

Eastern Kentucky University

Faculty Senate

Academic Quality Committee

Report on Online Education

April 4, 2022

Committee Members

Senator John Brent

Senator Ann Burns

Senator Anne Cizmar

Senator Lisa Kay

Senator Jessica Price

Senator Fontaine Sands

Background

The Academic Quality Committee (AQC) received the following charge from the Executive Committee for the 2021-2022 academic year to **Conduct an assessment of instruction on campus**. It was noted with this charge the following: In the previous 2020-2021 academic year, the Academic Quality Committee did a critical assessment of what worked and what did not work during the pandemic, as a result of a major shift to synchronous and asynchronous online instruction. With the return to a more in-person academic year, and the widely accepted notion that THE major thing that makes ECU so special is the teaching, **it would be useful to do ongoing assessment of instruction**.

After further discussion among members of the AQC and the Executive Committee, the following assessment objectives were established for this report:

- Gather information related to online education
- Document ECU trends associated with online teaching/learning using descriptive data pre-pandemic through the pandemic
- Compare, if possible, ECU student outcomes considering recent online trends (pre-post pandemic)

Members of the AQC met with ECU leaders who have insight into online and on-campus teaching, including Dr. Tim Matthews, Executive Director e-Campus; Russell Carpenter, Assistant Provost Noel Studio; Dr. Jennifer Wies, Associate Provost for Academic Affairs; and Dr. Sara Zeigler, University Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Literature Review

Even before the pandemic, online education was becoming more popular among prospective students and higher education institutions. According to Allen and Seaman (2014), most higher education institutions believe that this method of instruction will become critical for the future of higher education. The flexibility of online courses and the financial challenges higher education faces make online instruction more appealing. Even though online instruction sounds enticing, there are other challenges universities and students may face with this form of instruction. Kebritchi et al. (2017) conducted a review of the literature related to online teaching in higher education and identified multiple issues and challenges impacting online learners, instructors, and content development. Issues related to **learners** included learners' expectations, readiness, identity, and participation in online courses. Issues related to **instructors** included four specific categories of changing faculty roles, transition from face-to-face to online, time management, and teaching styles. Issues related to **content** included the role of instructors in content development, integration of multimedia in content, role of instructional strategies in content development, and considerations for content development.

ECU Resources

Professional Development

According to Dr. Tim Matthews, the Instructional Design Center (IDC) offers a host of professional development (PD) opportunities that faculty can take advantage of to enhance their knowledge and skills. Many of these can be viewed at <https://idc.eku.edu/professional-development-idc>. First is the IDC's 8-week [Online Course Development and Teaching Certificate Program](#). Over 309 faculty and staff have completed this program. The expertise acquired from this program is no doubt one of the reasons EKU was able to successfully navigate the transition to fully online teaching during the pandemic (Dr. Matthews, 2022).

Other valuable resources available for faculty are the series on Online Teaching and Learning (OTL), which are short workshops made available to faculty either live or via recordings by the IDC, and training opportunities offered from the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning (FCTL). These offerings complement the work of the IDC in highly meaningful ways, as they frequently offer sessions that address fundamental issues important to quality in our online courses.

The IDC and e-Campus conducts surveys annually to find out what topics are meaningful or desired by faculty who teach online. Table 1 depicts the survey results from the 2017, 2018, and 2019 surveys. The top three topics consistently were online teaching pedagogy, online student engagement, and effective use of discussion boards. In 2019, to round out the top five, it further included the top ten teaching strategies and effective online assessment strategies.

Table 1: Professional Development Desirability Survey Results 2017, 2018, 2019

	2017(69)	2018(40)	2019(82)
Online Teaching Pedagogy	40.58%	57.50%	52.44%
Online Student Engagement	39.13%	55.00%	53.66%
Effective Use of Discussion Boards	31.88%	52.50%	47.66%
Effective Online Assessment Strategies	28.99%	47.50%	35.37%
Google Suite	27.54%	37.50%	28.05%
Video Production	27.54%	17.50%	23.17%
Blackboard Mechanics	27.54%	22.50%	18.29%
Top Ten Strategies for Teaching Online	26.09%	32.50%	37.80%
Inserting Audio/Video in Blackboard	24.64%	25.00%	28.05%
Effective Use of Blogs and Wikis	23.19%	22.50%	23.17%
Voice Thread	23.19%	25.00%	15.85%

