

Training for DL Sustainability with Limited Resources



Texas State Technical College-Harlingen



Outline

- TSTC-Harlingen distance learning program
- Development & approval process overview
- Mentor2Mentor program overview
- Mentor2Mentor training methodologies
- Use of training methodologies across disciplines



Part I: Context





TSTC-Harlingen Distance Learning At-A-Glance

- DL Academic Course Growth:

▫ Years	2007	—————→	2010
▫ Courses:	6	—————→	25
▫ Enrollment:	296	—————→	1039

- Multiple sections
- Sister campuses throughout Texas
- Virtual College of Texas (VCT)
- TxVSN



Development & Approval Process for New Academic Courses

1. Course and faculty selected

- Data-driven

2. Faculty orientation provided

- Process
- Procedures
- Course Development Approval Document
 - Best practices associated with the process



Development & Approval Process for New Academic Courses

3. Faculty member is mentored by
 - Faculty member experienced in DL or
 - Academic Distance Education
Department Chair

4. Course must be approved by
 - Department Chair for discipline
 - Distance Learning Advisory Committee
 - Criteria in TSTC Harlingen Quality Assurance for Online Learning rubric applied (see rubrics that follow)

Quality Assurance for Online Learning Rubric

Department Chair Review
TSTC Harlingen Quality Assurance for Online Learning

Course Reviewed: _____

Date Reviewed: _____

A. LEARNING OBJECTIVES (COMPETENCIES)

General Review Standard: Learning objectives are clearly defined and explained. They assist the learner to focus learning activities.

Specific Review Standards:	Yes/No
1. The learning objectives of the course describe outcomes that are measurable.	
2. The learning objectives address content mastery as well as critical thinking ability and increased learning skills.	
3. The learning objectives of the course are clearly stated and understandable to the learner.	
Comments:	

B. ASSESSMENT AND MEASUREMENT

General Review Standard: Assessment strategies use established ways to measure effective learning, assess learner progress by reference to stated learning objectives, and are designed as essential to the learning process.

Quality Assurance for Online Learning Rubric

Distance Learning Advisory Committee Review
TSTC Harlingen Quality Assurance for Online Learning

Course Reviewed: _____

Date Reviewed: _____

A. COURSE OVERVIEW AND INSTRUCTION

General Review Standard: The overall design of the course, navigational information, as well as course, instructor and student information are made transparent to the student at the beginning of the course.

Specific Review Standards:	Yes/No
1. Navigational instructions make the organization of the course easy to understand.	
2. There is a statement introducing the student to the course and to how student learning is structured.	
3. Netiquette expectations with regard to discussions and email communication are clarified.	
4. The self-introduction by the instructor is appropriate.	
5. Students are requested to introduce themselves to the class.	
6. Minimum technology requirements, minimum student skills, and, if applicable, prerequisite knowledge in the discipline, are clearly stated.	
Comments:	



Delivery of Approved Courses

- Mentoring done by a faculty member with experience teaching the online course
- Faculty do not have to be approved to teach in the DL environment



Part II: History



Grassroots Program



- “Mentoring” centered on how to use learning-management system and software training
- No established mentoring program for DL course design, pedagogy, and delivery
- In-house talent with DL course design and delivery experience available



Part III: Mentoring Methods





Training Methodologies

- Design
 - Design Support Training
 - Expert training
 - Focus on design
- Delivery
 - Co-Teaching
 - Over-the-shoulder
 - Focus on delivery



Theoretical Underpinnings

- Positions on both continua
are determined by:
 system's goals
 mentor's goals and abilities
 mentee's goals and abilities
and are flexible with changing circumstances

MENTOR: (experienced in DL course development)
(might have knowledge of course content)

Continuum

accept -----relinquish
responsibility responsibility

MENTEE: (inexperienced in DL course
development but has knowledge of course content)

Continuum

dependence-----independence



Method 1





Design Support & Training

- Mentee
 - Subject matter expert
 - Autonomy for content and structure
- Mentor
 - Guides design
 - Provides DL course delivery experience
 - Accelerates transition to institution-specific DL guidelines



Design Support & Training

- **Benefits** associated with method
 - Collaborative relationship
 - Moral support and experience especially if lacking in mentee's department
 - Mentor objectivity



Design Support & Training

- **Challenges** associated with method
 - May not share content experience or expertise if not in same discipline
 - Mentee may operate outside of standard department oversight, without departmental support



Method 2





Expert Training

- **Mentee**
 - Content expert
 - No DL course design or delivery experience
- **Mentor**
 - Heavily guides course design
 - Provides design and delivery best practices
 - Orients faculty to DL institutional guidelines



Expert Training

- **Benefits** associated with method
 - Mentor can provide structure while mentee can have their “content stamp” on the course
 - Mentee has constant one-on-one support to discuss course ideas and for technical support



Expert Training

- **Challenges** associated with method
 - No environment for mentee to learn from mistakes
 - Mentee may not have their “technical stamp” on the course
 - Mentee may operate outside of standard department oversight, without departmental support



Method 3





Co-Teaching

- Mentee and Mentor are Content experts
 - Deliver different sections of an already developed and approved course
 - Mentor assists mentee with course delivery best practices



Co-Teaching

- **Benefits** associated with method
 - Mentor and mentee collaborate to interpret content for students in all sections as questions and problems arise.
 - Mentee can rely on mentor for advice with delivery and technical specifics.
 - Mentor has considerable control over mentee's sections while relinquishing many time-consuming aspects of the workload.



