

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Distance education, particularly online learning, has become a popular approach in the higher education environment. Various forms of distance delivery and new instructional tools used in distance education environments allow institutions to offer more distance courses and programs to a greater population of students. According to a study by the U.S. Department of Education on distance education in higher education, 39% of all public two-year institutions and 45% of all public four-year institutions offered distance education courses during the 1994-1995 academic year (Lewis, Alexander, & Farris, 1997). The number of institutions participating in distance education has grown significantly since that time; during the 2004-2005 academic year, 88% of all public two-year institutions and 86% of all public four-year institutions offered distance education courses (NCES, 2006).

The most popular form of distance education is online learning, also referred to as eLearning. Allen and Seaman (2003) reported that of the 1.6 million students who took at least one online course during the Fall 2002 semester, over 33% of the students took all of their courses online. Online learning includes synchronous instruction, which allows students and instructors to participate simultaneously, and asynchronous instruction, which does not require simultaneous participation (Simonson, Smaldino, Albright, & Zvacek, 2006). Of the public institutions that offered distance education courses during the 2000-2001 academic year, 90% offered online courses using asynchronous instruction while 43% offered online courses using synchronous instruction (Waits & Lewis, 2003).

Students, particularly adult learners, embrace online learning because of the convenience of taking courses from home or from work without cost and time issues associated with travel to and from a traditional campus (Simonson et al., 2006). With online learning, students appreciate the ability to communicate with their peers instantly and in environments that have little regard for age, race, or sex, which may often be communication barriers in a more traditional environment (Cuellar, 2002). Increased interest in distance education and increased enrollment, particularly in online learning, have required university administrators to offer additional courses at a distance, which indicates a need for faculty involvement in distance education.

Statement of the Problem

Moore and Thompson (1990) suggested that the success or failure of educational settings dominated by technology is largely dependent upon the skill and dedication of faculty. Constant changes in technology and advancements in education require faculty to improve their technical skills on a regular basis and improve their abilities to apply technology in instruction (Rockwell, Schauer, Fritz, & Marx, 1999; Betts, 1998; Schifter, 2000). This issue becomes particularly significant to faculty who teach in the distance education environment.

Preparing to teach in a distance education environment, particularly in an online setting, requires faculty to adapt to settings that may include technology and instructional strategies that may be unfamiliar to both the instructor and students. For this reason, teaching in a distance education environment may sometimes be rejected by those faculty who are accustomed to and more comfortable within the walls of a traditional classroom setting (Rahman, 2001). Although research shows that there is “no significant

difference” in student performance between traditional and distance courses (Shea, Pickett, & Li, 2005), there is clearly a difference in the traditional and distance education teaching environments.

Faculty who are transitioning to the distance environment must be adequately prepared to deal with various issues and differences that may exist in the new instructional environment. The differences that exist between distance and traditional environments require faculty to have special preparation to teach in an online setting. If faculty participating in distance education are to provide educational experiences commensurate with those provided in traditional classrooms (Bower, 2001; Olcott & Wright, 1995), instructional and technical support must be provided. Support for redesigning courses may be needed for faculty converting their traditional courses to web-based platforms (Moore & Kearsley, 1996) and training that instructs faculty on how to use and apply distance education technologies to their courses should also be provided (Lorenzetti, 2002).

Research implicates that the more traditional approaches to the preparation of faculty for teaching in a distance education environment, particularly in online instruction, may be too simplistic and may negate the relationships that exist between content, pedagogy, and technology (Koehler, Mishra, Hershey, & Perushi, 2004). Strategies are needed that will direct faculty on how to combine these and other components to effectively design and deliver online instruction (Koehler et al., 2004).

Although some institutions make valid attempts to prepare faculty for teaching in an online environment, research shows that institutions often fail to provide adequate support to faculty in transitioning from the traditional environment to the online

environment. An investigation of how faculty are currently being prepared at institutions of higher education is necessary to rectify this problem. This type of analysis could lead to the discovery of strategies on how to best prepare faculty to teach in online environments, which would in turn contribute to improved student learning and increased faculty satisfaction with distance education (Dooley & Murphrey, 2000).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the preparation of faculty for teaching online at institutions of higher education. This study identified the faculty development approaches and activities that were provided at universities to assist in the preparation of faculty to teach online. This study also identified the faculty development programs and activities in which faculty participated most frequently at institutions of higher education.