Table 1 continued	2017(69)	2018(40)	2019(82)
Screencast-O-Matic	21.74%	12.50%	19.51%
ThingLink	15.94%		
Quality Matters (QM) Certification	13.04%	20.00%	23.17%
H5P	13.04%	17.50%	14.63%
Writing Course Objectives and Bloom's Taxonomy	7.25%	20.00%	19.51%
Microsoft One Drive		12.50%	13.41%
FlipGrid		0.00%	

Source: Dr. Tim Matthews, March 2022

Technology

There is an abundance of applied technological tools and software that faculty can use to enhance student experience, while also enhancing learning outcomes. According to Dr. Matthews, this is a major point of emphasis of EKU's Instructional Designers who work with faculty in the design of their courses. Faculty who learn and apply these tools typically enjoy good outcomes and garner positive feedback from their students. Many of these tools are featured by faculty in the OTLs offered.

According to Dr. Russell Carpenter, new technologies are constantly being evaluated. A resource is being put together to outline and catalog what is needed to improve hybrid instruction. A new project, led by Brad Powell, has been funded and is being designed to improve video recording for faculty. Essentially, space either in the library or FTLC will be converted into a recording studio. There will be a green screen, a way to write and post lectures live (for example, doing math on a board), have professional mics and lighting, equipped with Zoom capabilities, a 50" screen to view while presenting materials, and picture-in-picture display so faculty can appear in front of the PowerPoint. No editing will be required. It will have a touchpad where the instructor can cycle through these preset settings next to the thumb drive port. To use it, faculty will make an appointment and bring a thumb drive. The goal is to keep it simple so that faculty are supported. An instructor will walk in, turn on the studio, insert a thumb drive, and everything will automatically work. For that reason, they are calling it a "one button" studio, meaning hit the button and it works. Tentatively, the goal is to have this resource available for Fall 2022.

System

According to Dr. Sara Zeigler, EKU Provost, the University's vision is to continue to build strong online programs, providing the flexibility current and prospective students want. In addition to the temporary shift to online for the entire campus in 2020, due to the pandemic, e-Campus course sections were also opened to Campus 1 (on-campus) students as well. Dr. Zeigler informed the AQC that the University has decided to continue to allow Campus 1 (on-

campus) students to enroll in e-Campus courses at no increased cost even after the pandemic (long-term). Currently the Dean’s Council is discussing capping enrollment numbers for on-campus (Campus 1) students in online e-Campus courses. This decision is related to several issues, such as impact on class sizes of on-campus course offerings and student success. It was noted that DFW rates are somewhat higher for on-campus (Campus 1) students taking e-Campus online courses than traditional online e-Campus students. It is unclear if the stressors of the pandemic were related, therefore further trending and analysis needs to be done. This could have future implications related to student retention and advising.

According to Dr. Matthews, as institutions increase online educational opportunities, system issues may need to be addressed. These issues may include 1) how to plan or schedule classes for faculty, 2) the possible influx of on-campus (Campus 1) students into e-Campus classes, 3) how to manage large online class sizes, and 4) more effective use of students’ evaluation of instruction. These issues need to be informed by data. Trends in data surveillance will be key to meet not only the needs of faculty but also the needs of students and the institution.

EKU Trends in Online Learning

Summary of EKU Footprints Data: Requested by Academic Quality Committee

The data provided by IT via a Footprints request indicate that the percentage of total credit hours generated by e-Campus classes has climbed from a little over 3% in Fall 2011 to around 31% in Spring 2022. This percentage was still below 20% prior to the pandemic. This information is summarized in Table 2 and Figure 1 that follow. Data for Summer and Winter sessions can be seen in Table 3. **Note that the data were pulled from Banner and may not exactly match data that come from other sources.**

Table 2: Fall and Spring Data

Semester	Non-e-Campus		e-Campus	
	No. Sections	Hrs. Generated	No. Sections	Hrs. Generated
Fall 2011	5500 98.41%	181930 96.74%	89 1.59%	6129 3.26%
Spring 2012	5487 97.93%	166574 95.60%	116 2.07%	7667 4.40%
Fall 2012	5757 97.43%	178318 94.42%	152 2.57%	10536 5.58%
Spring 2013	5748 96.22%	162908 92.79%	226 3.78%	12666 7.21%
Fall 2013	5875 95.97%	171680 91.84%	247 4.03%	15257 8.16%
Spring 2014	5574 95.46%	156726 90.59%	265 4.54%	16273 9.41%
Fall 2014	5736 94.95%	171027 89.60%	305 5.05%	19861 10.40%
Spring 2015	5467 94.34%	155850 88.10%	328 5.66%	21055 11.90%

