How to Detect & Prevent Plagiarism in the Online Classroom

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Presented by:

Errol Craig Sull

Errol Craig Sull has taught online courses for more than 10 years. Currently an online composition instructor, he has developed online teaching activities that are in use at more than 300 colleges and universities throughout the United States & Canada. He was a 2005 recipient of the Dell “Teacher of Excellence” award and is a columnist for the online newsletter Online Cl@ssroom.
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Stressed, overworked, underpaid, and unhappy are all termini that nurses use to describe their work. Nurses today are at a disadvantage because their numbers as a whole are dwindling, and employment is expected to grow more slowly in hospitals—healthcare's largest industry—than in most other healthcare industries. Many factors contribute to the shortage and not one is more detrimental than the other. An increase in population paired with longevity of the baby boomer generation creates larger numbers of medical patients requiring healthcare. In 2007, Auerbach, Jackson, and Riley documented that the nursing shortage had ventured into a nine-year stretch, which is the greatest shortage in fifty years. They also stated that in the year 2001 the shortage resulted in the vacancy of 126,000 nursing positions within the hospital system. Gerson and Oliver (2018) published statistics estimating the shortage to reach 340,000 nursing openings by the year 2020. Murray (2002) stated, “as of March 2000, the total number of licensed RN’s in the United States was estimated to be 2,696,540, which is the greatest increase (5.4%) reported in previous national surveys.”
In view of its statistics, one European country, Holland, is a beacon of hope for the rest of the denizens of our planet. How do they do it? Midwives! Most women in Holland are cared for by midwives and never see an obstetrician, and nearly half of those who are considered low-risk have their babies at home. Holland also has a national health care system, and after their homebirth Dutch women have a nursing assistant come to their home several hours a day for the first couple of weeks; they understand how critical the postpartum period is to ensure a successful transition into motherhood. As Dr. Odent notes:

Countries with skyrocketing rates of cesareans are those where obstetricians outnumber the midwives to such a degree that they play the role of the primary caregivers…On the other hand, countries with good statistics, including moderate rates of cesareans, are those where the midwives outnumber the obstetricians and remain the primary caregivers. (2014, p.132)
A) In explaining how he proposes to extend the current view of design, Reeves (1999) adds three primary components to design, including fundamental emphasis on human cognition, designing content equally with interface, and considering everyone who will use the design to be a learner.


B) Learner-centered design expands current design by acknowledging total cognitive complexity as a core concern, expanding design to the information content of the system, and seeing all users as distributed learners who seek understanding.


SOURCE: Indiana State University
From William Zinsser's *On Writing Well*:
Good writing has an aliveness that keeps the reader reading from one paragraph to the next, and it's not a question of gimmicks to "personalize" the author. It's a question of using the English language in a way that will achieve the greatest strength and the least clutter.

From a student's essay:
An important quality of good writing is "aliveness" (Zinsser 6). To achieve aliveness, a writer must avoid gimmicks and instead use the English language to achieve great strength and a minimal amount of clutter.

Works Cited

1. Explain why there is or is not plagiarism in the passage from the student's essay.

There is plagiarism because the student’s second sentence paraphrases from Zinsser without documentation. The student’s paraphrase also borrows too closely from the original.

2. Identify where, if at all, the student uses attribution.

The student does not use attribution in this passage.
Resources

Free Plagiarism Software
Grammarly (grammarly.com)
WCopyfind (http://www.plagiarism.phys.virginia.edu/Wsoftware.html)
Viper (http://www.scanmyessay.com/plagiarism-detection-software.php)
Dupli Checker (http://www.duplchecker.com/)
crossrefme (http://www.crossrefme.com/)
Plagium (http://www.plagium.com/)
PaperRater (http://www.paperrater.com/)
The Plagiarism Resource Cite (http://www.plagiarism.phys.virginia.edu/)

Citation or common knowledge?
http://www.uta.fi/FAST/ PK6/ REF/ commkno w. html
http://www.adams.edu/library/plagiarism_common/plagiarism_common.php

How to incorporate quotes into papers
http://www.studyguide.org/quote_integration_ 2.htm
http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/patten/usingquotes.html

How to paraphrase
http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/619/01/
http://libguides.library.cofc.edu/content.php?pid=112355&sid=1155292

YouTube videos focusing on preventing plagiarism, why not to plagiarize, etc.:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gC2ew6qLa8U (quirky look at why not to plagiarize)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4P05vgxDoPU (mini-lesson: What is Plagiarism?)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VnTPv9PtOoo (mini-lesson: A Quick Guide to Plagiarism)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=96QfIoDznXI4 (Plagiarism: Real-Life Examples)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7j5z7MNP4SU (another quirky look at why not to plagiarize)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sQGBhZ0ov6o (Your work, not someone else’s)
Websites to post that offer examples of / impact of poor writing in the workplace:
http://ezinearticles.com/?Employees-Poor-Writing-Skills-Can-Lead-to-Lost-Profit&id=46603
http://insurancecopywriter.blogspot.com/2008/06/example-of-bad-business-writing.html
http://www.d.umn.edu/~schilton/Courses/Snippets.html
http://www.moneyinstructor.com/lesson/buswritemisused.asp

Free plagiarism checkers:
http://www.grammarly.com/?q=plagiarism&gclid=CMbZw_an4qgCFQbe4AodHzAwDA
http://www.10dollararticles.com/plagiarism-checker.htm
http://www.plagiarismdetect.com/
http://plagium.com/
http://www.articlechecker.com/
http://www.dustball.com/cs/plagiarism.checker/

Famous folks who have plagiarized:
http://www.coedu.usf.edu/~dorn/tutorials/plagiarism/who-cares3.htm
http://www.plagiarismtoday.com/2009/03/31/famous-plagiarists-could-it-happen-today/
http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,128514,00.html
http://dearauthor.com/features/letters-of-opinion/the-many-faces-of-plagiarism/

Differences between “common knowledge” and what must be cited:
http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/plagiarism.htm
http://www.plagiarism.org/plag_article_educational_tips_on_plagiarism_prevention.html
http://ed.oc.edu/writersblock/avoidplag/media/b.htm (contains a great self-test)
http://cosmos.champlain.edu/library/pages/articles/research_guide_pages/tenthings.htm
http://www.transcendentalists.com/plagiarism_and_copyright.htm
http://wp.rutgers.edu/courses/plagiarism
Preparing Students in the First Week of an Online Course

By Rob Kelly

The initial hours of an online course are an important time in which students learn how to navigate their way around, get to know the instructor and fellow students, and begin to form a learning community. With so much to do in such a short time, where should they begin? Let them decide, says John Graves, assistant professor of science education at Montana State University-Bozeman.

