BEST PRACTICES TO ONLINE TEACHING AND DEVELOPMENT

The purpose of these best practices is to provide some general concepts to online teaching and development. Also provided are practical ways in which the "best practices" theory applies, as well as a visual application of a sample MCMoodle course home page.

1. Show Your Presence

Online instruction is unique in that you do not have face-to-face physical communication between instructor and students and among students. For this reason it is important to constantly make your presence known.

- a. Respond on time to questions
- b. Offer punctual feedback on forums
- c. Reach out to students not participating online
- d. Post timely scores

Up to 1 week prior to the first day of class, an instructor should reach out to the students via News Forum, sending them instructions on how to access MCMoodle and encourage them to get acquainted with the layout of the course. Daily throughout the course semester, an instructor should post announcements on the News Forum, answer questions (and encourage students to ask course questions) in the Ask the Instructor forum. When you see that a student is not participating in your weekly forum, immediately email them through "QuickMail", asking if they understood the instructions and what kind of help they need.

2. Create Community

This comes on the heels of "show your presence" in that as you make yourself accessible to your students, they can be encouraged to respond. Interaction is what can make meaningful learning online because it is very concentrated and focused. This can especially be accomplished through forums, requiring students to respond to their peers' forums.

- a. Encourage interaction
 Include an interactive module, such as a forum, assignment "portal", quiz or other weekly assignment that they must return to
 MCMoodle to accomplish
- b. Reference other's comments
 Responding to your students' comments will let them know you are paying attention and evaluating what they say and it will
 affirm to them that they are grasping key concepts.
- c. Other

3. Outline And Emphasize Expectations

Since you are not standing at the front of the class every other day, it is imperative that all your expectations be written out, not just once on the syllabus in a general format, but in multiple places, and "chunked" so as to compartmentalize and clarify specific pieces of information, such as due dates, "special" course work information, and the order of weekly assignment end dates.

- a. Web pages with significant portions of syllabus
 - "Due Dates" web page, "Weekly Course Outline" web page, and assignment descriptions
- b. Detail special projects
- c. Recap grade scale
 - i. Web page that reflects the grading system and weighting
- d. Outline weekly objectives
 - i. Include this in each week's summary

4. Use Variety Of Course Work Experiences

Variety provides students with various modes of learning styles and

- a. Assignments
- b. Forums with peer posts
- c. Quizzes
- d. Surveys
- e. Contributing, evaluating and commenting on websites
- f. Viewing videos and essay assignment based on impressions

5. Utilize Synchronous And Asynchronous Activities

- a. Meet online
- b. Online guest visitor

6. Encourage Feedback From Students On Issues

- a. Forums—"Ask the Instructor" forum for course questions
- b. Email—use for private matters, such as special needs, late assignment

7. Demonstrate Proactive Attitude

- a. Answer a crisis
- b. Contact key point people from whom you need help
- c. Confirm protocol to sensitive situations, e.g., special needs, student not logging in to MCMoodle

8. Offer Links

Uploading links pertinent to your course helps your student think beyond their text book. AS you give them websites to visit,

- a. Content resources
- b. Applications
- c. Current Events

9. Combine Core Concept Learning With Customized and Personalized Learning

10. Plan Strong Closing and Final Activity to End Course

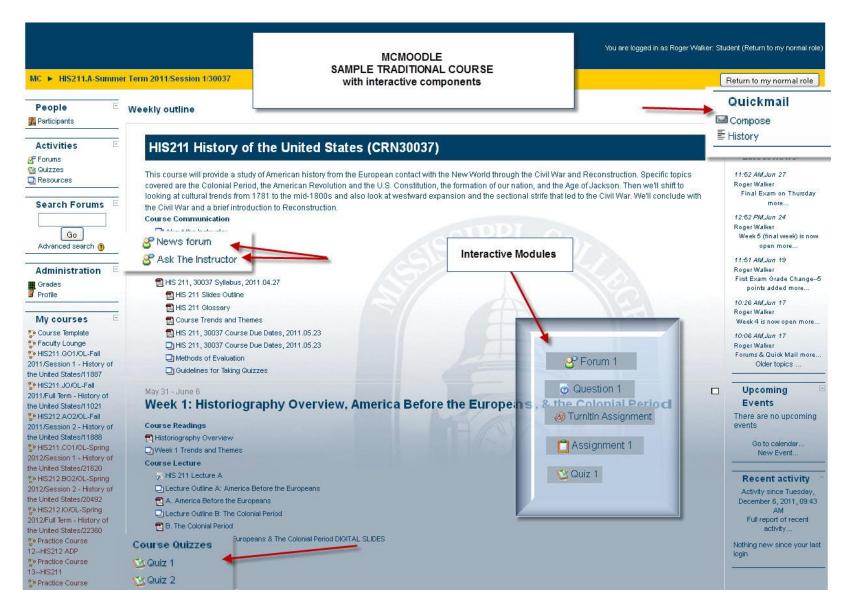
- a. Final test, quiz, paper
- b. Final message from the instructor
- c. Course information regarding final grades posting, reminders for final projects and due dates, graduation items

FOR ADDITIONAL READING ON BEST PRACTICES

"Best Practices" On Designing an Online Course rubric (standard/description) MCMoodle home page: http://moodle.mc.edu/file.php/1/Best Practices in Designing Online Courses faculty.pdf

TPACK—Technological Pedagogical and Content Knowledge

Technological <u>Pedagogical Content Knowledge</u> (TPACK) attempts to identify <u>the nature of knowledge</u> required by teachers for technology integration in their teaching, while addressing the complex, multifaceted and situated nature of <u>teacher knowledge</u>. At the heart of the TPACK framework, is the complex interplay of three primary forms of knowledge: Content (CK), Pedagogy (PK), and Technology (TK). http://www.tpck.org/



Submitted to Dr. Ron Howard by Jessica Manzo, Instructional Technologist