

Distance and online learning pt2

19 MIN · YOUTUBE · [HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=J4o42QX-DCK](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J4o42QX-DCK)
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SUMMARY

The presentation outlines best practices for designing online and distance learning courses, emphasizing the importance of tailored content, active engagement, and authentic assessments. The speaker shares insights from various literature sources, advocating for a student-centered approach that fosters peer interaction and deep learning.

- *Course design should be tailored to students' needs, experiences, and future goals.*
- *Active engagement is crucial; students should construct knowledge rather than passively receive information.*
- *Peer-to-peer and instructor interaction enhances learning and community building.*
- *Authentic assessments should be meaningful and applicable to students' professional contexts.*
- *Interleaving content helps reinforce learning by revisiting key concepts from multiple angles.*
- *Timely and personalized feedback is essential for student motivation and improvement.*
- *Utilizing online tools effectively can enhance interaction and engagement among students.*
- *Monitoring student activity can help identify those struggling and provide targeted support.*

so that kind of summarizes my philosophy in terms of best practices for designing online and distance courses and again designing uh distance learning opportunities is very much again picking the different um types of content you're going to create assessments and so on my philosophy that i've kind of presented is based upon my experiences and you know reading the literature and applying kind of the things i've learned through the literature but i wanted to spend the second half of this

presentation talking about some of the literature that's out there i've given you these articles as well uh to read in the uh readings in d2l but again i thought i'd summarize some of them here point out some of the more salient points i think when we look into the literature though for what are the best practices for designing online or distance learning opportunities it again we always see coming back to the same concept of design first we have to

plan these learning opportunities out we can't just hope they happen we have to really kind of identify what do we want them to learn and how are we going to have the students learn them and we have to create a lot of different learning opportunities and activities so that they can apply this these concepts so if we take a look at the article by alan i see a couple key points here first off i think they state

that again we must tailor course design again to the students needs to their life experiences and their interests so uh you know i always at the beginning of my classes if i don't already know the students i always try to get to know them fairly quickly like what are they doing now in their life who are they again personally but more

importantly professionally and where do they want to go where do they want to be what are their goals because i i

sincerely attempt to tailor the learning activities and the assessments and the lectures to them to you know i want it to be interesting to them as they're listening to me blabble on about the knee or the shoulder or whatever it might be i want them to think oh you know i i want to try that exercise or i need to target that muscle because that muscle is important in stabilizing the glenohumeral joint or whatever so i

really want to tailor the course and the content to the students needs to their previous experiences and their future experiences and their interests so that they aren't just saying i don't want to memorize all this stuff they're saying hey i need to learn this stuff because if i do i'm going to be that much better of a personal trainer or an athletic trainer or a fitness professional whatever it is their goals are i also think that i want to create a situation

where learners construct knowledge so i want them to be again actively engaged in the course and the content rather than me just again talking to them now there may be times where you have to produce lectures like this because you want to transmit a bunch of information but you also have to stop during that transmission get them to think about it and how can they apply this how how can they put it in with the other things

they've seen in their personal and professional careers um we also want to foster peer-to-peer interaction so again if the peers can work together and learn from one another and learn from each other's experiences that's great in our master's program we have people from a variety of settings lots of different experiences and them sharing those experiences helps other people learn it's often difficult to tease that out though and get them to kind of open up and and

speak but again if you can it makes the class that much more rewarding for everyone and then we also want to have peer to instructor interaction again to foster that relationship that needs to exist between the instructor and the student and then we want to create authentic learning environments and assessments what i think this means to me is again first off for authentic learning environments i think they need to know that i'm engaged in this class i'm

engaged with them i want them to learn i you know if they're successful i'm successful that makes them want to work that much harder that makes them want to maybe look forward to the next uh again uh presentation or content that i've created for them i also think the assessments need to be authentic they can't be busy work they have to be at the end of the assessment the students have to think boy i learned something by doing that and i want to

apply what i've learned down the road so they we need to keep that in mind so when i do assessments in my classes i have students typically from a variety of different backgrounds and going in very varied you know professional directions so i don't want to make everybody do something about an acl rehab program that's only useful for people that maybe are the af they're heading towards athletic training or or physical therapy i want to give them the

opportunity to apply what they've learned about the need to maybe training programs or enhancing endurance athlete performance or resistance training performance because that's what they're looking for some are more focused on endurance training some are more focused on uh resistance training some are more focused on just working with individuals that want to improve their daily living so again we need to keep things authentic and allow them to apply it to their own professional goals

