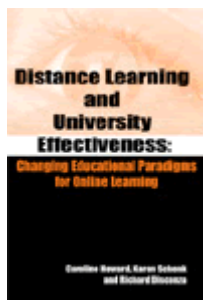


Distance Learning and University Effectiveness: Changing Educational Paradigms for Online Learning

Edited by Caroline Howard, Karen Schenk and Richard Discenza
Hershey (U.S.) and London (U.K.): Information Science Publishing (an imprint of Idea Group Inc.), 2004. 352 pages. \$59.95 US, paperback. ISBN: 1-59140-221-2

Reviewed by Res. Ass. Mestan KUCUK
Anadolu University
Eskisehir-TURKEY



This book is published by Idea Group Publishing. The book has three sections which consist of sixteen chapters. In addition of those it has an author bibliography and an index. 28 authors, including editors, have contributed to the book.

This book consists of three sections. First section focuses on strategies and paradigms. Second section is about course development instruction and quality issues. Third section is about building an organization for successful distance educations programs.

Section 1 consists of four chapters which are about "How distance programs will affect students, courses, faculty and institutional future; Design level for distance and online learning; E-moderating in higher education; Community-based distributed learning in a globalized world". In Chapter 1, authors depict how distance education classes are designed suitably to be effective. The authors discuss how tools and technologies used to facilitate learning opportunities for distance educational courses. They also describe many changes that required by students, faculty, and the university itself. Changes (such as; skill sets and faculty commitment) which are necessary for successful paradigm shift are discussed. Chapter 2 gives a framework which contains six levels of design for online and distance programs. This multi-leveled design process build on a philosophical base grounded in learning and change theory, as well as instructional design. Also this chapter suggests a set of principles and questions derived from that framework. Chapter 3 describes e-moderating. This chapter considers and explores the knowledge and skills that the best e-moderators have and how they can be recruited, trained and developed. In chapter 4, the authors look for ways that distributed learning can be developed to enhance collaborative learning in ways that will allow for respectful connections. They maintain the viewpoint that respectful partnership can be developed. They demonstrate the potential of this philosophy by describing two pilot programs for indigenous learners.

Section 2 consists of seven chapters which focus on instructional course development and quality issues. The authors in this section suggest indicators and strategies for maintaining quality throughout design and implementation process. In chapter 5, the authors discusses fundamental changes necessary for instructors to make distance learning more effective and appropriate for a growing audience and also present practical guidelines and examples for designing successful online courses. Chapter 6 uses an educational process model, the authors examine inputs, process and outputs that lead to list of best practices for tackling the virtual classroom. Chapter 7 identifies key components of distance education satisfaction. Chapter 8 focuses on the challenge surrounding assessment techniques in online education and describes various strategies ranging from participation technique to online group work, peer and self-assessment. In chapter 9, provides the results of a comparison between two sections of a graduate programming class, where one is an on campus class and the other a distance class. In chapter 10 the authors contend that conventional electronic learning materials are only suitable for a small target audience and cover only a few learning styles. For this reason they provide examples of the development of high quality and economically sensible distance learning materials. In Chapter 11, the authors examine how students from different cultural backgrounds use e-mail to communicate with other students and teachers.

Section 3 consists of five chapters which are generally about issues and strategies for building an organization for successful distance education programs. In chapter 12, the author suggests a variation from traditional approach for packaging and delivering internet education. The basis for Chapter 13 is to identify ways in which institutions can maximize their return on investment for distance education offerings through the appropriate and timely re-purposing of online content for different markets. Chapter 14 examines two common approaches that higher education institutions when implementing online learning programs and provides the rationale for their success or failure. Chapter 15 gives an example of an inter-university education network and presents the expected effects of co-operational activities. Chapter 16 presents the results from an empirical study that show students perceive a face-to-face course supported by a web site to be useful in enhancing their academic performance.

Distance education system is forcing the universities to rethink their foundations and shift their paradigms. This book discusses many challenges presented in the distance education environment, describes innovative approaches for meeting these challenges. It shares some experiences. In this respect the book is a useful guide for who are interested in distance education especially after paradigm shift.

Reference: Distance Learning and University Effectiveness: Changing Educational Paradigms for Online Learning, Edited by Caroline Howard, Karen Schenk and Richard Discenza Hershey (U.S.) and London (U.K.): Information Science Publishing (an imprint of Idea Group Inc.), 2004. 352 pages. \$59.95 US, paperback. ISBN: 1-59140-221-2

Biodata of editors:

Caroline Howard

Caroline Howard is on the faculty of the Goizueta Business School of Emory University where she teaches in the Decision Information area. She has an MBA from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, and a PhD from University of California, Irvine. She researches, consults and publishes in the areas of distance education, electronic commerce and telecommuting.

Karen D. Schenk

Karen D. Schenk holds a PhD in Information Technology and an MBA in Finance from the University of California, Irvine. She has been a professor of Information Systems at the University of Redlands, California, and North Carolina State University, teaching courses in Information Technology and Systems Design. Her research has focused on distance education, lifelong learning, decision support systems and human-computer interfaces. She is currently Senior Partner of K. D. Schenk and Associates Consulting, working with companies on decision support systems development and IT internal customer relationships.

Richard Discenza

Richard Discenza is a professor of Production Management and Information Systems in the College of Business and Administration at the University of Colorado in Colorado Springs. He received his BSF in Forestry from Northern Arizona University, an MBA from Syracuse University, and a PhD in Management from the University of Oklahoma. Dr. Discenza was formerly dean of the college where he helped establish and oversaw the development of a distance MBA program. His current research focuses on business process reengineering, distance education, project management and supply chain management. He has published numerous articles in professional and academic journals and is a member of APICS, the Academy of Management, and PMI.