Graves, who has taught online for 15 years, provides students with the essential resources to get started and lets them decide what to do first. He teaches in a graduate program for teachers, so his students are perhaps more self-motivated than undergraduates, but Graves says that his approach to the beginning of an online course would work with undergraduates as well. “One of the first things they encounter when they see my course is a home screen where there are very clear instructions as to what they need to do, but there’s actually a choice for them, so it’s not that they have to do a, b, and c in a linear fashion,” Graves says. “I’ve set it in such a way that it doesn’t matter where they begin as long as they go through each of the pieces and that they eventually get through what needs to be done.” Among these initial activities are personal introductions, a podcast, and a scavenger hunt.

Introductions

Each student is asked to post an introduction of him- or herself on the discussion board. This exercise opens the door to sharing common interests, experiences, and concerns. Graves has found that it’s important for the instructor to acknowledge each student’s introduction individually. “I’m online pretty much all day during those first days of the course. I’m watching the discussion area where students are posting their introductions. They’re telling a little bit about themselves. Some of them I have met face to face, but many I have not. As I’m watching them post their introductions, I will, as quickly as I can, send back a private message to each student and try to find some way to make a connection. Maybe they live in Hawaii—I was there last spring. Maybe they teach middle school science—that’s what I did for 30 years. Whatever it

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happens to be, try to find some connection to let them know you’re glad they’re in the class.

Students really appreciate that the instructor takes time to do that,” Graves says.

**Podcast**

Graves thinks it’s important that students have a personal connection with him. To help establish that connection, he posts a podcast introduction so that students can see and hear him so that he is not perceived as a “virtual” instructor. In addition, this introduction includes background information about the course. It’s pretty much the same material they would read in the syllabus, but they get it from me personally so they can see me and hear my voice,” Graves says.

**Scavenger hunt**

Graves has used a scavenger hunt as a fun, engaging way to introduce students to the various parts of the course. “I found I had spent an awful lot of time providing resources for the students, and they weren’t utilizing those resources. Even though I would tell them to read a writing expectations page, I kept seeing common errors in their writing. I made some of those points scavenger hunt questions, so I wouldn’t have to deal with those as often. That really seemed to help the process,” Graves says.

In addition to familiarizing students with course resources, the scavenger hunt asks questions that require students to read the syllabus and visit the assignment drop box and grade book, such as:

- What percentage is taken off for late work? and How can you avoid a late penalty on assignments?

The scavenger hunt, which takes about a half hour to complete, is one of several assignments during the first week of the course. Other assignments include textbook readings, responses to those readings, a discussion assignment, and a discussion assessment.

**Discussion rubric**

During that first week, Graves introduces students to the discussion rubric, a self-reporting tool in which they reflect on their participation in the class discussion for the week, asking whether the student responded at least once to questions raised by the group leader, whether the student made a second response, and whether the student tied the discussion to what was going on in his or her work. The rubric also asks each student to summarize his or her participation in that week’s discussion and has a field for each student to ask instructor questions that might have occurred to the student since the discussion ended or that they were not comfortable asking in a group setting. “I think part of it is that in the discussion they often are really focused on whatever that discussion topic is, and they may not be able or willing at that point to voice that question. So now that they have a specific forum in which to reflect on the discussions for the week, they will do that. And I get all kinds of questions,” Graves says.

Contact John Graves at graves@montana.edu.
Balancing Act: Managing Instructor Presence and Workload When Creating an Interactive Community of Learners

By Tammy Stuart Peery and Samantha Streamer Veneruso

Increasingly, online educators are faced with two key directives that are critical for student success and retention: increasing instructor presence and building a community of learners.

All too often, instructors with the best intentions try to implement these concepts by being hyper responsive, trying to maintain as close to a 24/7 presence in the online classroom as possible and responding to each student discussion posting, blog, or wiki. Such an approach, however, leaves instructors exhausted, burned out, or frustrated. Worse, too much instructor presence can actually impede students from taking more responsibility for their learning, prevent critical thinking, and downplay the value of student-to-student interaction.

Others try to meet this need through the use of automated feedback to provide instant canned responses to student work, but this approach can leave students wondering if a “roboteacher” is in charge of the class rather than a real person. Furthermore, “Building a community of learners” is often interpreted as a directive to create group projects for the sake of student interaction, even though many teachers groan at the thought of another difficult to manage group project that is time consuming and unpopular with students.

Online instructors can avoid these pitfalls and truly reap the benefits of strong presence and building a community if they clearly communicate how and when they will provide feedback to students and design assignments and materials that focus on student interaction from the beginning.

The benefits of designing and facilitating a course with strong student-to-student interaction are too powerful to ignore. Students become more engaged in an interactive class, and retention rates improve. They also feel less isolated in the online environment when they have a solid connection to their peers.

In addition, students must think more critically in a class with high levels of student-to-student interaction, really engaging more in thinking about and applying the material rather than simply skimming the surface of it. Harnessing the students’ perspectives and interests creates more and varied class discussions that are truly relevant to their needs and abilities. The topics students bring to the table are often energizing and can mitigate the additional time and energy a teacher might spend researching for new perspectives, approaches, or questions to ask.

Finally, in classes where students respond to each other and lead discussions, some of the burden is lifted from the teacher, who can then focus on more quality responses to student ideas rather than an enormous quantity of responses.

Clearly, though, in order to bring the students into a more prominent position, the role of the instructor must shift. In a course that is primarily instructor-led, the teacher is the center of the action and attention. Students rely on the teacher for correct answers, often without taking the time to explore why those answers are correct or the process used to arrive at them. In this type of environment, the instructor can feel overwhelmed by student questions, and students can feel isolated from others in their classes. While material is delivered efficiently, it is not necessarily delivered effectively. In contrast, a course with student-to-student interaction places the learner at the center of the action and attention. The instructor becomes a facilitator rather than a director, responding to and encouraging student ideas rather than simply answering questions. In this environment, the teacher has more time to provide substantive comments because he/she is not responding to every question. Students feel less isolated and are more proactive in their learning because they are engaging with others.

