Getting Started (Again) with Online Learning

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June 25, 2020
Online learning is any learning that occurs almost entirely online

- **BC**: Over 80% of content is delivered online
- Typically has no face-to-face meetings
What are some examples of online learning?

Terminology

- Asynchronous vs. Synchronous
- Cohort-based vs. self-paced
- Instructor-led vs. self-paced
1. Learning Management System: Synchronous and Asynchronous
2. MOOC Platform: Massively Open Online Course: Asynchronous

UlcelandX: Sheep101
Sheep in the Land of Fire and Ice

Grazing in the North

To provide a short overview of plant-herbivore interactions in northern ecosystems we have Professor David Hik from Simon Fraser University in Canada. Herbivores are animals that eat plants. Whether they are small like a caterpillar or large like a sheep, they play important roles in processes that determine the functioning of both natural and managed ecosystems. First by consuming plants and second by being food for predators, herbivores represent a central link in the flow of energy in the cycling of nutrients in nature. For example, imagine a goose in summer eating grass. The plant provides the goose with energy and nutrients, nourishment that allows it to grow and reproduce. But some of the

Knowledge check #2
Quick concept check
2 points possible (ungraded)
1. Animals that eat plants are called
   [ ] Select an option

2. Carrying capacity is...
   [ ] the maximum number of herbivores we can have in an ecosystem, irrespective of the resources available
   [ ] the minimum number of herbivores we can have in an ecosystem, given the resources available
   [ ] the maximum number of herbivores we can have in an ecosystem, given the resources available

Video (and Readings)

Discussion Forum

Assessment
3. Web Conferencing System: Synchronous and Instructor led
What are the benefits of online learning?

- Continuous learning
- Resources, materials, expertise, people
- Curriculum and content supports
- Online community of peers, learners, practitioners
- Build (certain types of) content knowledge
- As part of a blended system, can be as effective as face-to-face learning
What works in online online learning?

Here’s what the research tells us:

- Synchronous is better than asynchronous
- Cohort-based is better than self-paced
- Instructor-led is better than self-paced
- Course completion and satisfaction with online course = Satisfaction with instructor
Attrition

Achilles Heel of Online Learning: Dropping out; incomplete assignments; dropping in and dropping out; non-attendance; failure to complete course work
How can we reduce attrition/increase completion of online courses?

1. Pay attention to course design:

Design intentionally for online medium
Design courses that are mostly:
- Synchronous
- Cohort-based
- Facilitator-led

Make students work together (pairs, teams)

Employ multiple ways of learning. Students learn from:
- Each other
- Instructor
- Activities
- Content
Use a variety of content

Simple Learning Resources

Simple learning resources are non-interactive resources such as documents, PowerPoint presentations, videos or audio files. These materials are non-interactive in the sense that learners can only read or watch content without performing any other action.

These resources can be quickly developed and, when they match defined learning objectives and are designed in a structured way, they can be a valuable learning resource even though they don’t provide any interactivity.

Interactive e-lessons

The most common approach for self-paced e-learning is Web-based training consisting of a set of interactive e-lessons. An e-lesson is a linear sequence of screens which can include text, graphics, animations, audio, video and interactivity in the form of questions and feedback. E-lessons can also include recommended reading and links to online resources, as well as additional information on specific topics.

Electronic simulations

Simulations are highly interactive forms of e-learning.

The term “simulation” basically means creating a learning environment that “simulates” the real world, allowing the learner to learn by doing. Simulations are a specific form of Web-based training that immerse the learner in a real-world situation and respond in a dynamic way to his/her behaviour.

Job aids

Job aids provide just-in-time knowledge.

They can take several forms and be delivered on different platforms (e.g. computer, printed document, mobile phone). They usually provide immediate answers to specific questions, thus helping users accomplish job tasks. Technical glossaries and checklists are a few examples of simple job aids, but sophisticated expert systems can also be developed to assist workers in complex decision-making.
2. Prepare instructors to teach online

Not just how to use technology to teach but how to teach through technology
2. Prepare instructors to teach online

- Content
- Blend pedagogy, technology and content
- Understand various online technologies and what they are good for
- Troubleshoot technology
- Assess learners and learning
- Manage and support online learners
- Promote/Model effective online communication
- Establish online presence
3. Prepare students to be successful online learners

They’re not the digital natives we thought they were...
3. Prepare students to be successful online learners
Thank you!

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