EDITORIAL

Keeping abreast of current literature in the field of distance education can be challenging, particularly for practitioners and researchers in an area that is changing so rapidly. In an attempt to provide a glimpse of what is available, we occasionally publish abstracts and annotated bibliographies from a variety of sources. This issue of DEOSNEWS includes abstracts from Volume 11 (1997) of _The American Journal of Distance Education_. In the past, we published an extensive review of distance education research compiled by graduate students from the University of Oklahoma (See file numbers 96-00005, 97-00003 and 98-00003. Information for retrieving back issues appears at the end of this article). In the near future, we hope to post abstracts from the _Journal of Distance Education_, published by the Canadian Association for Distance Education. A broader American perspective is invaluable to informing our practice and providing a greater understanding of the many issues facing distance educators around the world.

THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

VOLUME 11 NO. 1 - 1997

Author (s): Patrick Moskal, Barbara Martin, and Neill Foshee

Title: EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY AND DISTANCE EDUCATION IN CENTRAL FLORIDA: AN ASSESSMENT OF CAPABILITIES

Pages: 6-22

The Faculty Development Group of the Central Florida Consortium of Higher Education (CFCHE) developed a needs assessment to address the capabilities and experience of CFCHE faculty with distance education, educational technologies, and instructional design. Assessment results include 1) the factors perceived by instructors as most important for both promoting and inhibiting the learning of new educational technologies; 2) distance education experience with and interest in various delivery approaches; and 3) the extent to which CFCHE faculty possess the necessary instructional design skills to initiate distance education courses. These results may provide information that is beneficial to institutions planning distance education initiatives.

Author (s): Paul M. Biner, Kimberly D. Welsh, Natalie M. Barone, Marcia Summers, and Raymond S. Dean

Title: THE IMPACT OF REMOTE-SITE GROUP SIZE ON STUDENT SATISFACTION AND RELATIVE PERFORMANCE IN INTERACTIVE TELECOURSES

Pages: 23-33

Undergraduate college students in seventeen live, interactive telecourses at sixty-eight remote sites
were asked to report their satisfaction with various facets of their telecourses, as well as their overall satisfaction with the courses. In addition, an index of relative performance was calculated for each student in which achievement in the current telecourse was compared to prior overall academic achievement. Results showed that remote-site group size (i.e., the number of individuals taking a course at a given site) significantly predicted satisfaction with all facets of the courses, overall satisfaction with the courses, and relative performance. Students attending class sessions with fewer students reported being more satisfied with the courses and were more likely to perform at levels exceeding their previous academic performance than students attending the sessions with a greater number of students. Practical and theoretical implications of these results are discussed.

Author (s): Ron Oliver and Catherine McLoughlin

Title: INTERACTIONS IN AUDIOGRAPHICS TEACHING AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Pages: 34-54

This paper describes a study that investigated interactivity in distance education lessons delivered by audiographics technologies. Videotaped observations of language lessons delivered to upper primary school students in remote schools were used to investigate the forms of interactivity supported by the technology, to determine the extent to which teachers were employing these interactions, and to establish the impact of the interactivity in enhancing the quality and form of the instructional programs. Results indicated that while audiographics can support interactions of many forms, the teachers tended to use a limited range of interactions and to use them largely for classroom management and content delivery.

Author (s): Thomas S. Westbrook

Title: CHANGES IN STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD GRADUATE BUSINESS INSTRUCTION VIA INTERACTIVE TELEVISION

Pages: 55-69

This study examined attitudinal changes in graduate business students during the first term of a two-year degree program taught via a fully interactive telecommunications system. The variables included the students' interaction levels, satisfaction levels, and perceptions of technological interference. The participants were adult part-time students enrolled in two classes that originated on the Drake University campus and were received at three remote sites in Iowa. Site differences in the students' pre-program and post-term scores, and changes in the students' anticipated to actual attitudinal levels were observed. The findings suggest that 1) students attitudes change between the time they begin classes and complete their first term, and 2) there are site differences between the students enrolled on-campus, where the instructors are present, and students at remote locations.

VOLUME 11 NO. 2 - 1997

Author (s): Linda L. Wolcott

Title: TENURE, PROMOTION, AND DISTANCE EDUCATION: EXAMINING THE CULTURE
OF FACULTY REWARDS

Pages: 3-18

This paper reports the findings of a study that examined the relationship between distance teaching and the faculty reward system. Using a qualitative approach, the study sought to understand how distance teaching is valued, rewarded, and accommodated within the institutional reward structure. Based on interviews with faculty members, distance education program administrators, and the chief academic officers at four research universities, the study describes a reward culture that is not accommodating to and rewarding of faculty work in distance education. The study finds that: 1) distance education occupies a marginal status, 2) distance teaching is neither highly valued nor well-rewarded as scholarly activity, 3) distance teaching is not highly related to promotion and tenure decisions, and 4) rewards for distance teaching are dependent on the academic unit's commitment to distance education.

Author (s): Margaret A. Koble and Ellen L. Bunker

Title: TRENDS IN RESEARCH AND PRACTICE: AN EXAMINATION OF _THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION_ 1987 TO 1995

Pages: 19-38

This study examines The American Journal of Distance Education (AJDE) during a nine year period from its inception in 1987 to 1995. The analysis of AJDE is based on Porter's "Forum Analysis," a set of questions used to study the publications of a discourse community. These questions provide a framework to describe the characteristics of a forum, such as AJDE. The questions for this study include, What is the background of the forum? Who speaks or writes in this forum? To whom do they speak? What do they speak about? and How do they say it? Data on AJDE's historical background and the contributors and their institutional affiliation were collected, and the major journal articles were classified by topic. Answers to the Forum Analysis questions form the foundation for a discussion of the trends in research and practice in the field of distance education, as reflected in AJDE.