Fall 2015	5684 94.25%	171304 88.17%	347 5.75%	22992 11.83%
Spring 2016	5412 93.34%	153416 86.57%	386 6.66%	23798 13.43%
Fall 2016	5030 92.63%	166785 87.53%	400 7.37%	23760 12.47%
Spring 2017	4536 91.53%	148128 85.85%	420 8.47%	24405 14.15%
Fall 2017	4698 92.46%	163563 87.56%	383 7.54%	23244 12.44%
Spring 2018	4512 92.19%	144620 85.10%	382 7.81%	25315 14.90%
Fall 2018	4660 92.39%	152115 84.85%	384 7.61%	27167 15.15%
Spring 2019	4225 91.59%	134114 82.54%	388 8.41%	28379 17.46%
Fall 2019	4411 92.03%	141916 83.27%	382 7.97%	28509 16.73%
Spring 2020	4168 91.40%	123824 80.80%	392 8.60%	29426 19.20%
Fall 2020	4189 91.32%	125566 76.56%	398 8.68%	38440 23.44%
Spring 2021	3825 90.92%	107128 73.99%	382 9.08%	37657 26.01%
Fall 2021	4183 90.60%	116519 73.68%	434 9.40%	41629 26.32%
Spring 2022	3743 89.46%	99781 69.38%	441 10.54%	44042 30.62%

