

Strategically Structuring Online Courses for Customer Service

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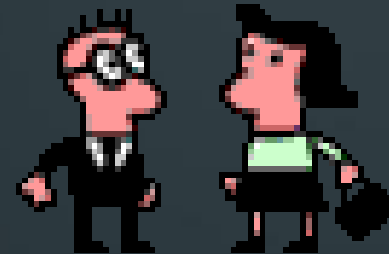
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Balancing Service with Standards



- Research on the effectiveness of online classes versus traditional courses remains inconclusive but the fact remains that distance learning programs are a big part of the education market.
- How do we balance academic standards with customer service?



It's up to the Professor

- To be successful, innovative professors must continue to enhance the quality of their online delivery in an effort to achieve the same educational outcomes acquired in a traditional classroom. Like brick and mortar courses, success depends on the quality and dedication of the person delivering the course.



“The Start stops most people”



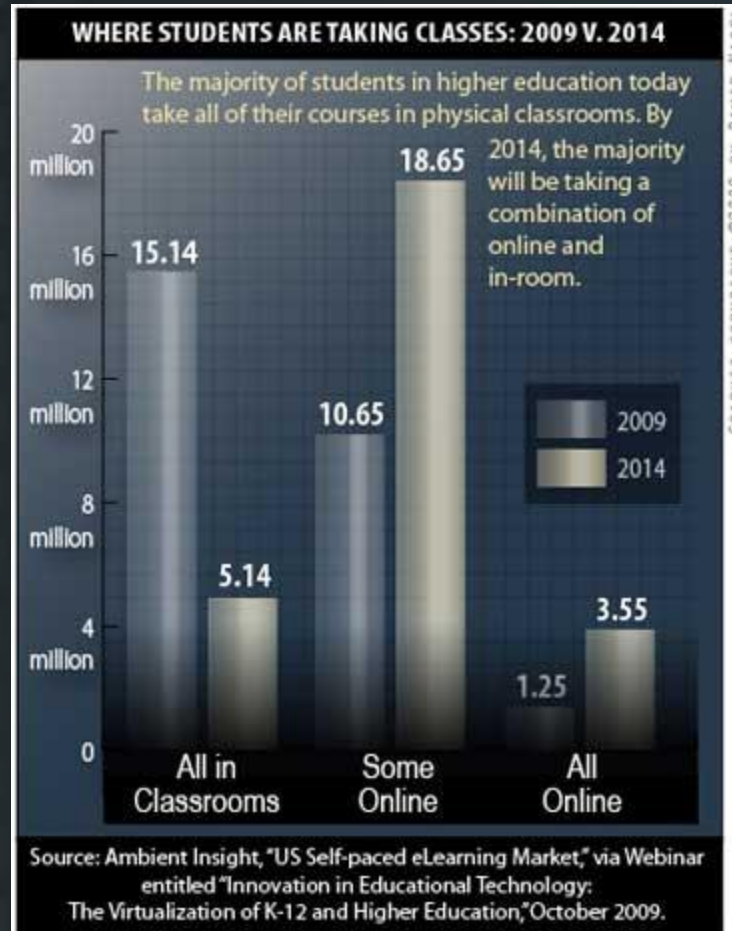
“You don’t know anything about your students until they are challenged”

Most College Students To Take Classes Online by 2014



- Nearly 12 million post-secondary students in the United States take some or all of their classes online right now. But this number will skyrocket to more than 22 million in the next five years, according to data released recently by research firm [Ambient Insight](#).

2009 versus 2014



Source:

