**Effective Models of ELearning**

**EDTC 676**

**Higher Education Case Studies**

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| **CASE STUDY #1:**  Online Learning Director |  |
| **SECTIONS** | **CRITERIA** |
| OVERVIEW | South Range State College is an urban institution with an enrollment of 6,500 undergraduates and 2000 graduates.  **Current Situation:** SRSC is struggling financially due to declining state funding. As a result, student tuition and fees have increased. The undergraduate enrollment continues to decrease while the graduate enrollment remains stable. There are only two graduate programs available online although some individual courses are offered either online and/or as a hybrid. Online courses receive the worst student evaluations. As a result, the faculty only teaches one online course per semester due to poor evaluations. The Provost has also decided to increase online class sizes from 20 to 25 to gain revenue.  **Challenge:** As the Director for Online Learning, you will need to create a comprehensive proposal to address the decrease in undergraduate enrollment and the poor student evaluations for the online courses. |
| NEEDS ANALYSIS | In order to address the existing challenges a performance analysis should be conducted using Mager’s model (Brown & Green, p. 44)   * The performance analysis may be able to determine what the professors in the graduate programs are doing to maintain a steady enrollment as compared to the professors in the undergraduate programs. * If a difference exists, the cause should be determined. Once the cause is determined the situation should be remedied depending on the outcome. * It should also be determined whether the professors that teach online classes know how to do what is expected of them. * If they could and know how to do it then why are they not doing what they should be doing? * If the professors don’t know what is expected of them and how to do it can the task be simplified? It will also need to be determined if training will need to take place. * In addition, the existing student survey results should be analyzed closely especially the feedback from the online courses. This would be a good starting point since the data should be readily available. * People in key positions should also be interviewed in order to gain first-hand knowledge about what’s working well, what’s not working and the reasons for it. * A review of the relevant literature may also provide some key insights as to how other institutions have addressed similar concerns. * Conducting interviews with focus groups can also provide meaningful feedback from all stakeholders. |
| TASK ANALYSIS | * The instructors that teach the online courses need to have a strong background in content knowledge. * The instructors also need to have the technical expertise on how to teach an online course. * A subject matter expert should also be involved in this process. |
| LEARNER ANALYSIS | * Conduct a learner analysis to develop a clear understanding of the target audience and what they can and will be able to do (Brown & Green, p. 72). * Instructional lessons should also be developed with the guiding principles of UDL and with the different learning styles in mind. |
| GOALS/OBJECTIVES | The desired outcome of this case study is to increase undergraduate student enrollment at SRSC and create a positive experience with online learning.   * The instructional staff will demonstrate an understanding of the target audience and the skills that need to be addressed * The instructional staff will develop goals and objectives of learning aligned to the curriculum. * The instructional staff will create an online learning module that will facilitate the learning process. |
| OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION | Proposal:   * Follow the Jonassen, Hannum, and Tessmer Model of task analysis (Brown & Green, p. 58) to help determine the goals and objectives of learning along with the tasks, sequencing of instructional activities, learning environments and performance assessments. * The instructional staff should consider Mager’s Approach to Analyzing Learners (Brown & Green, p. 76) * Involve a subject matter expert to provide greater insights on the sequencing of instruction. |
| BENEFITS | * This plan has the potential to improve the educational, intellectual, cultural and socio-economic environment of the urban region that surrounds SRSC. * It can also provide the opportunity to increase revenues for the institution. |
| DOWNSIDES | * Involving a subject matter expert will require additional funding which poses a challenge due to the current budgetary restrictions. |
| OPTIONS RECOMMENDED | * According to the needs analysis survey it was determined that many of the undergraduate courses were taught by adjunct professors with limited experience in teaching at institutions of higher education. * It was also determined that the newly hired adjunct professors had not received any formal training on how to develop online modules for the students. As a result, they did not have the technical expertise needed to successfully integrate the components of the module which left the students feeling frustrated with the technology itself.   As the Director of Online Learning at SRSC the following options have been recommended from an instructional design perspective.   * Based on the needs analysis, it was recommended that moving forward, new adjuncts with less than 3 three years of experience should co-teach online classes with an experienced full-time college professor. * Furthermore, it was recommended that all instructors receive formal training on how to conduct the online modules. * In addition, live webinars and online tutorials will be accessible to the instructional staff for additional support. * Involving the assistance of a subject matter expert is also strongly recommended during the task analysis process. In doing so, the SME will assist in gathering the necessary information about the content and/or tasks that will be used to develop instruction (Brown & Green, p. 63). * Given the limited resources, the Director of Online Learning at SRSC should carry out the roles and functions of an instructional designer using Jonassen, Hannum, and Tessmer’s Model of task analysis (Brown & Green, p. 58). |

