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Creating an Effective Training Curriculum for Faculty Who Teach Online

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Creating an Effective Training Curriculum for Faculty Who Teach Online

The recent explosion in demand for online education has forced many colleges and universities to implement measures to ensure the quality of their online programs. While college faculty is increasingly asked to create new online courses and adopt their existing face-to-face courses for online delivery, it is imperative they be provided with adequate training and preparation to face the challenges of teaching online. To help ensure the quality of online offerings at Sacred Heart University and to assist faculty in the development and delivery of online courses, the Office of Instructional Technology has developed a unique Digital Learning Faculty Certificate Program (DLFCP). The DLFCP is an online, eight - week program which allows participants to become acquainted with the online learning environment from the students' perspective. Each of the weekly modules focuses on a specific topic associated with developing and teaching an online course. What makes this course unique is that we start with and focus on the principles of effective instructional design for an online environment rather than the technology of the delivery platform. Additional topics covered include developing an 'e-Personality' and effective communication strategies for the online world, effective time management, and issues of copyright in the digital age. Each module includes activities which represent a step in the design, development and delivery of an online course.

Now entering its second year, the DLFCP has drawn tremendous interest from both full time and adjunct faculty at Sacred Heart University. Participants have indicated the program has been a valuable learning experience which has helped them to not only meet the challenge of developing and teaching online, but to rethink their approach to teaching

on-ground as well. At this session, we will review the content and activities that form the basis of this highly successful faculty development program and discuss the rationale that went into the design of the DLFCP as well as the challenges faced during the initial planning and development process.