Figure 1: Fall and Spring Data

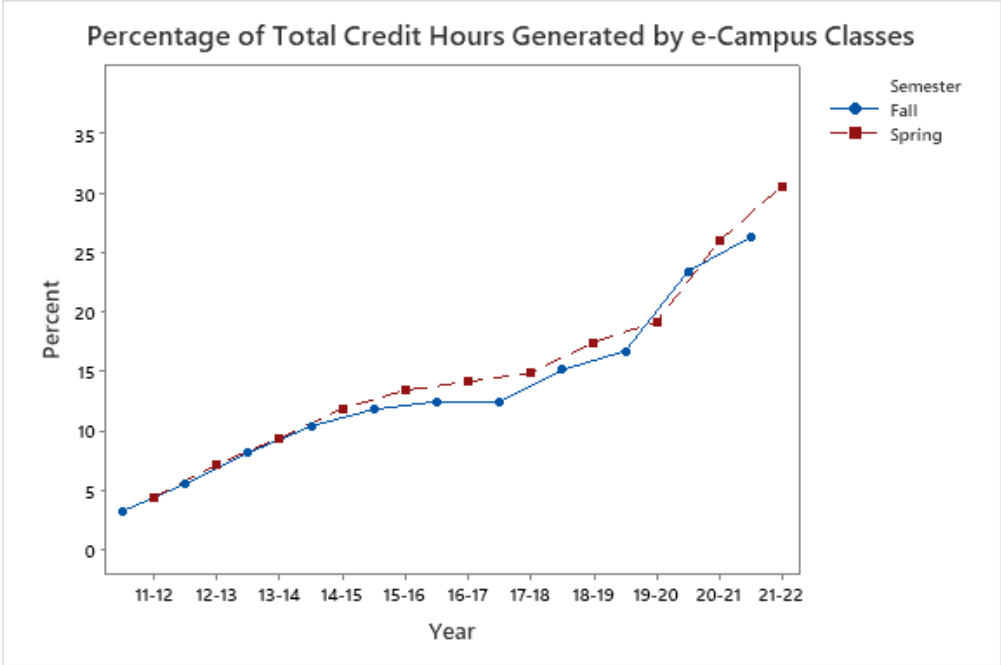


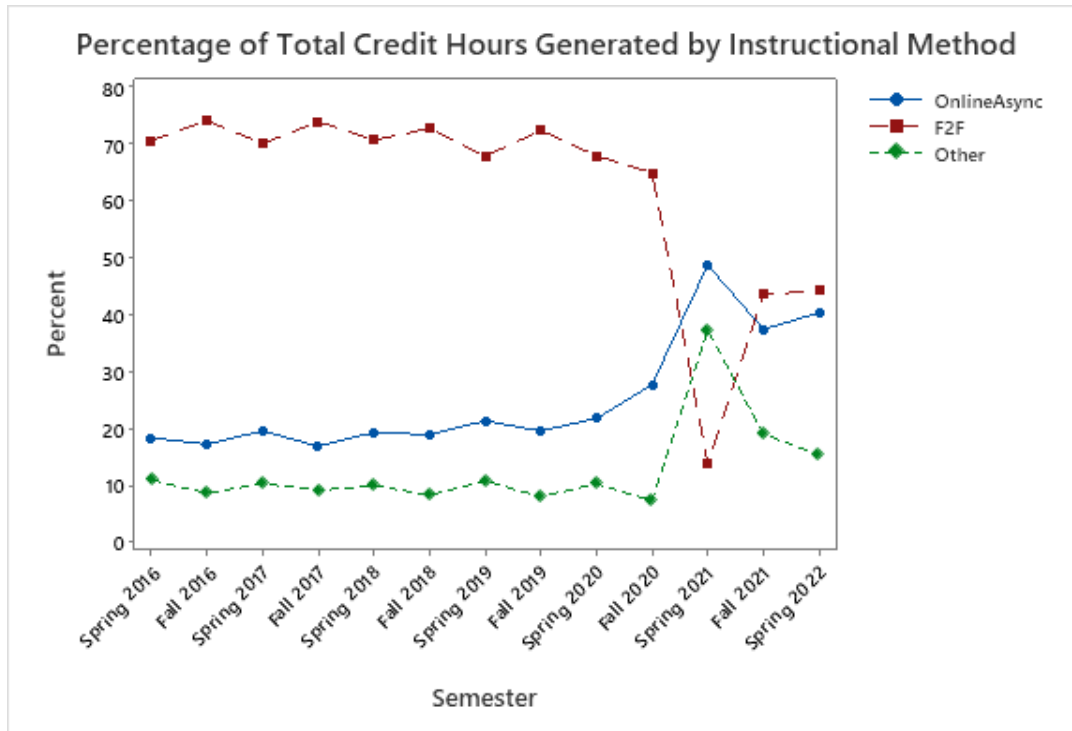
Table 3: Summer and Winter Session Data

Semester	Non-e-Campus		e-Campus	
	No. Sections	Hrs. Generated	No. Sections	Hrs. Generated
Summer 2012	2084 96.30%	27026 87.89%	80 3.70%	3725 12.11%
Summer 2013	2116 93.63%	23341 80.30%	144 6.37%	5726 19.70%
Summer 2014	1956 92.48%	20877 74.73%	159 7.52%	7060 25.27%
Winter 2014	52 100.00%	586 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%
Summer 2015	1909 90.65%	19023 67.91%	197 9.35%	8989 32.09%
Winter 2015	68 100.00%	821 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%
Summer 2016	1308 85.43%	17184 63.81%	223 14.57%	9744 36.19%
Winter 2016	72 100.00%	983 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%
Summer 2017	1166 84.99%	16146 62.55%	206 15.01%	9665 37.45%
Winter 2017	67 100.00%	854 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%
Summer 2018	1082 84.01%	14657 56.30%	206 15.99%	11375 43.70%
Winter 2018	64 98.46%	885 100.00%	1 1.54%	0 0.00%
Summer 2019	797 78.75%	10229 43.17%	215 21.25%	13468 56.83%
Winter 2019	50 98.04%	653 100.00%	1 1.96%	0 0.00%
Summer 2020	822 79.73%	9880 38.95%	209 20.27%	15487 61.05%
Winter 2020	147 100%	3093 100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%
Summer 2021	682 76.29%	10001 41.00%	212 23.71%	14392 59.00%
Winter 2021	174 99.43%	3995 100.00%	1 0.57%	0 0.00%

Table 4 and Figure 2 that follow show that the percentage of total credit hours generated by 100% online asynchronous classes has grown from around 19% in 2016 to nearly 41% in 2022, while the percentage of total credit hours generated by traditional face-to-face classes has fallen from around 70% in 2016 to about 44% in 2022. Of course, some of these changes are due to pandemic conditions. In Fall 2019, the percentage of total credit hours generated by 100% online asynchronous classes was about 20%, and the percentage of total credit hours generated by traditional face-to-face classes was about 72%.