There are a number of ways to encourage student-to-student interaction in online courses. Of utmost importance is setting the expectation for student participation from the first day they log in to the course. The course syllabus should set clear guidelines for participation expectations (number of posts, frequency of posts, types of posts, sample student posts) as well as netiquette expectations. The instructor does need to plan to be more frequently present in the first few weeks to encourage and reinforce this participation. It’s par-

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In this series on adding narration and interactivity to online PowerPoint presentations, I’m hoping to up your game in producing narrated PowerPoint slides for your online students. Giving your students PowerPoint slides with only text or graphics is a problem because slides, even with text and graphics on them, really do not stand alone. It’s hard to add enough context without adding tons of text to explain what’s on the slide. And, well, PowerPoint isn’t really the right media for tons of text. If you want students to do a lot of reading, you really should provide students with printed or downloadable print materials.

The purpose for using PowerPoint in a presentation is to support you and your message. In an online presentation, you are still the presenter and you should be there. Narration lets you connect with students and set the context for the presentation. This month I’ll be discussing preparing a narration script for use when narrating your slides.

Why a script?

Don’t think that you can just “wing it” when narrating your slides. I supposed there are some people who can do this, but I can tell you that even with a script, it’s hard to get it exactly right without doing a number of “takes.” For one thing, it’s really easy to trip on your words even with a script. So it’s inevitable that you’ll record narration multiple times in order to sound the way you want it to sound. If you try to do it without a script, there’s a good chance that you’ll need to rerecord a multitude of times, more times than if you prepare a script.

In addition, writing a script helps you think through the sequencing of your slides and the best way to present what you are talking about. Once you start adding narration text to go along with your slides, you’ll see holes in your presentation where you need to add slides and places where you need to change the order of the presentation. So the script helps you think through the best way to present your content.

Preparing the script

Writing a narration script is about writing words for students to hear, not read. And that difference makes all the difference.

To write listening-friendly scripts, you’ll want to do some things a bit differently than when you are writing for reading. Audio should sound friendly and conversational. Use contractions and feel free to use sentence fragments, just like you would use in conversation. Use a friendly tone.

Practice reading the script aloud before you narrate the slides and fix anything that sounds stuffy or awkward. When reading your script aloud, you are bound to find words, phrases, and sections that need rewriting. Try to use less complex sentences, because complex sentences can be confusing to follow. Complex sentences can be reread when written, but having to replay an entire slide is more frustrating than rereading a sentence.

Write the script so that you aren’t tempted to ad-lib. What I mean is, if you think it might be good to put in a few comments that sound off-the-cuff, write them into the script, and don’t try to ad-lib them while narrating.

Plan audio “white space” and try not to talk too long on a given slide. If you have a block of dense text, plan where you will stop and take a breath and write it in the script as WAIT or BREATHE. If you have a lot of text on a single slide, consider how to make your wording more concise; if you need to keep all the text, consider dividing the narration among two or more slides.

Creating narration scripts in PowerPoint

PowerPoint makes it very easy to create a narration script. Simply write the narration that goes along with each slide in the Slide Notes pane that appears below each slide in Normal View, as shown below.

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Once you enter the narration for each slide, output the script by selecting Publish from the Office button in the top left corner (PowerPoint 2007 and 2010) and then selecting Create Handouts in Microsoft Word next to slides.

PowerPoint will send thumbnails of your slides and the narration (notes) for each slide script to Microsoft Word and you'll have a Word document with each slide and the corresponding narration. An example of one row of the table created during this process appears below.

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In this section, I'll be discussing the research surveys and questions related to synchronous e-learning. Although technologies such as chat and IM are considered synchronous e-learning, I'll be mainly talking about virtual classroom technologies here.

Voila! Your narration script! To use this Word narration script, I print it and use it when narrating my slides.

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Pay attention to repetition of the same errors in a student’s essay. When custom essays are bought by students, the author will sometimes purposely include writing errors to give the impression of a not-so-perfect essay that is less prone to be suspected of not being written by the student. The folks who write these essays usually get comfortable with including the same errors from essay to essay, and while this might initially give the impression of being “signature” errors of the real student it can also quickly backfire—if you have previously pointed out the errors to the student but they pop up again in a subsequent essay. This can indicate the student is not reading your comments, but rather “going to the well” again for a paid “original” essay.

Remember: A teacher has always been a mixture of Socrates, Helen Keller, Confucius, Horace Mann, Galileo, Booker T. Washington, and Ayn Rand ... but now must also add Sherlock Holmes, Indiana Jones, and Wyatt Earp.

Errol Craig Sull has been teaching online courses for more than 15 years and has a national reputation in the subject, both writing and conducting workshops on it. He is currently putting the finishing touches on his next book—How to Become the Perfect Online Instructor.
A Mini-Guide to Detecting and Thwarting Plagiarism

By Errol Craig Sull

Plagiarism—whether it’s material copied directly from another source or essays custom created for a fee—has always been the 800-pound gorilla in the academic Temple of Honesty and Ethics. And in a society where pressure persists (and grows) to receive excellent grades in school, to find good employment, and to produce at a high level on the job, plagiarism is not going away anytime soon. The 21st-century teacher—and especially the online instructor—must be on constant vigil to detect plagiarism. The more you know how to find plagiarism the more effective you can be at defeating it.

What follows is a comprehensive list of items to help in spotting the plagiarism that lurks around your online courses, and while these suggestions will not result in a 100 percent plagiarism-free class, they will prove effective in making you more aware of the plagiarism that does occur.

To get to know your students. The online learning environment offers several opportunities to know your students—and for you to use this knowledge in detecting plagiarism: [a] have students post a brief biography about themselves, especially asking them to discuss academic interests in high school, in a present job, and (if applicable) a previous college experience; this information can prove helpful if you need to compare a suspect essay against a student’s previous subject interest; [b] ask students to include whether they do/do not like writing and to list areas in which they still have problems; this information can be compared against writing where it seems too smooth, too good; [c] if possible, have an early-in-the-course phone chat with your students—it will give you a feel for each student’s usual vocabulary, his/her voice, level of maturity, etc.—all items that can be weighed against the “sound” of the student in a paper and a possible later conversation to discuss suspected plagiarism.