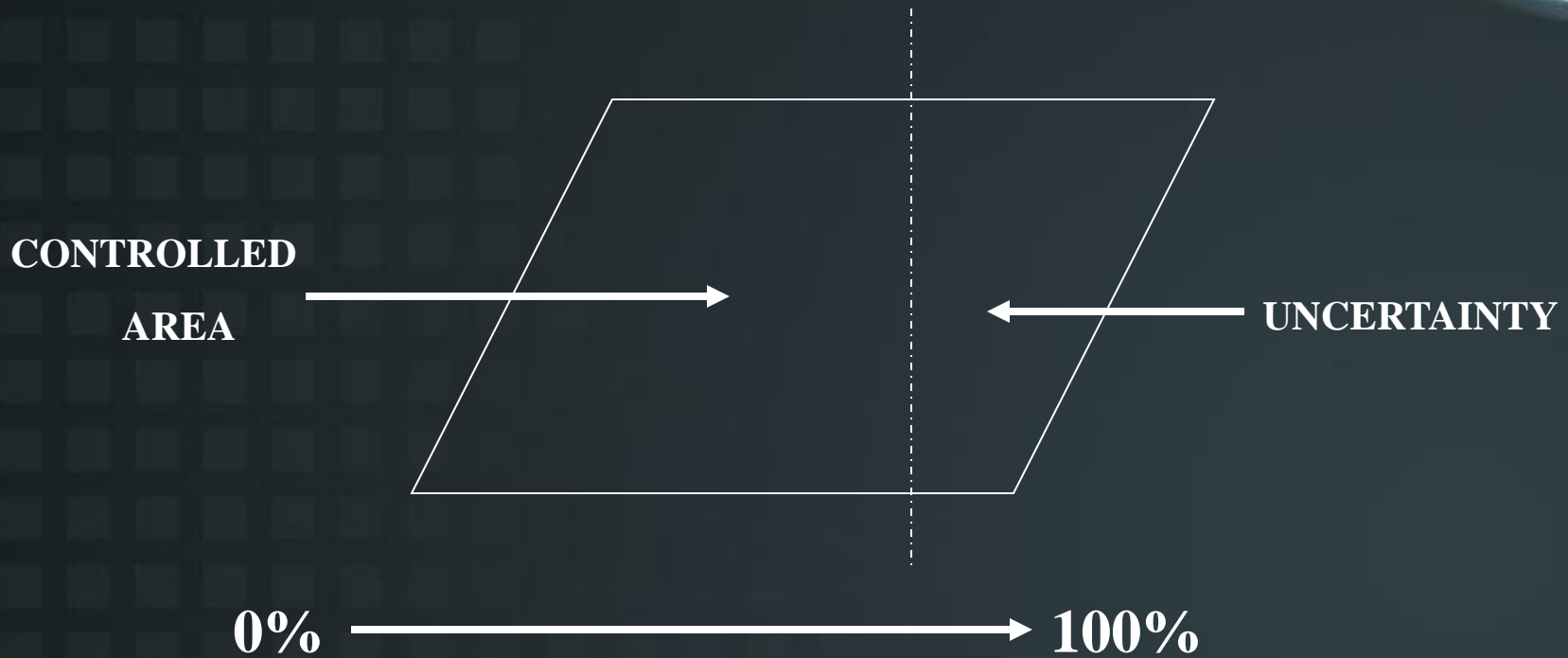
<http://campustechnology.com/articles/2009/10/28/most-college-students-to-take-classes-online-by-2014.aspx>

We cannot ignore the process?

- An online professor cannot look for the traditional “glaze” in a student’s eyes as he/she might in a traditional classroom. Therefore, several key elements must be included with the academic coursework to ensure retention of students and successful completion of the online course



User Friendly Course Design



CONTROL AS MUCH OF THE PROCESS AS YOU CAN

Customer Service/Retention/Quality



Communication

- Email
- Announcements
- Lecture Capture Software
- Group Module
- Wimba Classroom
- Wimba Office Hours
- Personal Web Site
- Examples
- Feedback
- Surveys

Structure

- Assignments
- Discussion Board
- Real-World Group Project
- Exams/Quizzes
- Research Project
- Guest Speakers
- Mini-Lectures
- Practical Exercises
- Library
- Assessment

Communication

- **The professor must accept responsibility for students by communicating in detail at every stage. Instructional information should be organized and concise. Professors should use the syllabus, chat room, electronic whiteboard, discussion board and email to make requirements crystal clear. Once the class is underway, the little things make your students feel like part of the class. Send email updates often and be timely with feedback and grades.**



Organization

- **Organization** is a vital part of the course for non-traditional students. Most of them have work and family issues in addition to their online class and they need guidelines that reduce wasted time. Spell out each requirement in detail on the syllabus and summarize requirements in one place to ensure that everything is understood. The delivery software should be organized for easy access to requirements.



Instruction Begins with the Syllabus

- This includes making sure that the student understands requirements from the very beginning. The syllabus is critical and distance education guidelines must have additional information not required for a traditional classroom.



Simplify the Technology

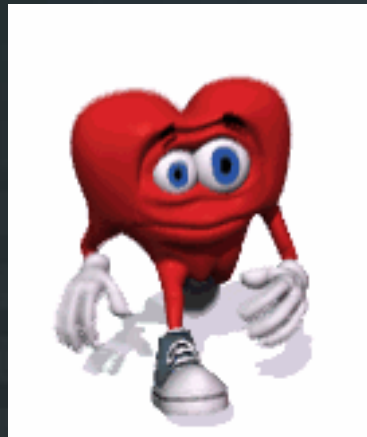


- Use of the delivery technology must be clear. This includes a good training program and a conscientious professor. The syllabus should contain detailed instructions for use of the technology and contact information for immediate help



Conclusion

- There is not enough room on this presentation to cover all aspects of a good online course. However, the tips provided will improve delivery tremendously. Retention and completion is the responsibility of everyone at the College.
- If your course is designed correctly, you can do your part without lowering academic standards. Online courses should be slightly more rigorous than a traditional course to ensure that the outcomes are the same.



Thanks