This study also identified the faculty development initiatives and types of assistance provided at institutions that faculty found to be most and least beneficial in preparing them to teach at a distance. The identification of strategies that faculty perceived to have the greatest impact on their distance education teaching experiences will inform faculty development organizations on what can be done to better prepare faculty to teach at a distance.

The purpose of this study was to also identify those areas in which faculty felt they needed additional assistance or training. As faculty participated in various faculty development activities, individual expectations and desires for training and assistance may have existed. During the course of training, these expectations and needs may have been unmet, which may have affected the online teaching experience. This study identified these expectations and needs with hopes of providing institutions and faculty

development organizations with information that will assist in the adequate preparation of faculty to teach online.

Significance of the Study

This study contributes to the scholarly literature on the preparation of faculty for teaching online by identifying successful strategies to help faculty effectively engage in distance teaching. This study was significant because it provides agencies with data on the types of faculty development that are provided at institutions of higher education, the strategies that are most beneficial to faculty who are teaching online, and the strategies that are least beneficial to distance faculty. This study also identifies faculty expectations of training and assistance that may be unfulfilled by the current faculty support provided at institutions. The outcomes of this study reveal best practices that will inform administrators of institutions, faculty development organizations, and other departments of how to best prepare faculty to teach at a distance.

Research Questions

This study sought to answer three research questions regarding the preparation of faculty to teach in distance education, particularly via online instruction:

1. In what ways are faculty being prepared to teach at a distance through faculty development programs?
2. What professional development strategies do faculty find to be most effective in preparing them to teach at a distance?
3. In what areas do faculty perceive they need further preparation to enhance their distance teaching experience?

Definitions

Distance Education. A type of organized learning in which the instructor of the course is separated from the student by both time and space (McIsaac & Gunawardena, 1996; Keegan, 1996; Schrum, 2000; Willis, 1994).

Distance Education Units. The organization designated by the institution to provide distance education programs and activities.

Distance Learning. Learning that occurs as a result of distance education (Steiner, 1995).

Experienced. Faculty member with three or more years of experience teaching online.

Formal Training. Activities and initiatives that have a structured format with a clearly defined curriculum (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, n.d.).

Informal Training. Unplanned and unstructured training with no formal curriculum (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, n.d.).

Instructional Support. Support provided by institutions to assist faculty with the development, delivery, and improvement of their instruction (Lee, 2001).

Non-Experienced. Faculty member with one to two years of experience teaching online.

Online/eLearning. Any learning that utilizes a network or the Internet for delivery, interaction, or facilitation. The terms 'online' and 'eLearning' will be used interchangeably throughout this document.

Technical Support. Technology training that instructs faculty on how to use and apply distance education technologies (Lee, 2001).

Traditional/Classroom Course. A traditional teaching environment in which students sit in a typical classroom setting and listen to a teacher or instructor, with face-to-face interactions between students and instructors (Cuellar, 2002).

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this literature review was to examine prior research associated with the preparation of faculty to teach in an online environment. Issues related to the online environment, the role of faculty in online environments, and preparing faculty for online instruction were addressed. This literature review also attempted to provide a brief analysis of approaches to faculty preparation for teaching online.

The Online Environment

As institutions of higher education face the challenge of providing quality educational opportunities, the field of distance education continues to accelerate as a viable means of providing more access to a greater number of students. Distance education, which is described as a type of organized learning in which the instructor of the course is separated from the student by both time and place (McIsaac & Gunawardena, 1996; Keegan, 1996; Schrum, 2000; Willis, 1994), has been in existence since the late 1800s, when correspondence courses were popular (McIsaac & Gunawardena; Matthews, 1999, Baer, 1998). Since its inception, the popularity of distance education has spread in such a manner that it not only includes print technology, but it now includes the widespread use of various technologies for teaching and learning.