Use a “Tell me about yourself” type of essay at the beginning of class. This is an expanded, more formal version of the brief biography and while the facts contained in it can be helpful, what is more telling is the students’ styles of writing, writing foundation (grammar, punctuation, spelling, proofreading) errors, and layout approach. It is important to ask the students what they hope to take away from the course and their goals beyond college—this information can often tell you if the student truly does know or is just winging it (as writers for hire are wont to do).

Discussion threads are shadow plagiarism checkers. Discussion threads ask for spontaneous postings, and thus there is less inclination for students to pay others to sit in on discussions. When a student is suspected of plagiarism, go over his/her discussion postings. These postings offer a nice trail of a student’s true writing style for comparison. The approaches, interactions, and subject choice of students can also be telling when compared to a suspected plagiarized essay. Those “pay to be me” writers who take the actual student’s place in a discussion thread, can often be unmasked if you note the frequency with which the suspect student posts, the tone of the postings, the times of the postings, and the sophistication of the postings—there are hints here of a pseudo student if you compare and contrast against this “student’s” tenure in class.

Ask your student to more broadly discuss a subject from a suspect assignment. Whether the student has copied from another source or paid someone to write a custom essay, the chances are slim that the student will know in depth the material discussed in such a paper. Call the student—it must be a conversation in real time for it is important you hear the student’s tone—under the guise of merely seeing how all is going. But then ask the student to expand on a particular subject or part of a subject in a suspect paper: this can often reveal the student does not have a solid understanding of the topic.

Use Google and other search engines. Search engines offer a quick—and often quite accurate—means of checking students’ work for instances of plagiarism. (Note: The overwhelming research choice for those who write essays for a fee is Google and Google Scholar: the sites are fast, comprehensive, and free.) Type in one or two sentences, hit “Enter,” and see what comes up. Many students are under a severe time crunch; often, they simply look to the Internet to use material, either whole or in parts, for their essays. And it is important you don’t do just a one-time check of this; rather, spot-check throughout the paper. For a student may have a paragraph or less from the Internet buried within his or her own text. If you do find copied portions be sure to save the URL for evidence.

Make note of sudden changes in voice, vocabulary, and approaches in writing. Many

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students are not sophisticated enough in their writing abilities to smoothly meld or integrate plagiarized portions of their essays into their own writing; this results in sudden, obvious changes in vocabulary, sentence structure, voice, and flow of a paper. When this occurs, it is a nearly certain sign the student has inserted material that is not his or her own.

**Ask for input from students on what they have been taught regarding plagiarism.** Whether you post a discussion thread or ask for a mini essay, getting students’ thoughts on plagiarism is important for three reasons: [a] it reinforces your focus on plagiarism (and thus can help in minimizing plagiarism); [b] it can give you yet another sample of a student’s writing; [c] the students’ thoughts on plagiarism can give you an indication on what students might be more apt to plagiarize; also, such comments from the students can be helpful in any individual conversations with students regarding suspected plagiarism.

**Discuss a topic in a chat with a student suspected of plagiarism.** The chat feature in online courses is a helpful real-time tool that can trip up someone who plagiarizes: [a] compare spontaneous writing against the student’s suspect essay; [b] ask about a particular topic the student discussed in the paper in question, then note how long it takes the student to respond (an unusually lengthy amount of time can indicate that either the student or a student stand-in is looking up information, and thus the student is not familiar with the material his or her paper indicates was researched).

**Ask the suspect student “reveal questions” about his/her work.** This is a conversation—again, it must be a live phone chat—where you ask the student questions such as, “Very interesting point you raised on X in your paper—what made you decide on that topic?” “Wow, you had some really good writing in several portions of your paper; it was very impressive! But I am curious as to why other parts of your paper read almost as if they were written by someone else—could you explain this to me?” “Your research was excellent, as I found passage after passage that showed you used the Internet quite extensively for your paper—but you have no citations: why?” In none of these questions are you accusing the student of cheating; rather, you are asking what are known as “focused questions,” i.e., you are narrowing in on the problem by first beginning with a positive, to lower the student’s guard, then asking a question that is anything but positive—and this can quickly catch the student off guard.

**Have plagiarism software at the ready.** Out of dishonesty comes an industry, and thus plagiarism detection software was born. Many schools—online and face-to-face—subscribe to such services, but there are also free ones. (These services are most effective in checking for material that is copied, not custom created by an essay writer for hire.) Here is a sampling of these:


**Note:** Probably the most comprehensive listing of plagiarism tools can be found at a site called Plagiarism Tools (www.shambles.net/pages/staff/ptools) and an exhaustive listing of online research tools at VirtualSalt (www.virtualsalt.com/search.htm).

**Check the citations and research students use.** Students who copy from the Web—or anywhere, for that matter—often do not cite, cite incorrectly, use outdated sources, mix citation formats, and/or have unusual formatting (which may indicate copy and paste). Check more than one of the student’s papers to see if such a pattern holds: the more you see one or more of these “signs,” the greater the probability the student has plagiarized. (Remember: students do make innocent citation errors, so keep this in mind before deciding each student citation error means plagiarism.)

**Customized essays for sale often become stock essays for sale.** Although the initial custom paper a student has bought is more difficult to detect as not the student’s own work, many of these papers end up as stock papers to be bought from essay mills, and thus they often can be found floating somewhere on the Web. Thus, check any suspect student’s work (and, ideally, all students’ essays) against plagiarism software.

**Student emails can prove helpful in checking for plagiarism.** When students write you it is nearly always the real students registered in your class who are writing; it is important to save these as a means of checking the students’ writing style, errors, and voice against any

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particularly important that instructors notice when students aren’t participating and give them a gentle nudge to reinforce how important their interaction is through an email or phone call. A strong, encouraging presence at the beginning helps to retain students and demonstrate that their presence is important. As the course progresses, each major assignment should have a student-to-student interactive component that is clearly explained and modeled in the assignment description.

In addition, students should be provided with rubrics or other measures that clearly indicate how their interaction with each other will be assessed and why it’s important to their understanding of the material. When instructors clearly communicate a relevant purpose for the interaction as well as a clear assessment method, students become more confident and interested in participating.

Another element that is especially key is including a self-reflective component, where students can think about how and when they are participating and make a plan for how they might participate even more fully. Once students are given the opportunity to take stock of how much they’ve done and learned by participating with each other, they really grow to value the opportunities the teacher provides to interact.

