

## Library Education via Distance Learning: Implications for the Profession



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2

## My online learning research

- Online community among distance learners
- Disengaging from online community (2)
- Sociotechnical capital
- Community-embedded learning
- Learning in hybrid spaces
- Online programs with and without a residency
- On-campus students in online classes

3

## ... and my online teaching

- Teaching online since 1997 (first online TA at UIUC-GSLIS)
- Learned to teach online first and had to adapt to the face-to-face environment
- Teaching online continuously since then, using an ever-changing array of learning platforms and technologies
- Primarily in mixed a/synchronous environments, with and without residencies required, with and without voice
- Various recognitions of my teaching

4

## This talk includes implications for 5 stakeholder groups

- Students
- Faculty
- Librarians
- Users
- Profession

5

## Effects on distance students

- Learning “in place”
  - A unique opportunity for many students
  - Not leaving libraries/communities un(der)served
  - Community-embedded learning
- Access to knowledge shared by other “in place” learners
- Taking advantage of consortial arrangements

6

### The online learning environment

- Adaptable to personal needs and preferences
  - Physical environs are often malleable
  - Learning becomes mobile and ubiquitous
  - Opportunities for multi-tasking
- Malleable & mobile environment can also be porous and distractable

7

### Integrating the experience for online learners

- Active, continuous, and systemic support for
  - Community building
  - Social support
  - Academic support
  - Technology support
- Mitigate stress/frustration/fear through
  - Frequent communication in multiple media
  - Proactive dissemination of information
  - Streamlining number of sources

8

### Effects on on-campus students

- Fewer local students
- May end up taking online classes
  - Not preferred by many students who are on campus for a reason
  - Can be beneficial: using technology for “doing” is different from technology as “topic”
- Access to knowledge shared by distant others learning “in place”

9

### Factors to consider in selecting a distance learning program (1)

- Residency
- Curriculum design
- Delivery mode / technologies / learning platform
- Orientation
- Tech support

10

### More factors to consider (2)

- Learning support
- Community support
- Advising
- Consortium opportunities
- Extra-curricular activities

11

### Effects on faculty

- The 24/7 job
- Evenings and weekends – but why?
- Normal deadlines -10
- On campus vs. online assignment procedures: two stories
  - Help without oversight
  - Online to campus and back again

12

### Adapting pedagogy

- Digitize it? Technology & pedagogy
  - Timing
  - Multiple media
  - Synchronous/asynchronous
  - Group work?
  - Exams?
- Constraints of the LMS on pedagogy

13

### Faculty worklife

- Support, recognition, evaluation
- Collegial environment
- Advising
- “Our” experience is no longer “theirs” – faculty must strive to meet the students on “their” ground

14

### Effects on Librarians

- For those educated online
  - Getting jobs
  - Getting active in the profession
- For those at work
  - Having colleagues doing online education can be beneficial and annoying
    - Access to a network of knowledge
    - “New” ideas and use of resources

15

### Effects on users

- Again, “new”
  - Ideas, services, technologies
- Technology: benefit or drawback?
  - Upcoming research area
  - How does technology use in LIS education affect technology implementation in LIS workplaces?

16

### Effects on the profession

- Professional networks & service
- Our profession relies on volunteerism
  - Online learners well-integrated in
    - Face-to-face AND electronic interactions of
    - Local library associations and local libraries
  - Online learners less integrated in
    - ALA (because less involved in student chapters)
    - Long-term professional networks at a distance

17

### The benefits outweigh the risks

- Continuing history of non-traditional education
- Online learning (e-learning) has become popular in many sectors
- Community-embedded learning
- Growing our own
- Access, access, access!

18

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22

#### Some other resources

- Journal of Education for Library and Information Science (<http://jelis.org>; indexed and full text in Wilson's Lib Lit)
- ALA "Directory of Accredited Programs"
- Web-based Information Science Education (WISE) (<http://www.wiseeducation.org/>)
- Sloan-C (<http://sloanconsortium.org/>)

23