Spring 2022	58047 40.36%	4679 3.25%	8920 6.20%	0 0.00%	1974 1.37%	3272 2.28%	954 0.66%	63663 44.26 %	1434 1.00%	880 0.61%
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Figure 2



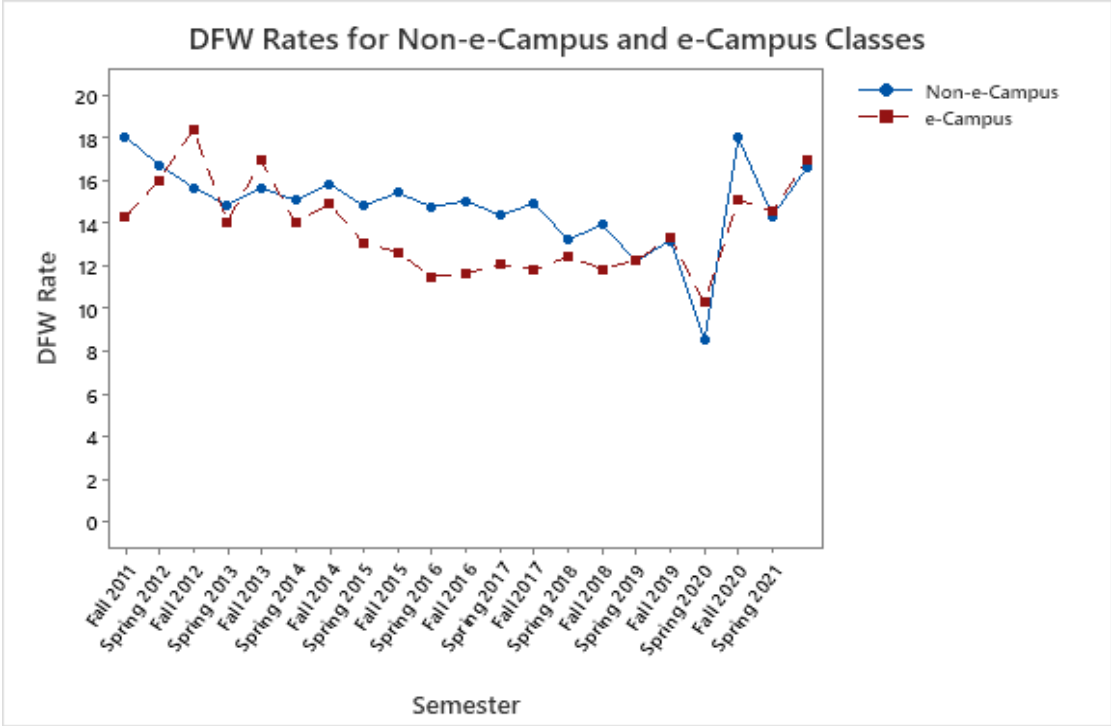
DFW rates, shown in Table 5 and Figure 3, were computed for e-Campus and non-e-Campus classes for each fall and spring semester from Fall 2011 to Fall 2021. DFW rates tend to be comparable for e-Campus and non-e-Campus classes, with DFW rates for e-Campus classes generally running a little lower than those for non-e-Campus classes in recent years. Both groups hit a low in Spring 2020, when the pandemic first hit, and both were relatively high in Fall 2020.

Table 5

Semester	Non-e-Campus DFW Rate	e-Campus DFW Rate
Fall 2011	18.07%	14.27%
Spring 2012	16.74%	16.02%
Fall 2012	15.67%	18.42%
Spring 2013	14.86%	14.08%
Fall 2013	15.66%	16.94%
Spring 2014	15.07%	14.03%
Fall 2014	15.86%	14.92%
Spring 2015	14.82%	13.06%

Fall 2015	15.44%	12.65%
Spring 2016	14.77%	11.50%
Fall 2016	15.05%	11.64%
Spring 2017	14.39%	12.10%
Fall 2017	14.94%	11.82%
Spring 2018	13.23%	12.45%
Fall 2018	13.93%	11.86%
Spring 2019	12.22%	12.26%
Fall 2019	13.20%	13.33%
Spring 2020	8.52%	10.28%
Fall 2020	18.00%	15.11%
Spring 2021	14.35%	14.54%
Fall 2021	16.59%	16.97%

Figure 3



Articles of interest and additional data provided to the Eastern Kentucky University Board of Regents Quarterly Meeting December 10, 2020 report, provided to the AQC by Dr. Jennifer Wies, can be seen in the appendix of this report and attached document.

