Success in LCB Online Programs

Excellence in development and instruction is critical to the competitiveness and success of our online programs. In recent year enrollment growth in higher education has been much higher in online programs as compared to residential programs. Factors such as online program flexibility, the expansion of high quality schools in the market and the changing attitudes toward the efficacy of online programs has contributed to this rise in popularity. Program reputation is a key criterion when students select an online program and is influenced by the quality of the courses and student experience.

Success in the online learning environment offers a unique set of challenges and require approaches that differ from traditional face-to-face courses. The most effective instructors in this modality create and foster a strong faculty-student relationship whereby students perceive the faculty member is highly responsive and committed to the student’s success. Furthermore, in these climates students reach out to peers more regularly within courses and the programs. Peers are additional resources in a course for support, co-learning and continued encouragement.

The following activities are associated with greater success in an online program. These techniques can be used by faculty to enhance their success in their online courses.

Faculty Engagement and Responsiveness:

- Introduce yourself and your course facilitators to student – consider a short video introduction.
- Define level of responsiveness to email and graded assignments in the course syllabus and manage to those commitments.
- Make yourself frequently and regularly available to your students during traditional work hours, evenings and weekends through email, office hours, phone contact or other ways.
- Use facilitators to manage small cohorts within a large class to create a seminar-like environment.

Student Success:

- Create frequent opportunities for student engagement with the course material and their peers (e.g. discussion boards, frequent quizzes, group assignments etc.)
- Provide timely and constructive feedback on assignments. Rubrics can be used to enhance the quality, quantity and timeliness of assessment.
- Provide weekly course summaries, announcements, or video messages to help direct or clarify concepts presented in the course.

Our instructional design team will assist you in developing a course that provides significant interaction and feedback opportunities. They will also direct you toward training resources to familiarize you with the Blackboard tools you’ll utilize in your course. As your experience grows with this pedagogy we’re confident you’ll expand your competency with this teaching methodology. We also invite you to share other techniques you’ve successfully used at one of our brown bag lunches held each term.