Online education, which involves the use of courses that have at least 80% of the course content delivered online or through the web (Allen & Seaman, 2006), has quickly evolved as a popular method of distance education (Kosak, Manning, Dobson, Rogerson, Cotnam, Colaric, & McFadden, 2004). In the fall of 2003, an estimate of more than 1.9 million students participated in learning at a distance via web-based technologies. This

number grew significantly to 2.35 million students in 2004 (Allen & Seaman, 2004). Participation in online learning, also referred to as eLearning, has grown considerably over the years particularly because of increased use of the Internet.

Rapid use of the Internet to offer instruction has provided institutions of higher education with practical alternatives to constructing new classrooms and building other facilities to accommodate increased student enrollment (Jones, 2003). Although instruction provided through the Internet offers a viable alternative to the need for “physical” space, the need for faculty involvement in distance education remains a prevalent issue for those institutions that plan to continue offering instruction at a distance.

The Role of Faculty in Online Environments

Over the past few years, the number of online courses and programs has grown significantly (Allen & Seaman, 2004; Parker, 2003). As student enrollment and online course offerings continue to increase, institutions will need faculty who are willing to accept the challenge of teaching online. Due to the nature of distance education and the manner in which teaching online differs from teaching in a traditional environment, some faculty have been slow to adopt the concept of teaching online.

Faculty Adoption of Distance Education

Earlier faculty adopters of distance education did so on a voluntary basis, expecting compensation and other extrinsic rewards (Wolcott, 1998). In more recent years, faculty have been expected to participate in distance education as a part of their regular duties as faculty (Wolcott, 1998). Despite this expectation, faculty have still been hesitant to convert their traditional courses to an online format (McLean, 2005; Bower,

2001). The literature attributes this reluctance to the lack of support, assistance, and training provided by institutions of higher education (Betts, 1998; Schifter, 2000; Milheim, 2001; Rockwell et al., 1999).

Both novice faculty, who may have been reluctant to participate, and expert faculty play a significant role in guiding the types of support, assistance, and training provided by institutions of higher education. Rockwell et al. (2000) evaluated the types of education, assistance, and support that faculty felt were needed to be successful in distance education. Faculty responded with the assertions that assistance and support for developing instructional materials, developing interaction, and for applying certain technologies was critical to their success in online environments. Faculty consistently felt that additional instructional and technical support were needed because faculty were genuinely concerned about the quality of their distance education courses and the amount of technical assistance and training available to them at their institutions (Betts, 1998; Schifter, 2000; Milheim, 2001; Rockwell et al., 1999).

Supporting faculty becomes significant because of the number of faculty who begin the online teaching experience with little knowledge of the process of designing, developing, and instructing an online course (Cuellar, 2002; Irani & Telg, 2002). According to a National Center for Education Statistics (Lewis, Alexander, & Farris, 1997) report, 40% of the institutions that offered courses at a distance expected faculty to teach without any training or preparation. This lack of knowledge and lack of preparation by institutions ultimately leads to online instruction that lacks continuity and quality (Johnsrud, Harada, & Tabata, 2006). To produce this type of instruction, institutions must alter the methods by which faculty are prepared to transition to online

environments and faculty must alter the way instruction will be provided to students in this new environment (Kosak, Manning, Dobson, Rogerson, Cotnam, Colaric, & McFadden, 2004).

Transitioning from Traditional to Distance Education

Faculty who participate in distance education typically stem from the population of faculty who generally teach traditional courses. Allen and Seaman (2006) reported that in 2005, 72% of 16 southern institutions of higher education used mainly core faculty to instruct online courses. While the use of traditional faculty to teach online may appear to be a quick and uncomplicated solution to the need for faculty involvement in distance education, faculty face several challenges in the transitioning process.

Structural Limitations and Technology Use. Due to the fact that online education is still fairly new to some, faculty may be faced with a new learning environment that has characteristics and limitations that are different from a traditional setting (Rahman, 2001). Adjusting to the dynamics of this new learning environment includes adapting to the structural differences that exist within the online setting (Wiesenberg, 1999). In an online environment, instruction that is normally provided within the walls of a traditional face-to-face classroom is replaced by instruction that can typically be accessed at any time and anywhere (Caviedes, 1998). In order to provide “anytime/anywhere” instruction, instructors must have adequate technology skills. The use of advanced technologies becomes a requirement for online instructors in order to accommodate the increase in the population, age, and technical experience of the students enrolled in online courses (Wiesenberg, 1999). Instruction is conveyed to students via the computer and the Internet, through the use of text, video, and audio (Ascough, 2002).