Author (s): David A. Keast

Title: TOWARD AN EFFECTIVE MODEL FOR IMPLEMENTING DISTANCE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Pages: 39-55

As a response to the challenges and constraints now facing postsecondary education, institutions are attempting to find new strategies that will more effectively address the need for change in the way educational services are provided. In early September 1995, three institutions in Alberta, Canada—the University of Alberta, Fairview College, and Kayas Cultural College—embarked on a new partnership in offering a selected number of introductory Faculty of Arts courses in remote northwestern regions of the province. The primary mode of delivery was synchronized, multi-point videoconferencing (to as many as six sites), with all courses delivered
from the University of Alberta campus. Slightly more than 70% of the student cohort for the first academic year were Aboriginal. This discussion highlights the implementation and evaluation of this partnership and proposes a model for the effective planning and implementation of distance education initiatives.

Author(s): Phyllis Saltzman
Title: THE LEARNING COUNCIL: CORPORATE DISTANCE LEARNING IN ACTION
Pages: 56-63

The Learning Council, a corporate interdivisional enterprise, employs distance learning to meet the learning needs of the organization. Specifically, distance learning is used to increase participation in the Johnson & Johnson tuition reimbursement program, to offer learning opportunities to employees from a variety of sources, and to bring formal university courses on-site for employees. The Learning Council is continuing to evaluate these programs as the business environment changes. This article reviews these applications of distance learning and lists considerations for other organizations interested in distance education opportunities. The use of distance learning methods facilitates the maintenance of flexibility and responsiveness in providing continuous learning for employees. The use of a combination of various distance learning methods works well, giving the company a "business edge."

Author(s): Monica G. M. Magalhaes and Dietrich Schiel
Title: A METHOD FOR EVALUATION OF A COURSE DELIVERED VIA THE WORLD WIDE WEB IN BRAZIL
Pages: 64-70

This paper describes the application of evaluation methods to a distance course, and discusses the need for ongoing evaluation to control the quality of distance education courses. During the last quadrimester of 1996, a course in Graphic Mechanics was offered in Brazil through a distance education program entitled "Programa Educ@r" via the World Wide Web. Evaluation methods and data analysis were developed and applied during the period of the course, and results of the evaluation are discussed.

VOLUME 11 NO. 3 - 1997

Author(s): Charlotte N. Gunawardena and Frank J. Zittle
Title: SOCIAL PRESENCE AS A PREDICTOR OF SATISFACTION WITHIN A COMPUTER MEDIATED CONFERENCING ENVIRONMENT
Pages: 8-26

Based on the GlobalEd inter-university computer conference, this study examined how effective "social presence" is as a predictor of overall learner satisfaction in a text-based medium. The stepwise regression analysis converged on a three-predictor model revealing that social presence (the degree to
which a person is perceived as "real" in mediated communication), student perception of having equal opportunity to participate, and technical skills accounted for about 68% of the explained variance. Social presence alone contributed about 60% of this variance, suggesting that it may be a very strong predictor of satisfaction. Reliability data on the social presence scale is provided. The results also indicated that participants who felt a higher sense of social presence enhanced their socio-emotional experience by using emoticons to express missing nonverbal cues in written form. These findings have implications for designing academic computer conferences where equal attention must be paid to designing techniques that enhance social presence.

Author (s): Andrew J. Mowen and Sara C. Parks

Title: COMPETITIVE MARKETING OF DISTANCE EDUCATION: A MODEL FOR PLACING QUALITY WITHIN A STRATEGIC PLANNING CONTEXT

Pages: 27-40

Increasing competitive forces are compelling academic administrators to think strategically about specific offerings in their distance education programs. Across a wide variety of educational contexts, quality is being recognized as a major source of competitive advantage. This paper examines the role of quality in determining appropriate market-driven strategies. A model for integrating quality based on competitive ability and market attractiveness is presented.

Author (s): Anita Colyer

Title: COPYRIGHT LAW, THE INTERNET, AND DISTANCE EDUCATION

Pages: 41-57

This article examines copyright issues related to online course development and delivery. An overview and brief history of copyright law is presented, with attention to the ways in which various technologies have shaped modern interpretations of copyright law. Examples of recent lawsuits and several case studies provide a context for examination of fair use issues and liability for online copyright infringement. Finally, some helpful questions are presented on topics such as process issues, institutional policies, software and licensing, copyright issues, and other alternatives. These questions should provide a basis to help online course providers think through issues related to copyright, the Internet, and distance education.

Author (s): Robert W. Strong and E. Glynn Harmon

Title: ONLINE GRADUATE DEGREES: A REVIEW OF THREE INTERNET-BASED MASTER'S DEGREE OFFERINGS

Pages: 58-70

This article briefly reviews and compares three offerings of graduate degrees via the Internet -- two Master's programs in the field of Management and one Master's program in the area of Library and Information Science. Three different management degrees offered by the University of Phoenix, the
Master of Arts in Management offered by The Graduate School of America, and the Master of Science in Library and Information Science offered by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign are described according to each program's online and printed prospectus. Based on this information, the three programs are compared and evaluated. The article concludes with a "Consumer's Guide" that formulates some key questions that any potential student of these types of programs should ask before enrolling in such a program.

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