

February 2010

Designing Successful Online Courses - Part 2

Kathleen P. King

University of South Florida, drkpping@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/ehe_facpub

 Part of the [Adult and Continuing Education and Teaching Commons](#), [Artificial Intelligence and Robotics Commons](#), [Community College Education Administration Commons](#), [Curriculum and Social Inquiry Commons](#), [Disability and Equity in Education Commons](#), [Finance and Financial Management Commons](#), [Higher Education Administration Commons](#), [Higher Education and Teaching Commons](#), [Instructional Media Design Commons](#), [International and Comparative Education Commons](#), [Other Education Commons](#), [Science and Technology Studies Commons](#), and the [Technology and Innovation Commons](#)

Scholar Commons Citation

King, Kathleen P., "Designing Successful Online Courses - Part 2" (2010). *Adult, Career, and Higher Education Faculty Publications*. Paper 2.

http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/ehe_facpub/2

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Adult, Career, and Higher Education at Scholar Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Adult, Career, and Higher Education Faculty Publications by an authorized administrator of Scholar Commons. For more information, please contact scholarcommons@usf.edu.

Designing Successful Online Courses - Part 2

By [Dr. Kathleen P. King](#)

Introduction

Once again, our major goal is to provide faculty with consistent guidance through the many instructional decisions and design steps they need to pursue in this process. This process is a fantastic opportunity to craft a virtual learning space in which people can engage in learning beyond the constraints of time and space.

Step 1 Tap the Power of Peer Learning. Online learning environments provide an unparalleled opportunity to access the benefits of peer learning. As described, students can increase their understanding by communicating and exploring content with one another. It is important to use this opportunity to encourage peer learning to inform the dialogue and course discussions (Conrad & Donaldson, 2004; Luppardini, 2007). Rather than a black and white world with only faculty providing answers, instructors who encourage peer learning can develop a critical inquiry and learning community which respects and values diverse views.

Step 2 Strengthen Student Assessment. As mentioned above, the frequency and depth of student feedback is important in online environments and there are many options (Simonson et al., 2009). Consider first how to provide this guidance on an ongoing basis so that students frequently receive direction and support throughout the course (perhaps in assignments, their journals, or discussion boards). Second, provide detailed, swiftly-written evaluations and remarks on larger assignments so that learners have ample information and time to improve their work for their next submission. By following these recommendations faculty develop efficient workflow, increase grading transparency, and cultivate student responsibility (Luppardini, 2007).

Step 3 Intensify Interaction with Students. Multiple means for student interaction with the instructor may include online office hours, responsive email policies, assessment feedback and/or advising appointments. Faculty can select formats which jointly fit the learning needs of the students and their faculty needs (Simonson et al., 2007). For instance, live virtual office hours with a shared screen might be an effective way to help students work through difficulties in solving math problems, while a video conference may be more effective for a literature class discussion follow-up. Faculty can make initial selections, determine if they work well, and add more strategies over time.

Step 4 Escalate Online Course Evaluation. As indicated in instructional and program planning, it is most effective to start program design with evaluation in mind (Caffarella, 2002; Lawler & King, 2000). This maxim requires faculty to incorporate strategies and feedback mechanisms for students/participants to share needs, problems and suggestions during and after a course delivery. Most faculty consider their courses as works in progress. To support this continuous design, well-developed online courses provide the means to systematically collect and easily analyze student feedback. It is interesting to note that as technology users become more comfortable with online technologies, they also expect more features and services in their courses. At this point, faculty can continue to raise the ante of course expectations and design developments.

Step 5 Deliver, Improve & Repeat! The final step in the model ensures that faculty remember the continuing process. Instead of a linear sequence, this model poses a continuous improvement cycle. Learners will provide feedback, faculty will discover assignments and strategies to add, and new developments will mean changes have to be made. Most online learning environments provide the ability to copy an entire course into the new semester's space. This provides a starting point and faculty can prioritize the changes which are most urgent for the next round.

These five steps of Part 2 complete the full circle of planning and designing online courses. I hope that you experience much success in applying and adapting what you have read. Remember this model is a continuous cycle and will be customized by you based on your context, learners and content. Wishing you all success in your online teaching endeavors.

Written by,
Dr. Kathleen P. King (EdD)

Professor of Education, University of South Florida

Dr. King is a dynamic, interactive keynote speaker, and author who invigorates audiences on a variety of professional topics. From coping with changes in the workplace, to navigating organizational demands, developing leadership, meeting the needs of 21st century learners, and distance learning, she is always "Helping Professionals Reach Their Dreams."

Article Source: [http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Dr. Kathleen P. King](http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Dr._Kathleen_P._King)