Using technology in instruction allows faculty to provide access to various sources of information for students and to use technological tools to provide skills and knowledge for students that will assist them in the workforce and in society (Eastmond & Lawrence, 1997-1998). Although technology is important, it does not work alone. Faculty must appropriately use technology for it to be effective in instruction (Valentine, 2002). The most prevalent concerns that faculty have regarding technology are the time it takes to learn how to use new technology and being proficient in its use (Butler & Sellbom, 2002).

Communication Barriers. Communication with students is another challenge that exists in an online environment. Online education has been rejected by some who believe that the personal aspects of traditional courses are lost with the implementation of distance education (Fox, 1998). Bower (2001) reported that some faculty felt that in distance education settings, courses were developed and instructed with no real awareness of the students. Because instructors and students will no longer be in the same place at the same time, which is the case with traditional instruction, faculty must find alternate methods for communicating with students and dispersing course information and content (Wiesenberg, 1999).

Using the appropriate technologies to communicate with students is pertinent for engaging learners and allowing the students to interact socially (Cuellar, 2002). Interaction within an online course is essential for success in the online environment. Although learners are expected to steer their own learning, instructors are expected to facilitate the process, which makes the use of technologies like chat rooms, email, and discussion boards essential for communication in an online course (Cuellar, 2002).

Pedagogical Changes. Instructors who transition from traditional to online environments also face the challenge of adjusting their teaching styles. For instruction to be presented in an effective manner, instructors must rethink their methods of presenting the information to students. Just as the physical environment for information transfer changed from traditional to online, the instructional strategies must also change. Being able to successfully use technology associated with the online environment should not be the goal; using technology to adequately meet the instructional goals of the course should be the ultimate target (Levy, 2003). Instructors must be willing to change their pedagogical approaches and adopt those that are specific to the online environment (Kosak et al., 2004).

When transitioning into the distance environment, faculty are challenged with actually designing and developing their courses to be offered online. The design of an online course is a major element because it allows faculty to plan how appropriate pedagogy and technology will be effectively incorporated into an online course (Byun, Hallett, & Essex, 2000). Training for the actual design of an online course is needed to help prepare faculty, who are sometimes overwhelmed with technology, in the development of instructional skills and strategies that will stimulate successful learning in their courses (Thach, 1995).

Preparing Faculty for Online Instruction

Skills Needed for Online Instruction

Few will argue with the fact that faculty transitioning from traditional instruction to distance instruction may require the acquisition of new skills. Faculty may need to seek specialized training and devote more time for course preparation than what may

normally be required for traditional courses (Willis, 1998; Gunawardena & Zittle, 1995). According to the research, technical and instructional skills emerge as the most commonly used skills in distance education. On a consistent basis, faculty request technical and instructional support from institutions (Betts, 1998; Schifter, 2000; Milheim, 2001; Rockwell et al., 1999). This indicates the skills that they perceive to be necessary for successful participation in distance education.

Technical Skills for Online Instruction. Faculty must be provided preparation programs that will allow them to enhance their technical skills (Eastmond & Lawrence, 1997-1998) for online instruction. Schauer, Rockwell, Fritz, and Marx (1998) found in their study on education, assistance, and support for distance education various technical skills that faculty wanted to receive from education and training. The ability to use required technology to develop student materials, the ability to use web-based instructional strategies, and the ability to mix various technologies were technical skills that faculty ranked as being very important. Those faculty who had prior teaching experience in distance education were more interested in mixing various types of technology than were those who had no experience in distance teaching. Participants also ranked the following as being somewhat important in education, assistance, and support programs: (a) integration of multimedia application; (b) email usage; (c) development and usage of videotapes; (d) audio conferencing; and (e) satellite delivery strategies. Faculty who had taught 10 years or less were more interested in integrating multimedia applications and using email than were the other faculty involved in the study.

The literature also outlines an increased need for the use of interactive electronic media, such as teleconferencing, computers, and television, in distance instruction.