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| **CASE STUDY #2:**  A Dilemma Case in Teaching |  |
| **SECTIONS** | **CRITERIA** |
| OVERVIEW | Current Situation: The students in Paul Seymour’s Molecular Evolution course were not satisfied with the new teaching methodology that had been introduced. The students were not used to working collaboratively and preferred a different mode of instruction. As a result, the students did not rate the course favorably.  **Challenge:** Paul Seymour, a professor at the State University of Chicago, has not been able to successfully incorporate the discussion method of teaching Advanced Molecular Biology. |
| NEEDS ANALYSIS | * It would appear that the students at the State University of Chicago are more comfortable with a more traditional method of teaching. * A full-scale needs analysis will not be needed since the survey results have been gathered and the problem has been determined. * It would benefit Dr. Seymour to conduct student interviews with focus groups to obtain first-hand knowledge of some of the issues and concerns that need to be addressed. * It would be equally beneficial to consult with other members of the faculty to get a better sense of the climate and culture of the school. They may also be able to make recommendations for introducing the new method of teaching. |
| TASK ANALYSIS | * The students in Dr. Seymour’s class need to be exposed to working in collaborative groups. After all, as pre-med students, they will need to work collectively with medical teams. * Jonassen, Hannum, and Tessmer’s Model of task analysis should be employed in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the performance problem (Brown & Green, p. 58). |
| LEARNER ANALYSIS | * Conduct a learner analysis to develop a clear understanding of the target audience based on Mager’s approach to analyzing learners (Brown & Green, p. 76). |
| GOALS/OBJECTIVES | The desired outcome of this case study is to successfully introduce a new teaching methodology into the existing curriculum.   * The students will share diverse perspectives * The students will develop new approaches to resolving differences * The students will establish a shared identity with other group members * The students will develop their own voice in relation to their peers |
| OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION | Proposal:   * Dr. Seymour should create opportunities to collaborate with the instructional staff at his university as a means of reflecting on teaching and student learning. * A review of relevant literature and “best practices” should be researched. * Dr. Seymour should reconsider his approach to introducing the new teaching method. Instead of relying heavily on 50% of the group scores, he should lower the percentage to 20% until he has mastered the instructional practice. |
| BENEFITS | * By collaborating with the instructional staff, Dr. Seymour can create a professional network that will serve as a support system. * By reviewing the relevant literature, “best practices” can be modeled and adopted. |
| DOWNSIDES | * The downside of introducing a new teaching methodology in the Molecular Evolution course is that it is quite possible that it may not be the right fit. Pre-med students who are looking ahead to the MCATS may need a methodology better suited to meet their needs. |
| OPTIONS RECOMMENDED | * The staff should create Professional Learning Communities as a means of reflecting on effective teaching practices. * A review of relevant literature and “best practices” should be researched. * Instead of relying heavily on 50% of the group scores, Dr. Seymour should lower the percentage to 20% until the instructional practice has been mastered. |

References

Brown, A. and Green, T. (2011). The essentials of instructional design: Connecting fundamental principles with process and practice (2nd edition). Pearson Education, Inc. Boston, MA.