Summary

Due to the pandemic, a rapid shift to online teaching and learning occurred in 2020. The pandemic demonstrated to both students AND faculty the pros and cons with online learning. Even before the pandemic, students were demanding more online courses; therefore, it is imperative for ECU to move forward strategically to deliver online instruction with the highest possible quality. Ongoing planning for professional development, availability of resources, and trending of student success are critical. The AQC members recommend that this data continue to be trended as the University returns fully to normal practice post pandemic.


Appendix

The following data was included in the Eastern Kentucky University Board of Regents Quarterly Meeting December 10, 2020 report, and provided to the AQC by Dr. Jennifer Wies.

Fall 2019 and Fall 2020 Instructional Method Comparison

Fall 2019 - 4,227 Total Sections			Fall 2020 - 3,925 Total Sections		
Instructional Method	Number of Sections	% Total	Instructional Method	Number of Sections	% Total
Applied Learning Experience	551	13.04%	Applied Learning Experience*	0	0.00%
Dual Credit	2	0.05%	Dual Credit	0	0.00%
Traditional	2,766	65.44%	Traditional	1,460	37.20%
Web-Blended	95	2.25%	Web-Blended	218	5.55%
Distance Learning	106	2.51%	Distance Learning	0	0.00%
Online	466	11.02%	Online	1,171	29.83%
Mixed Mode	241	5.70%	Mixed Mode	0	0.00%
Hybrid	0	0.00%	Hybrid	1,076	27.41%
TOTAL	4,227	100.00%	TOTAL	3,925	100.00%

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Spring 2020 and Spring 2021 Instructional Method Comparison

Spring 2020 - 4,229 Total Sections			Spring 2021 - 3,900 Total Sections		
Instructional Method	Number of Sections	% Total	Instructional Method	Number of Sections	% Total
Applied Learning Experience	743	17.57%	Applied Learning Experience	551	14.13%
Dual Credit	0	0.00%	Dual Credit	0	0.00%
Traditional	2,558	60.49%	Traditional	790	20.26%
Web-Blended	82	1.94%	Web-Blended (Asynchronous)	342	8.77%
			Web-Blended (Synchronous)	107	2.74%
Distance Learning	87	2.06%	Distance Learning	81	2.08%
Online	477	11.28%	Online (Asynchronous)	915	23.46%
			Online (Synchronous)	512	13.13%
Mixed Mode	282	6.67%	Mixed Mode	251	6.44%
Hybrid	0	0.00%	Hybrid	351	9.00%
TOTAL	4,229	100.00%	TOTAL	3,900	100.00%

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*Spring 2021 Traditional, Synchronous Web-Blended, Synchronous Online, and Hybrid= 1760 (45.13%)



Source: Dr. Sara Zeigler Co-Chair Fall/Spring Contingency Task Force on Instructional Design and Methodologies.

Articles of Interest

Suggested by Dr. Tim Matthews

Bryan, et al (n.d.). Going online: COVID-19 Lessons and Perspectives from Allied Health Administrators. Retrieved at https://www.westga.edu/~distance/oidla/summer242/bryan_green_carruth242.html

Kebritchi, et al (2017). Issues and Challenges for Teaching Successful Online Courses in Higher Education: A Literature Review. *Journal of Educational Technology Systems*, Vol 46(1) 4-29. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1kE5BJhFxlhREPqXyMcTpXYWfi2WfIMFI/view>

Mohr, S., & Shelton, K. (2017). Best practices framework for online faculty professional development: A Delphi study. *Online Learning*, 21(4), 123-140. doi: 10.24059/olj.v21i4.1273

McQuiggan, C.A. (2012). Faculty Development for Online Teaching as a Catalyst for Change. *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*. Vol 16 (2), 27-61.

Scarpena, et al (2018). Creating Successful Professional Development Activities for Online Faculty: A reorganized Framework. *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*, v21 n1 Spr 2018.

The Post Pandemic College (2020). Published by Chronicle of Higher Education. <https://store.chronicle.com/products/the-post-pandemic-college>