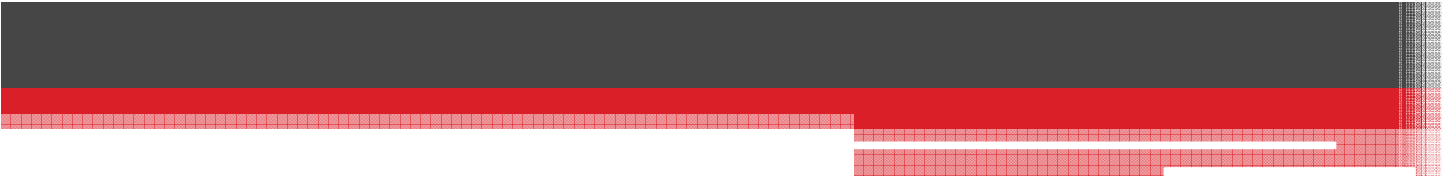
Co-Teaching

- **Challenges** associated with method
 - Care must be taken to avoid confusing students with multiple instructors or conflicting directives.
 - Mentor must be readily available to provide mentee with advice in a timely manner throughout the semester.



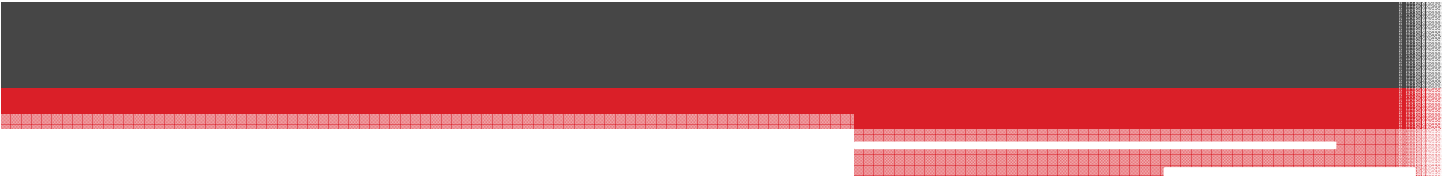
Method 4





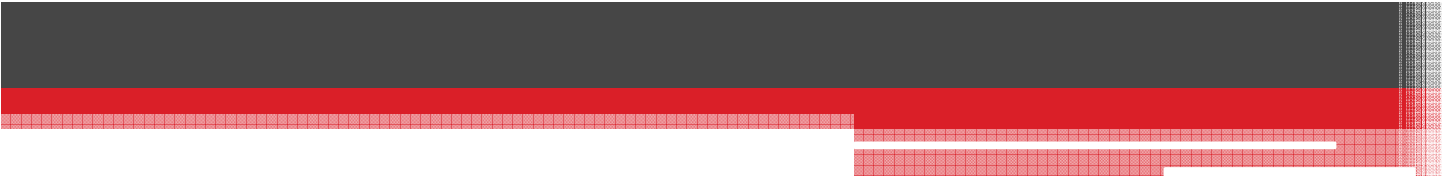
Over-the-shoulder Training

- Mentee
 - Content Expert
- Mentor
 - Doesn't have to be but can be content expert
 - Observes course in-process
 - Provides suggestions for mentee to meet best practices in course delivery



Over-the-shoulder Training

- **Benefits** associated with method
 - Mentor relationship provides the mentee with the security of having access to the mentor's expertise.
 - Mentee can use mentor to answer specific questions about technical aspects of the course.
 - Mentor can provide guidance in relating course content to feedback and evaluation.



Over-the-shoulder Training

- **Challenges** associated with method
 - The relationship requires the mentor to be readily available to provide timely responses to the mentee
 - Mentee's decisions can differ from mentor's intent due to mentee's inexperience with various aspects of the course.
 - Feedback to student can be delayed while the mentee consults mentor.



Part IV: Handling Growth





Mentor2Mentor Scaffolding Process

- Mentees who gain experience can eventually serve as mentors
- Training methods can be used to meet increased DL demand
- In-house talent maximized & celebrated
- Recruitment and retention of DL faculty
- Promotes development of DL community

Theoretical Underpinnings

- Positions on both continua
 - are determined by:
 - system's goals
 - mentor's goals and abilities
 - mentee's goals and abilities
 - are flexible with changing circumstances

MENTOR: (experienced in DL course development)
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Continuum

accept -----relinquish
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MENTEE: (inexperienced in DL course
development but has knowledge of course content)

Continuum

dependence-----independence

Use of Mentor2Mentor Program Across Disciplines

- Mentoring is **not** always one-size-fits-all

	Design Support	Expert	Co-teaching	Over-the-shoulder
	Course content is more fluid		Course content is set	
	Varying degrees of development or delivery experience			
				



Questions!

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