As a course moves forward, instructors can then be more targeted in their communication with students, sending personalized feedback each week to a different group of students, or summarizing a discussion rather than responding to each post within it. Doing so allows the student interaction to be the focus of the discussion rather than the instructor’s response to each individual being paramount.

While creating a facilitation plan encouraging student-to-student interaction is essential, creating a highly interactive course balanced with a strong instructor presence is more than an issue of facilitation strategy; it really begins at the course design level. Incorporating assignments such as student-led discussions, wikis or blogs, student-prepared study guides, student-generated test questions, peer assessments, group projects, problem-based assignments, and question/answer areas in which students can respond to each other is the foundation for generating student participation. Similarly, discussion questions or topics need to be carefully designed to generate multiple thoughtful responses rather than soliciting simple yes or no or single correct answer responses. When this type of interaction is built into a course from the ground up through scaffolded or interrelated assignments, student-to-student interaction becomes the main expectation of the course, rather than the exception.

Increasing student-to-student interaction in online courses asks learners to become stronger critical thinkers. They must not only read and understand the text, but must also develop good questions that elicit responses from their classmates and formulate responses that further the discussion and encourage ideas from others. True, sometimes, they’ll get some things wrong—but those can be used as teachable moments, with other students explaining their different answers and how they arrived at them, and certainly, the teacher will still be present to clarify and extend the discussions as needed. When students respond to each other, they are not only thinking more deeply, they are building community and learning to work as teams. Students become more engaged with each other and the class and are often more successful as a result. Implementing strategic course design and targeted interaction with students allows instructors to create a balance that is to the benefit of both teachers and students.

Tammy Stuart Peery is an assistant professor and English department chair at Montgomery College in Germantown, Md. In 2010 she was recognized at the Maryland Distance Education Association’s Distance Educator of the Year.

Samantha Streamer Veneruso is an associate professor and English department chair at Montgomery College in Rockville, Md. She is a certified Quality Matters online course reviewer. Her course En 101, Techniques of Reading and Writing I, was awarded Quality Matters certification. She was the lead designer for two of Montgomery College’s online common course templates, which are fully designed, ready to teach online courses.

On February 23 Peery and Veneruso will lead the Magna Online Seminar “How to Balance Online Learner Needs and Instructor Workload. For information about this online seminar, see http://www.magnapubs.com/catalog/balance-online-learner-needs-and-instructor-workload/.
Using Data to Improve Online Courses

By Rob Kelly

There are several sources of data that instructional designers can use to improve online courses. These include student feedback, course tracking information, and instructor feedback. Each data set provides a piece of the picture, but they are much more insightful when used in combination.

In an interview with Online Classroom, Phil Ice, director of course design, research, and development at the American Public University System, talked about an explanatory mixed-methods research design applied to instructional technology and instructional design.

“The mixed methods paradigm basically says that neither qualitative nor quantitative data on their own are sufficient. You have to balance what you’re seeing coming in from multiple sources and make sense of the whole picture. You do not always need a formal research question. It’s an open-ended research question. When you get down to it, data mining is what we’re talking about,” Ice says.

This approach to course design and improvement changes the role of the instructional designer, Ice says. “The instructional designer’s job becomes interpretation of what the data sets mean in real time or near time and then combining it with end-of-course survey data. The ID’s job is a lot more complex than it was 10 years ago when we thought about building a series of activities, documents, and resources, letting students progress though the course, and our job was done. The job has become one of actively monitoring what is going on and being able to take that end-of-course data, merge it with what’s going on during the course, and seeing how we can modify the course,” Ice says.

Student feedback

Students are an essential source of information about the learning experience. Ice recommends using the Community of Inquiry framework, which analyzes the following elements:

• Instructional design and organization
• Ability of the instructors to facilitate discourse
• Direct instruction
• Development of social presence
• Development of cognition.

“Those are the big overarching elements that are critical underpinning to all of the other elements of success in an online course,” Ice says.

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6 Ways to Support Adult Online Learners

By Rob Kelly

Adult learners typically have very specific reasons for taking online courses and are usually highly motivated. They also bring a wealth of experience. However, being away from formal learning and having to adapt to the online learning environment can be quite challenging even for the most motivated and intelligent students. To address this issue, adult learners need to become more aware of how they learn, says Natalie Peeterse, an adjunct English instructor at the University of Montana. She says that instructors can help adult learners become more self-aware by using the following metacognitive scaffolding techniques:

- **Build on previous learning**—“I think the best way to start off an online course with this type of students is to get them thinking about prior experience,” Peeterse says. “One of the things to do in the course is to move past introductions and get students to recall past learning experiences. For example, you could ask, ‘Can you think of a learning situation in which you excelled? What was that like? Can you give us a specific example of learning something? How did you go about learning it?’”

- **Require critical reflection**—After students complete their first major assignment, have them discuss what worked for them, what they struggled with, and what help they needed. “I think it’s great to share that with peers because it’s an easy topic to interact about, so they’re more likely to do it. I also think the interaction should be required and graded so students are sure to do it. Critical reflection is a great online discussion activity. Students get a sense of connection and are also able to articulate what they need help with, which is something that I think is a little challenging for the adult learner, but it’s really important that they express that and have that be addressed and also see that other students are struggling with similar problems,” Peeterse says.

- **Provide structured feedback**—Peeterse recommends posting feedback on the same day every week within 72 hours of the end of each unit. “[Without timely feedback], students are just stuck out there flying blindly until they get something to grab onto. One of the ways to help students build that metacognitive awareness is to give them solid, timely feedback. Adult learners sometimes are not able to self-assess their performance. Gauging the difference between how you feel you performed and how you actually performed is really important. A lot of students are terrified of failing but find that they did really well. Then they have to recalibrate their self-assessment, which is part of the idea behind metacognitive scaffolding. If you can build that self-awareness into the course, if you can build those structures so students can compare and contrast how they

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Understanding the Online Learning Experience

By Rob Kelly

Barbara Zuck, assistant professor of business at Montana State University–Northern, was teaching a 100-level online course in business leadership and wanted to understand her students’ experiences in the course. So at the end of the course she asked students three open-ended questions:

• What are the two greatest difficulties you had taking this course in an online environment?
• What three things surprised you most by taking this course in an online learning environment?
• What three things would you change about this course, assuming it were also taught in an online learning environment?