another source that i've found useful is a book by miller it's called minds online and uh in the d2l shell i also have a link to an interview uh you know with uh dr miller and the uh her she's her background is psychology and how the brain works so when she talked about design courses and this would work for both online as well as and distance as well as a live course she calls her design you know cognitive

optimization and again this is another way to kind of organize your course and think things through as to what you know your goals are and what you want the students to do i'm going to go over this fairly quickly but you can obviously take a look at these slides on your own as well she kind of organizes her classes by first coming up with these learning objectives and again it's what we want the student to know which is very

similar to the other kind of philosophies for course design we've talked about before and this these learning objectives again understanding what we want the students to know should guide our selection of activities and and again these learning objectives can be best met by doing problem-based learning case studies simulations you know again explaining why they chose an answer and so on she then uh kind of comes up with learning activities that are grouped under these learning objectives and it's

how we want students to spend their time while they're working in the course and again we may have lectures that have embedded questions so they have to stop and think about it and review we can do have them reflect on things during the presentation they can do synchronous chat practice and so on so again there's a list there of some other things that are kind of interesting and help to we design how the students are going to

spend their time in the class one important concept i want to mention is this concept of interleaving i have another presentation or video that you can watch from another edx course that uh it kind of goes over this as well but the concept of inter interleaving is basically returning to important material over and over so again when you design you know your main learning objectives you know you want to hit those objectives from several different angles in several different ways again

if i'm trying to teach somebody about the acl and how to prevent acl injuries you know i may want them to really understand what the mechanisms are and i may mention that in my podcast as well as my video and in their assignment they may have to describe them and so on so i think those are kind of the things that you want to do when you're interleaving you want to mention them through different parts in the class and then we want to

promote this deep processing where they're really thinking about things having to apply the content concepts that you've given them already dr miller goes on also to also you need to plan out the assessments how you're

going to measure the uh success of your students as well as how you're going to show them that they're actually learning something she really is a big proponent of testing as a way to promote retention and i do too i think it's if a kid has

an exam coming up it's going to force them to study and become engaged with the material so the studying for the test is going to help them learn as well as the actual act of taking the test uh again i i in my classes in like anatomy and physiology and exercise fizz and so on i have lots of tests online or live and during the tests i let them use their materials because it's a trick right i'm forcing them to

look through the materials one more time which is only going to enhance learning there may be times where i want to have closed book tests and so on but again tests are a great way for people to learn peer-to-peer interaction is another thing you should plan out again because they can often learn from one another and learn how to apply the information in different settings and then finally she talks about grades and other incentives and again how to

get the grades are not uh again the the be-all and end-all but they certainly are a motivating tool to again get kids learning and engaged in the material now if you're designing a course that's like a continuing education course there still is potentially a grade or a test at the end but we may provide other incentives again by doing this continuing education you're going to be better at your job you're maybe going to be able to charge more per hour those

types of things but again grades and other types of incentives are something you want to plan out as part of your course design process in another article by khan they uh looked at active learning in distance and online education and again they found that active is the key that students that were more active in their classes more engaged with the material learned better they did they performed better

and again they really focused in their article on the creative use of activity and online learning and we do have to again that's sometimes hard to do but you need to find ways to get students engaged with the material experimenting with the material learning on their own applying it to new scenarios and so on and this is i think to me the most important part of course design or really what separates the really good instructors from the average

is that they create these opportunities to be get students more engaged and i will say that i've experimented with a lot of different things trying to do this and then i i typically ask students afterwards if they felt that this assignment or new type of assignment was good or bad or what have you and i've had some successes and i've had certainly some failures but again even i found when i create an assignment a written assignment that students have to

do in my class i often will give them multiple questions and they get to pick which question they feel they want to answer and typically they're going to pick the question that they think pertains the most to the setting and the situations they may work in and they've been appreciative of that and i think that again is just an example of

maybe getting them a little more engaged and a little more active in their thinking and their application of

the content so again i think faculty it's incumbent upon us to develop and apply active learning techniques to our courses into our content as much as possible and that means we have to keep learning we have to keep on seeing what new techniques are that are out there new technologies and trying to apply them to our our situations and again and then try and gauge get some feedback to see if they're successful or not uh there was another article that i've

uh shared with you that had again a nice kind of summary here that they had six strategies or best practices for online learning and uh these are concepts that i kind of keep in mind when i am looking at a course as a whole but also my individual units and i try to again the goal is to try to build a community of learners we want all the students to be engaged with the content but

