supervision
 - Mentor teachers
 - Leadership teams
 - Department heads
- Site coordinators

More changes and trends

- Ongoing professional development
 - Just-in-time needs
 - Professional development tracks
- Communities of practice
 - Discussion forums and study groups
 - Annual f2f meetings
- Convergence in two directions
 - Virtual courses being used in f2f classrooms
 - Virtual courses integrating more virtual classroom activities
- More generic professional development courses
- Pre-service programs

Virtual Schools and Virtual Schooling: Brief Reading List

Overviews

Berge, Z. L., & Clark, T. (Eds.). (2005). *Virtual schools: Planning for Success*. New York: Teachers College Press.

[This edited collection has a series of short case studies of 7 U.S. virtual high schools, as well as context articles on some of the key issues.]

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- Michigan Virtual University. (2005). *Report to the Michigan Department of Education on the development and growth of the Michigan Virtual High School: 1995-2005*. Lansing, MI: Michigan Virtual University.
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- Mills, Steven C. (2003). "Implementing online secondary education: An evaluation of a virtual high school." Proceedings of the 14th International Conference of the Society for Information
- Minnesota Department of Education. (2003). *2003 report card: cyber village academy*. Minneapolis, MN: Author.
<<http://education.state.mn.us/ReportCard/2003/RCF402507010.pdf>>
- Roblyer, M. D., & Marshall, J. C. (2002). "Predicting success of virtual high school students: Preliminary results from an Educational Success Prediction Instrument." *Journal of Research and Technology in Education*, 35(2), 241-255
- Washington Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. (2003). *Internet academy 2002–2003 WASL results*. Olympia, WA: Author.
<http://reportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us/Reports/summary.aspx?schoolId=1164&reportLevel=School>
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Comparison debate

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