Despite the small sample size (19), Zuck has gleaned some useful information that has influenced how she teaches the course. (She continues to ask students these questions to get a larger sample and more useful insights.)

Many of the students were first-time online learners, and their comments reflected this. The following themes emerged from the students’ comments:

• Time management is important.
• The course required more work than expected.
• Some students missed being in the classroom.
• Some students wanted more peer interaction.
• Some students felt disconnected.
• The course required commitment and motivation.
• Some students wanted more input from the instructor.
• Some found the course interesting and easy to navigate.

“I was somewhat surprised by their responses. One of the comments that came out pretty strongly was, ‘This is so much more work that I thought it would be,’” Zuck says.

This surprise at the amount of work involved in the course came despite expectations clearly delineated in the syllabus, which included details about threaded discussions and weekly exercises, as well as an explanatory paragraph for each assignment.

Students were very positive about a community-service assignment, but they did struggle to find the time to spend the required 20 hours working with a community partner. Given the frequency of this concern, Zuck has reduced the number of hours students spend in the field to 15.

To help students manage their time better, Zuck has changed the ways she manages assignments. For example, rather than establishing Sunday night assignment deadlines, which are typical in other online courses and can create workload/time management issues for students, Zuck sets deadlines throughout the week to avoid the “Sunday night crunch.”

On larger assignments, Zuck has implemented several milestone deadlines to help keep students on track and provide feedback. “I have found that sometimes my communication or how my students are reading my instructions can create some confusion. The milestones help keep me making sure I give good feedback to students on their work, and it gives them the opportunity to turn in a better paper at the end.” Zuck says.

To improve clarity, Zuck provides a rubric and examples for each assignment and sends each student three feedback emails per week. “I found that with online learning, students really like the rubrics because it’s a way for me to communicate my expectations. It’s in a little bit different format, and when the students get their grades they can very easily see where I mark the points off in each category. Rubrics have really helped me in my communication with the students,” Zuck says.

Self-confidence and motivation were issues for some students in the study. Zuck decided to send weekly inspirational/motivational quotes to the class. “I have had some students email me back and say, ‘Wow! That really made my day!’ It’s a small thing, but at least the students who took this course realize that they may need some positive influence in their world,” Zuck says.

Zuck also asks permission to post exemplary work to serve as examples for others as a way to improve morale and motivate students.

Zuck has established an open student forum for students to post and request assistance from other students, as a way to create connections among students. The forum also provides a space for students to share their projects with each other.

Zuck will continue to ask these three questions in future sections of the course and will use the feedback to shape the course. She also will look at other ways to solicit student feedback. “We, as instructors, should look for opportunities throughout the semester to get feedback from students. From an assessment point of view, it can be very valuable,” she says.
In this series on adding narration and interactivity to online PowerPoint presentations, I’m hoping to up your game in producing narrated PowerPoint slides for your online students. Slides, even with text and graphics on them, aren’t particularly as good as instructional content because someone needs to explain what’s on each slide. You are still the presenter and you should explain, right? (Right.)

Last month I discussed writing a narration script to use when narrating your slides. I explained that writing a narration script is about writing words for hearing rather than reading, and that distinction is critical. This month I’ll provide a set of tips to prepare for recording narration that sounds good to your students. Some of these tips come from Tom Kuhlmann (www.articulate.com/rapid-elearning) at Articulate, the authoring tool I use most often for recording narrated PowerPoint slides. (I’ll discuss this tool and others in a future article.)

Why should you care that your narration sounds good? Let me put it this way: poor-sounding narration makes it harder to listen and makes the narrator sound less professional. So here are some tips that will help you sound professional and clear.

Tip 1: Use a decent microphone

If you are going to be recording narration regularly, you should invest in a decent microphone to use when recording narration. Good doesn’t mean expensive. I use the Plantronics DSP USB headset microphone that I bought for my computer, and Tom Kuhlman says he has good luck with this headset microphone as well.

Many experts, including Kuhlmann, suggest using a unidirectional desktop microphone (rather than an omnidirectional desktop microphone). That’s because unidirectional microphones record your narration from one direction only and are less likely to pick up noise coming from other directions (such as the whoosh coming from the vents in the ceiling). A number of people recommend the Samson Go Mic Compact USB Microphone (see the Amazon.com reviews). Also consider using a microphone pop filter to help prevent the popping Ps that are common when recording your voice.

Tip 2: Prepare the environment

Recording studios have special walls that dampen the sound. Most of us aren’t going to set up a real recording studio in our homes or offices, but we should do what we can to produce audio that doesn’t sound like it was recorded inside the mall or near the television with children yelling and the phone ringing.

The place where you record should ideally be quiet and far from the action. It should ideally have a carpeted floor, furniture, and heavy curtains that will dampen the sound. You should avoid a space with bare furniture and uncovered walls. That’s because you’re looking for a place that doesn’t echo. Then you’ll want to reduce as much background noise as possible:

• Shut the door.
• Let those around you know you are recording and need quiet. Put up a sign.
• Turn off or cover air vents.
• Close windows and blinds or curtains.
• Unplug office machines and the phone. Put your cell phone in another room.
• Check to see if your chair squeaks when you move. If it does, oil it or get another chair!
• Place the microphone away from your computer (computer fans are noisy) and the microphone cord away from your computer’s power cord.

Believe it or not, most walk-in closets work for recording because clothes dampen the sound! Cubicles are also designed to absorb sound, so they may work well if there isn’t too much going on nearby or in the halls. Or better yet, find a smallish room with a cubicle and a door you can shut. Or pin up quilts, blankets, or egg-crate foam on the walls.

If recording at your desktop computer isn’t going to work because of noise, consider recording into a portable device and going somewhere you can control the noise. You could use your laptop or portable recorders made for this purpose. But doing this means you need to transfer your files from the portable device and then sync the files with your slides (unless they are on the laptop you are using), so this option may be less desirable because of the extra

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Tip 3: Record using the same environment

This may not be intuitive, especially if you are just getting started with recording narration, but you will be doing retakes, sometimes at a different time than when you recorded the original narration. If you record in the same place each time using the exact same setup, you’ll be better able to match the sound of your narration from one recording session to another, and that’ll make it easier to swap in rerecorded narration.

In addition to using the same room and setup for recording, you’ll want to use the same microphone, same recording distance (between you and the microphone), same recording settings, same computer, and so on.