hopefully engage with each other i will say in the doctoral class so far this has been extremely easy you kind of came in as a community but in other classes where especially if it isn't a cohort model that community may not be as solid but you can do this in a number of ways with different types of activities we also need to clearly outline course objectives this goes with the course planning but i think it's important for

the students to know hey what are you going to learn in this course not only in the course as a whole but this unit what are the goals what are we going to learn what are we focusing on so the students can again know where we're going where we're headed and so on we need to utilize online tools for interaction and this i would say is probably where i struggle the most you know i've kind of turned and tweaked and

changed my discussions and and so on several times in my different classes to try to get more kids involved at a real level not just posting to meet the requirements but engaging and actually discussion discussing so again i've i've tried doing discussions less frequently so maybe they get more engaged and don't get burned out i've tried a number of different things but again trying to enhance that interaction and to promote again this exchange of

ideas between students and uh with me the faculty member in a kind of a more of a discussion and informal kind of a setting i think that it's again and i think you'll all agree here we need to give feedback uh it needs to be timely so when kids are posting discussion you know posting discussions or turning in assignments i think there's nothing worse than waiting two weeks to grade it and uh and then maybe not even giving

them personalized feedback because it doesn't encourage the student to want to work hard but it also doesn't tell them again what they've done well and what they've done poorly or where they can improve so i think it's really important and this is sometimes really hard for the instructor depending upon your teaching load and the number of students in your class but to provide timely and relevant feedback i i think it's really appreciated by the students and

again based on the feedback i've gotten from courses they really want that personalized feedback even if it's critical of their performance they want that they want to know that you've read their things and so on i will say that in some cases when our some of our class sizes have gotten bigger i've cut down on you know how many assignments i may give a week or in a course because again if i don't have the time to give timely and relevant

feedback then i don't want to give that assignment and that's why mixing up some of the assessments have really kind of helped me give better feedback so for instance in my 720 class i have one week where there's a quiz and the quiz is all auto graded so i don't actually need to spend a lot of time giving feedback because they're taking a quiz that week and studying the material and then i'll try in the in a different

course at the same time to have an assessment that week so that week i can focus on grading the assignment giving good feedback the next week the other people are taking a quiz and other people you know so so that i can give that quality feedback because the students really learn more i think if i can do that so i kind of went off on a tangent there um and then obviously creating an environment that's student-centered this

goes along with being authentic and kind of is that same in that same vein we need students to know that we're interested the learners need to know that we're interested in their learning we're putting together some great material for them and we're here if they have questions and want to learn more or need additional resources so again make a an environment that's student-centered and that will certainly enhance the students uh how much they give to the course and

that's really important i also one other thing that's mentioned at times in these articles is measuring activity we do need to and again it depends on the situation if you're doing a continue continuing ed course you know you don't need to necessarily follow students through the class but when i'm doing a course uh especially in a an undergraduate level course i watch my students pretty closely sometimes so closely that i feel guilty like i'm spying okay i'm watching their activity

in d2l we can do a number of things and once the shells are up and running for you all and you get a chance to get in there and you can see us progressing through your courses um you know we can see a number of things obviously i can go into the grade book at any point and see how people are doing and i do again i look for students that maybe aren't doing well i look at

if they aren't doing well i look for reasons why they may not be doing well and that spying helps me maybe identify how i can make suggestions to the student onto how to do better again sometimes i see that they aren't accessing all of the content items to me in an online situation that's like skipping class the kids skipping class i will probably talk to them in a live course and say hey you know jimmy what's

going on why aren't you coming to class uh you know you're not doing well and maybe that's a reason why well if they're not viewing all of the content which again i can see through the instructor you know portion of the course that's maybe a reason they aren't doing well i look at their logins you know again if i have a student that's only logging in on sundays and believe it or not there's a lot that do this

they log in on sunday at 9 00 pm and they try to get everything done and they aren't doing well well that's probably why so again i look at how many logins they have throughout the week and so on i can look at their discussion participation not only can i see what they've posted but i can see how many discussion items they've read and how many times they checked into the discussion over the week and again if

they're only reading one or two and responding to them that's going to enhance or again decrease how much learning they're doing because they're not learning from their classmates then i can even set up and look at how much time they spend potentially watching the presentations do they only watch the first five minutes and they watch it the whole way through and so on and then assignments obviously by reading and evaluating their assignments i can tell you know are they really

getting it or not and again that's why it's important to be critical uh in your feedback because they need to know hey yeah you said some things that were from the class but you really didn't think deeply you didn't apply it to this situation and again by giving them feedback i can hopefully get them back on track you