

DIGITAL STRATEGIES FOR ONLINE DISTANCE LEARNING

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Distance learning is a learning delivery modality in which learning takes place between a teacher and students who are geographically separated from one another during instruction. Modular Distance Learning, Online Distance Learning, and TV or Radio-Based Instruction (RBI) are the three types of this modality.

The teacher is the facilitator in this learning modality, supporting learners' full engagement using various technologies accessed through the internet while they are distant from each other during instruction. Live synchronous instruction is possible with online learning. It is necessary for participants to have a good and consistent internet connection. It is more interactive than other forms of distance education. The responses are instantaneous. Learners can access materials from the internet, complete and submit assignments online, and participate in webinars and virtual classes.

The technologies and tools that we can use to teach and learn online are referred to as "digital learning modalities." There are many ways to classify digital tools that are designed for or can be used for teaching and learning, but one of the most common is asynchronous and synchronous. Asynchronous means self-paced, so participants can use the provided asynchronous learning elements, such as online audio, video, and discussion forums, whenever and wherever they want. Synchronous refers to real-time communication, which requires participants and instructors/facilitators to virtually meet at the same time from different locations. Webinar tools, such as Zoom and the virtual classroom, are popular for synchronous learning.

Students benefit greatly from online distance learning because it is a cost-effective method of learning. Learning is more flexible, and it can improve interaction with students by providing asynchronous and synchronous tools such as e-mail, forums, chats, and video conferences. Moreover, internet technologies make content distribution easier. At the same time, it can cater to a large number of users. Online learning platforms also provide many benefits to students, like control over the content, control over the time spent learning, and thus control over the process adapted to the learner's needs and learning objectives. This could lead to better results. Communication with students, despite some inherent challenges brought about by any crisis, online learning may help students learn more effectively.

Digital Strategies for Effective Online Teaching-Learning

Familiarize with the Technology

Because some students are unfamiliar with technology, be equipped with skills to troubleshoot and advise your learners to expect technological failures. Make yourself become familiarized in using technology. Have access to additional training on how to handle tools for online classes.

Provide technical assistance to students who are having troubles using digital technologies.

Provide contact information and be ready to direct learners with possible responses if they reach you.

Be Flexible in All Situations at All Times

Technology will fail at some point, whether it is a video chat that does not connect, an assignment and/or resource links that do not work properly. Prepare a backup plan for any tasks or assessment procedures that require the use of technology.

To save time, don't be afraid to solve technical problems in real time, such as during synchronous discussions or collaborative real-time tasks.

Make and Keep a Strong Presence

Forward a message to all students, preferably via video, to welcome and reassure them about online learning.

When interacting with the learners, using video chat is far better than instant message.

Use emojis for effective nonverbal communication.

Include in your profile your professional and personal characteristics for students' reference

Establish Precise Expectations for the Course

Students are also unfamiliar with online learning. Make it clear to students how their performances are being graded..

Develop a Safe Online Environment for Learners

Students expect you to set the tone. To reduce fear, anxiety, and isolation, exhibit enthusiasm and excitement during the teaching process.

Motivate learners to customize their homepages and spend time going around the class having to ask students to collaborate information about what else they have posted.

To facilitate a productive discussion, pose questions that help participants challenge one another.

Provide responses to the community as a whole instead of directing all feedback to individuals outside of the community.

Check Content Resources and Applications on a Regular Basis

Check all links, resources, modules, and activities on a regular basis. Online content can shift or change, leading to disengagement.

Show the process of accessing websites that are not embedded in the course, and show how to keep track of navigation when transitioning from site to site.

References:

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