Tip 4: Practice recording

Before you start recording for real, you’ll want to practice and do some test recordings lasting 20 to 30 seconds each. You’ll want to evaluate the test recordings for sound clarity, background noise, and voice level. Try moving the microphone toward you and away from you to find the best recording distance. The best distance for your microphone is typically 6 to 12 inches from your mouth.

Some people find that they get better audio if they stand up while recording. That’s because many people tend to slouch when sitting, and slouching makes you breathe more irregularly and may make your voice less clear.

Some people tend to speak very quickly when recording, and this makes you sound rushed. Because you are aiming for a friendly, conversational tone, you may need to practice with the script in order to slow down and make it sound like you are talking directly to your students.

Once you have prepared your slides and script and have prepared for good audio, you can start recording your narration. Next month I’ll discuss some tools and applications you can use to record your narration.

Patti Shank, PhD, CPT, is a widely recognized information and instructional designer and writer who helps others build valuable information and instruction. She can be reached through her website: www.learningpeaks.com.

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feel and think and how they did, they can start to self-regulate and self-correct. That is what you really want students to be doing.”

• Use check-in quizzes—Peeterse recommends creating a predictable structure for an online course, and part of that can be a series of check-in quizzes, yes-no or Likert-scale quizzes that ask students to stop and self-assess once every two weeks. These quizzes can have students rate themselves in terms of how they think they are doing and indicate which concepts they understand and which concepts they are struggling with.

• Monitor students’ participation—Peeterse recommends using a course management system’s early-warning system to monitor student participation in the course. Blackboard, for example, enables instructors to send automated emails to students who do not log in during a specific time. Peeterse uses the early-warning system during the first two weeks of a course. She has the system set up so that if a student has not logged on for five days, he or she receives an automated email. She also has the system set up to notify students who fail to submit the first major assignment.

• Pick up the phone—Automated emails can help, but sometimes there is no substitute for a live conversation, Peeterse says.

Contact Natalie Peeterse at npeeterse@gmail.com.

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can leverage that to enhance the learning experience and make it more individualized and provide specific suggestions, is that really so bad?” Ice asks. “That’s the question that instructional designers and universities have to seriously confront because the technology to do that is there. Deep data mining and profiling on a current and historical basis is possible. Are we prepared to do it?”

Ice recommends discussing this issue because instructors are often unsure about best practices in the online instruction and sometimes revert to “novice status when interacting with technology.”

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work involved.

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A Mini-Guide to Preventing Online Plagiarism

By Errol Craig Sull

Last month’s column focused on detecting online plagiarism, but wouldn’t it be much better if there were none to detect? What follows is a variety of approaches to keep plagiarism—both that copied from another source and that created specifically for an assignment—in check. Of course, no matter how many safeguards the online instructor uses to prevent plagiarism, it is always possible that some non-original work could slip through. Yet using one, some, or all of what I present in this column will help in the reduction of plagiarism, and when that happens we can smile just a bit more in the success of our classes.

And don’t forget: if you’d like to add tips to those I’ve listed below, please send them to me for publication in a future column.

Have a post at the start of class with a focus on plagiarism only.

This jump-starts your serious take on plagiarism. By devoting a post to plagiarism only, the students know it is not simply, “Okay—Item #5 is . . .” Here, you want the students to know your penalties for plagiarism (the first thing mentioned): that students in your previous classes have failed an assignment or subject due to plagiarism (if true); that if they have any questions on citations, etc., they should contact you immediately; and where info on citing and plagiarism can be found. You want to be clear that you take seriously any instances of plagiarism.

Continually remind students about the perils of plagiarism.

While it is imperative that you post information on plagiarism that will greet students during their first week of the class, it is also important to give them reminders throughout the course. If you do not, students can get the idea that, “Hey—Prof had to post that information, but he/she probably doesn’t really care because there are so many papers to edit and it was only mentioned one time.” By reinforcing the pitfalls of plagiarism, reminding students to contact you with citation questions, etc., you let them know this is a serious subject with you throughout the course.

Incorporate links of well-known and respected folks who have plagiarized.

No one is perfect, and thus many well-known and respected folks have plagiarized. Post links such as www.plagiarismtoday.com/2009/03/31/famous-plagiarists-could-it-happen-today, http://wrt-howard.syr.edu/Bibs/PlagFamous.htm, and www.spirititus-temporis.com/plagiarism/famous-examples-of-plagiarism.html. These list individuals who have plagiarized and what they have plagiarized.

Be sure that students know the difference between “common knowledge” and information in need of citations.

Many students have no idea as to what needs to be cited and what does not, so a brief explanation of “common knowledge” (that never needs to be cited) is in order; some websites that explain this are www.uta.fi/FAST/PK6/REF/commknow.html, www.adams.edu/library/plagiarism_common/plagiarism_common.php, http://libraries.ucsd.edu/locations/sshl/guides/preventing-plagiarism/common-knowledge.html, and http://web.mit.edu/academicintegrity/citing/facts-and-stats.html.

Make information available on citations and/or teach how to correctly cite. If already teaching your students how to properly cite sources and why they should be cited, great. However, if not, it is important that you post information for students on anything and everything related to proper citation—not only does this help the students learn a very important skill they will no doubt need beyond your course, but it also presents you as an instructor who cares that the students “get it right,” and they get a necessary tool to write solid research papers.

Require specific research components for a written assignment. If you tell the students an assignment must contain, for example, “three Internet sources, two printed scholarly journal sources, and one personal interview” or “The Seena article on nanotechnology in The Journal of American Nanotechnology,” you limit students from simply copying from or submitting someone else’s work.

Require students to include an annotated bibliography. The annotation has several parts (brief summary of the source, location info, URL, and print call number) and an evaluation of the source’s usefulness. While this is not so difficult for students creating their own papers, it does create a serious hurdle for students who want to buy or lift a paper from the Web, as few of these papers include annotated bibliographies.

Have students use research that is up to date. This can be a big help in preventing plagiarism, as so-called paper mills often have

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sources that are older; too many online "writers for hire" use Google and take whatever research best fits the topic, not paying much attention to the dates of the research. By telling students their sources must be no older than five years, you put up yet another hurdle to prevent plagiarism.