Because instructors and students are separated by physical space, technology is needed to bridge gaps that may exist because of geographical distance (Eaton, 2001). Because of the increasing need for advanced technology, particularly in online courses, faculty may need to seek out media and technical support personnel or acquire specialized skills and strategies that may be necessary for teaching in an online environment (Willis, 1998; Lee, 2002; Howell, Williams, & Lindsay, 2003).

Instructional Skills for Online Instruction. Faculty must also be provided training and development on using the appropriate instructional strategies in an online course. Instructional skills for teaching at a distance should include strategies for instructional delivery (Lee, 2001) and for course management (Clay, 1999). Clay indicated that the following instructional factors should be implemented into training programs: (a) strategies for managing problem behaviors in distance courses; (b) strategies for acknowledging student perspectives; (c) strategies for varying the instruction presented in distance courses; and (d) tips for conducting needs assessments to improve instruction.

Schauer, Rockwell, Fritz, and Marx (1998) developed a survey in 1997 to ascertain faculty perceptions of the instructional skills they desired in the Colleges of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR) and Human Resources and Family Sciences (CHRFS) at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Faculty rated development in interaction skills and material development as very important. In the study, the participants wanted training to develop their skills in: (a) increasing instructor to student interaction; (b) reinforcing student interaction with the course content; (c) eliciting student feedback and (d) communicating with students located off campus.

Lee (2001) conducted one of the few existing research studies that examined perceived faculty satisfaction with instructional support programs and teaching in distance education. The study used a web-based survey designed for administrators who provided instructional support programs at their institutions and the faculty who actually taught the courses. Of the 237 faculty (from 25 institutions) that responded to the survey, most of them had negative perceptions of instructional support. Ironically, these faculty members also possessed perceptions about the levels of satisfaction with their own teaching that were lower than their perceptions of motivation and commitment related to distance teaching. Lee's (2001) study showed that the lack of satisfaction that faculty had with their own teaching was probably due in part to the type of instructional support that they had been receiving at their institutions. Their negative perceptions of the instructional support programs at their institutions indicate that the institutions need to revisit their support structures and redesign a system that better prepares faculty to teach at a distance.

Adequately preparing faculty for the transition from the traditional setting to the online environment allows instructors to acquire the appropriate skills to provide effective online instruction. The ability to use diverse instructional strategies to accommodate different learning styles and the ability to use appropriate technology are keys to success in this new teaching paradigm. Faculty must be willing to incorporate both pedagogy and technology to connect learners to the content for a more successful online teaching and learning experience.

Types of Training and Preparation for Online Instruction

Changing technologies require faculty to improve their technical skills and their abilities to apply technology in instruction (Rockwell et al., 1999; Betts, 1998; Schifter, 2000). Therefore, faculty who plan to participate in online instruction must be prepared using methods that should be somewhat different from those used for traditional environments (Thach, 1995). Based on the current literature, faculty development initiatives for distance education are typically divided into formal training, informal training, or a combination of formal, informal, and self-paced training (Irani & Telg, 2002).

Formal and Informal Training. According to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics (n.d.), formal training includes those activities and initiatives that have a structured format with a clearly defined curriculum. Formal training activities typically include workshops, seminars, class sessions, lectures, and presentations made using audio and/or video techniques. Formal training can also include structured training materials (Irani & Telg, 2002). Informal training is generally unplanned and lacks the structure of formal training, which makes informal training adaptable to most training situations and people (U.S. Bureau, 2001). Informal training typically includes assistances provided by individuals or by colleagues in relaxed and casual settings (U.S. Bureau, 2001; Irani & Telg, 2002).

According to Irani and Telg (2002), formal training is the primary form of training used to prepare faculty for distance education. In their study to assess the evolution and elements of their Distance Education Faculty Training (DEFT) Program, Irani and Telg (2002) found that regularly scheduled courses and training materials were

the main types of formal training conducted by the distance education developers at 14 land-grant universities. Clay (1999) also cited regularly scheduled courses and training materials as being key methods of training for distance instructors, citing group sessions, printed materials, and web-based tutorials as formal training opportunities that are effective for training distance instructors. Clay, however, identified one-on-one training, a form of informal training, as the most effective type of training for distance instructors. According to Clay, although one-on-one training is expensive, this type of training focuses on the individual needs of faculty and it allows instructors to work at their own pace.

