**Tips for Teaching Adult Students Online**

**Teaching with Technology**

- **Collaboration:**
  - Use digital tools to facilitate group work.
  - Encourage real-time communication through chat and video conferencing.
  - Utilize collaborative platforms for project sharing and feedback.

- **Assessment:**
  - Use a combination of self-assessment and peer assessment.
  - Incorporate rubrics and grading criteria to ensure consistency.
  - Provide regular feedback to help students improve.

- **Feedback:**
  - Offer constructive feedback to help students understand their progress.
  - Use technology to provide automated feedback on assignments.
  - Encourage peer feedback through discussion forums.

- **Engagement:**
  - Incorporate interactive activities to keep students engaged.
  - Use technology to create a virtual learning environment.
  - Encourage participation through polls and surveys.

- **Adaptability:**
  - Be flexible and open to change.
  - Use technology to adapt to different learning styles.
  - Provide resources and support for students who need it.

**Resources:**

- **Online Learning Platforms:**
  - Blackboard, Canvas, Moodle
  - Coursera, edX, Coursera

- **Video Conferencing Tools:**
  - Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Google Meet
  - Adobe Connect, WebEx

- **Collaborative Tools:**
  - Google Docs, Google Slides, Microsoft Office
  - Slack, Microsoft Teams, Google Hangouts

- **Assessment Tools:**
  - Quizlet, Kahoot, Google Forms
  - Turnitin, ProctorU, Blackboard Learn

**Conclusion:**

By integrating technology into your teaching, you can create a dynamic and engaging learning environment for adult students. Encourage participation, provide support, and be open to new ideas to enhance the online learning experience.

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References

WMT: Teaching with Technology Collaboration - Tips for Teaching Adult Students Online  Page 3 of 3
Andrological and Pedagogical Training Differences for Online Instructors

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Andrological and Pedagogical Training Differences for Online Instructors

Introduction

Colleges and universities are rushing at an alarming rate to answer the call of the growing number of online learners. Many are motivated by promising financial forecasts. Others are simply keeping up with their peer institutions. Regardless of the reasons, the rush to join the ranks of "e-institutions" often results in the significant aspects of the online learning paradigm being overlooked. Can faculty make effective use of the online platform to design, construct and deliver a meaningful online course that addresses the motivations, needs, learning styles and constraints of nontraditional learners, while achieving the same learning outcomes as on-ground?

Answering this question requires an examination of online learners and their needs, which reveals the need for substantive differences between online and on-ground methodologies. Online learners are the products of a fast moving society that values time, productivity and measurable results. They demand only that which is necessary to learn the processes and shun traditional student life distractions. The differences in online and on-ground course methodology lead to a comparative discussion of pedagogical and andragogical theory.

Pedagogy describes the traditional instructional approach based on teacher-directed learning theory. Andragogy describes the approach based on self-directed learning theory. Malcolm Knowles, a recognized leader in the field of adult education, coined the term andragogy from the Greek words a-nas meaning adult, and agogus, meaning guide or leader, to describe the art and science of helping adults learn (Knowles, 1992).

Distance education and, in particular, online education is primarily directed to nontraditional learners. Historically, nontraditional learners have been defined as persons over age 25 (Whisnant, Sullivan, & Skayno, 1992). However, Knowles (1980) defined adulthood as "the point at which individuals perceive themselves to be essentially self-directing" (p. 40). Self-directiveness is not necessarily correlated with age.

More young people are choosing nontraditional education to start and advance in their careers while completing and furthering their formal education. "Typical distance learners are those who don't have access to programs, employees who work during scheduled class hours, homemaker individuals, self-motivated individuals who want to take courses for self-knowledge or advancement, or those who are unable or unwilling to attend class" (Chapin, 2000, p. 10). Three key elements surround the online learner: technology, curriculum, and instructor (Bedre, Bedre, & Bedre, 1997). These elements must be keenly integrated into one smoothly and operationally functional delivery tool.

Technology

Technological advances have created an educational environment where student and professor are tied together to synchronous learning activities not to physical meeting locations. Although a reliable and stable delivery platform, easy to master and versatile in functionality is an important part of the online delivery equation, it is nothing more than a tool used to affect the transfer of knowledge. Many administrators, preoccupied with delivery, assume that, by themselves, these new simple-to-use tools are sufficient to ensure a quality online course or degree program.

The intuitiveness and ease of the new course platforms places technology behind the elements of instructor and curriculum in importance in the Bedre (1997) model presented above. These two elements are too tightly intertwined, they are best addressed within the framework of online instructor training. Training must produce online instructors who fully understand the differences between on-ground and online delivery methods, the conversion or development of on-ground course material to an online format, and the unique needs of the nontraditional learner.

Day and Brackett (1982) offer that andragogy should be understood not as a theory of adult learning, but as "an educational ideology rooted in an inquiry-based learning and teaching paradigm" (p. 156). Andragogy theory "suggests all kinds of humanistically desirable and democractic practices; and it separates educators and trainers of adults from their counterparts in childhood, secondary, and higher education" (Brodick, 1998). Brodick (1999) states that instructor training provides insight into the differences between the traditional learner, who values the time honored didactic obsessive approach, and non-traditional learner who values the experiential applications-based constructivist approach.

Training

Assumptive Differences. Traditional learners rely heavily on an instructor's knowledge, which is disseminated in a unilateral (teacher-to-student), lecture-based method. Learners are expected to accept without question the information disseminated, "learning" the material and delivering it back to the instructor in the same manner it was presented to them.

Nontraditional learners require an alternative framework within which to learn. Knowles states that nontraditional learners need to know why they need to learn something before undertaking to learn it (Merriam & Brockett, 1997). This need suggests that the responsibility for learning be transferred from facilitator to learner. Prospective online facilitators learn to affect the transfer by training in the same collaborative learning model as their students: an experiential model that is learner-centered rather than instructor-centered, dialogue-based rather than lecture-based.

Instructors have generally underutilized traditional students' experiences as a resource for learning, considering them as pre-existing knowledge merely providing a foundation upon which new knowledge will build. Nontraditional students bring a variety of life and work experiences to the virtual classroom and are more responsive to learning models that provide an opportunity to apply theory to their experiences. The open and collaborative sharing of experiences within the context of the course material serves to enrich the learning process for themselves and their peers. Thus, online facilitators are taught to encourage a continual stream of dialogue concerning the subject matter in a constructivist atmosphere "where meaning is created in relation to students' prior experience and knowledge" (Truman-Davis, Futch, Thompson, & Yonehara, 2000, p.59).

Online learners should be recognized for who they are and where they stand in achieving their educational goals. Their readiness to learn and orientation to learning are inseparably tied together, as both of these assumptions center on learners' life tasks and problems. Nontraditional learners have a life-centered orientation to learning, as opposed to the subject-centered orientation of traditional learners. Stimulating dialogue that is meaningful to the learner capitalizes on this life-centered orientation.

The most effective tools for generating dialogue are discussion questions, case analysis, and other applications-oriented materials that put theory into practice. These tools, combined with group and team activities integral to the learning model, allow learners to synthesize theory with their own experiences to best demonstrate learning outcomes. Facilitators learn to design open-ended questions, constructed to require learners to draw and support conclusions based on this synthesis and

http://www.westga.edu/~distance/otjda/fall43/gibbons_wentworth43.html

4/29/2010