Be sure that students know how to correctly incorporate quotes and paraphrasing. Far too often students don’t know how to integrate quotes into a paragraph, including proper citation, what paraphrasing is, how to paraphrase, and how to cite it. It’s crucial that they have info on these items. These sites will help with incorporating quotes: www.studyguide.org/quote_integration_2.htm, www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/using_evidence.pdf, www.sjsu.edu/faculty/patten/usingquotes.html. These sites will help with paraphrasing: www.communicatebetter.org/2007/07/02/how-to-properly-paraphrase-2/, http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/619/01/, and http://libguides.library.cofc.edu/content.php?pid=112355&sid=1155292. Of course, make certain that students are aware of what style citation you are requiring, e.g., APA, MLA, CMS.

Post a screenshot from Turnitin.com or other plagiarism-checking software (if available). Nearly all plagiarism-checking software uses bright colors to show instances of plagiarism and possible plagiarism in papers; posting one or two screenshots of these pages can give students a vivid look at how accurate this software can be and remind them that you will be using it. Some schools also make such a service available for student use, so if your school is one of them, require each student to submit his/her paper to such a service—this can give them some added lessons in how to cite and just what constitutes plagiarism, thus preventing them from doing this in the papers they submit to you for grading.

Have students keep a journal of their writing process for each major assignment. If students know they will need to discuss their research, how they arrived at their topic and thesis statement, and problems they encountered with the assignment, they will be less inclined to submit non-original work. This journal incorporates their critical thinking and the process they went through in developing the assignment—two items that do not come bundled with plagiarized work.

Require revisions. The perfect writer is yet to be born, and thus any paper needs drafts and revisions to drafts before it is ready for final submission. When a student knows that you require this of any written assignment, it becomes yet another obstacle to submitting work that is not the student’s own. If a paper is copied, it is very difficult for the student to submit a draft with errors and then a final copy of the assignment. If the paper is to be bought from scratch through a flunky online writer, then each draft will cost the student more money and time.

Vary the audience of each major assignment. Be specific with a different audience for each paper—e.g., “Your first paper will address to a professional group familiar with the subject, your second paper will address folks who are new to the subject, and your last paper will address college professors who know a little bit about the subject.” Doing this requires students to use specific vocabulary, structural approaches, and research to fit different audiences—something that can’t be found through papers for sale on the Internet, and a process that is more time-consuming (and thus more expensive) if the paper is bought from an essays-for-hire online writer.

Have peer review sessions for students to share their assignments with others in the class. By having one online session for each major writing assignment where students must post parts or all of their papers for others in the class to peer-review, you are telling the students, in essence, “Okay—instead of just me checking out your paper for possible plagiarism, there is also the entire class.” This helps discourage plagiarism.

REMEMBER: Ben Franklin once remarked that “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure,” and Erasmus stated that “Prevention is better than cure.” Could they have known about plagiarism?

Please let me hear from you. Send along suggestions and information for future columns. You can always reach me at errolcraigsull@aol.com. And remember: please forward me your computer tips and suggestions to make teaching in the online classroom more efficient and productive.

Errol Craig Sull has been teaching online courses for more than 15 years and has a national reputation on the subject, both writing and conducting workshops on it. He is currently putting the finishing touches on his next book—How to Become the Perfect Online Instructor.
categories. While other surveys may not have the same elements to them, there are other ways to ascertain whether a course is well designed—whether the goals, objectives, and due dates are clear to the students; whether the activities you ask students to engage in are interesting to them; whether the exploration cycle is well designed; if students can easily engage with the course material; and if they can achieve the cognitive outcomes desired. If you can hit upon those elements, that’s really a survey of how well an instructional designer did in putting a course together,” Ice says.

One of the limitations of getting this kind of input from students is that it often comes at the end of the course. While this can be helpful for future sections of the course, it does not provide actionable information while the course is in session.

Web analytics

To get at information about the current section of the course, Ice recommends using Web analytics to track the students’ use of the course. For example, if the course content is segregated by page, it’s fairly simple to use free or fee-based analytic tools to track the number of visits to each page. In addition some learning management systems can indicate the path students take to get to certain content.

“We know from a lot of the existing research that the average student will view an asset approximately two times. If an asset in a class of 20 students gets somewhere between 20 and 40 hits, then that probably means that it’s a well-designed piece of material. If there are 60 to 100 or more hits to that asset, it probably means that the instructional designer did not do a great job of developing it because the students are viewing it again and again, trying to divine meaning,” Ice says.

When an asset is accessed fewer times than expected—say five times in a class of 20—that could mean that the students are skipping it because they don’t feel that it would be worthwhile or they can’t find it.

Text analytics

Analyzing qualitative data is also important in understanding the learning experience. One way to do this is to analyze the discussion forums, looking for references to assets developed for the course. If students reference assets in their discussions, “you can have a fairly high degree of confidence that the students are actually accessing them and making meaning out of them,” Ice says.

However, if students do not make references to the course materials and instead bring in assets from other sources, it could indicate that the course content was not useful, relevant, or clear.

Another explanation that can be cross checked with Web analytics is that the students did not access that course content, which could indicate a navigation issue.

Instructor feedback

Instructor feedback is another important source of data about an online course. Ice has found that debriefs in the form of weekly, biweekly, or end-of-course faculty questionnaires can provide actionable insights.

A less formal technique would be to create an instructor wiki—a place for instructors to add to a common body of knowledge about what works and what does not work in a course. Another way to get instructor feedback is to simply ask them to provide regular feedback on the course.

Gathering instructor feedback in the online learning environment is quite different than in the face-to-face environment, Ice says. This is due to the traditional silos that are prevalent in higher education as well as instructional design theory.

“Professors in the face-to-face classroom run everything. They believe that they are the foremost authority on what to teach. That’s a very different model than in the online classroom, where the instructors are dependent on the development of assets from the instructional design team.

“Instructional design theory has long said that the instructional designers work with a subject-matter expert up front. They look at the needs assessment, build the content, and turn it over to the instructor. And the only evaluation comes at the end of the course. What both these of frameworks are missing is the idea that learning is much more dynamic and organic than what can be accounted for using these models. To be really effective we have to have a situation in which feedback goes in both directions.”

On March 15 Phil Ice will lead the Magna Online Seminar “Data Driven Decision Making for Online Instructional Design.” For information see www.magnapubs.com/catalog/decision-making-for-online-instructional-design/.

We’d like to know what you think!

Please share your thoughts on this issue in a four-question online survey located at www.surveymonkey.com/s/OCN.