

Faculty Showcase '05: Partners in Learning

Sponsored by Academic Technology at Simmons College



Faculty as Authors of Online Courses: Support and Mentoring

Overview

Through videotaped interviews with faculty, Gail Matthews-DeNatale and Deborah Cotler identified recurring challenges most people face when developing online and web-enhanced courses for the first time. With their recent experiences fresh in mind, the interviewees shared their thoughts on what first timers need to know. For example:

- Recognize that you're teaching in a new medium;
- Look at models; consider what will work for you
- Learn how to partner with staff on development and production;
- Think ahead and clarify the plan;
- Understand that your writing needs to be both explicit and inviting – and, as an act of authorship, revisions and versioning are also part of the process; and
- Know that your role will feel different.

These and other identified patterns of need were used to develop a framework for faculty mentoring that includes guiding questions as well as suggested methods for course design, production, and assessment.

Framework materials, including video interviews with faculty members Robert Goldman, Mary Jane Treacy, and Vicki Bacon are available online in the "Articles & Presentations" section of the PTRC web site (<http://my.simmons.edu/services/technology/ptrc>).

The Evolution of an Activity

First Assignment: Construct Your Genogram

Birth Order (oldest to youngest)

Online Courses Require New Skills

- be explicit in writing up assignments
- write with a familiar tone that conveys both meaning and personality
- sequence online learning activities
- phrase and sequence questions that prompt meaningful discussion
- integrate formative assessment into pilot offerings, and use that assessment to make constructive revisions

Faculty as Authors of Online Courses, Educause, 2004

Gail Matthews-DeNatale
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Presentations

In October 2004 Gail and Deborah presented this framework at Educause, the national conference on technology in higher education.

Gail and Deborah will be presenting again at the Annual WebCT User Conference in San Francisco in July 2005.