The Faculty Training Program (FTP) in the Continuing Learning Program for Distance Faculty at the University of Maryland University College (UMUC) offers a four-step plan that includes both formal and information training. The first step offers initial training in technology and pedagogy. Faculty complete homework assignments and participate in discussions related to distance instruction. In the second step of the plan, faculty participate in observations of colleagues experienced in distance instruction and faculty work in training classes. In the last step of the plan, faculty participate in online discussions with other colleagues (SchWeber, Kelley, & Orr, 1998).

Instructional and Technical Support. Instructional support is support provided by institutions to assist faculty with the development, delivery, and improvement of their instruction (Lee, 2001). Providing faculty with instructional support for their online courses gives them the opportunity to learn valuable strategies that lead to a more conducive distance learning environment (Northrup, 1997). According to Lee (2002), instructional support can be divided into four categories: (a) support for redesigning

courses; (b) technology training; (c) instructional training; and (d) media and technical support.

Technical support in the form of technology training instructs faculty on how to use and apply distance education technologies to their courses. Faculty involved in online programs at Suffolk University in Boston were provided with teaching assistants who were well-equipped with technology skills, which enhanced faculty's ability to communicate with students (Lorenzetti, 2002). Not only do faculty need assistance with technology, but they also need assistance with using pedagogy in their distance courses (Lorenzetti).

Analyzing Approaches to Faculty Preparation for Teaching Online

Distance education is an organized process of delivering instruction to students who are separated from the instructor by time and space. Distance education, particularly online learning, has grown in such a way over the last few years that institutions of higher education are in need of additional faculty to accommodate the growing population of students interested in online instruction. Faculty who participate in distance education must possess skills and techniques in incorporating design, technology, pedagogy, and communication to provide online instruction in an effective manner.

Faculty development programs provide instructional and technological strategies to faculty with the aim of enhancing the quality of learning for students and teaching for faculty. Although many may assume that the instructional and technological strategies used in a traditional setting are equivalent to those needed in an online environment, research shows that technological and pedagogical skills specific to the online environment must be developed. Because faculty must be adequately prepared to provide

effective online instruction, an examination of current faculty development initiatives and practices for instructors who teach online must be conducted.

Faculty consistently request support that would assist in the improvement of their instructional and technical skills. Strategies that faculty perceive to be beneficial must be examined and considered because the less complex the online teaching experience is to faculty, the more likely they are to have successful online teaching experiences. Because instructional and technical support are key factors in the success of a distance education program, institutions can foster a successful online teaching experience by providing faculty development programs that relate directly to the design and development of effective online instruction.

This study proposed to further expand the body of knowledge pertaining to how faculty were prepared to teach online, including types of formal and informal training that were used to enhance the instructional and technical skills of faculty. The next chapter outlines the methodology that was used to accomplish this mission. The research design, participants, data collection procedures, and data analysis procedures for this study are addressed at length.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The major purpose of this research study was to examine the preparation of faculty to teach online at institutions of higher education. This chapter summarizes the procedures that were used in this study to address the three research questions identified in Chapter One of this study. This chapter provides an account of the research design, participants, recruitment process, data collection procedures, instrument, implementation procedures, and data analysis procedures employed in this study.

Research Design

A qualitative research approach was used in this study. Qualitative research is rooted in social sciences because researchers in this field attempt to understand the social life that has been experienced by participants in various studies (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2005). Researchers typically use qualitative research to make some type of interpretation of the meanings that are gathered from people (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Meaning, which is described by Bogdan and Biklen (2006) as the sense people make of their lives, is important in helping researchers determine what people are experiencing and how they interpret these experiences. I used qualitative research in this particular study because it allowed me to investigate the interpretations and meanings of participants in their natural settings (Seidman, 1998). Collecting participant perspectives and interpretations in a more natural and conversational environment allowed me to better understand their behaviors and actions (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006).

This study was designed to use informal interviews as the qualitative method of inquiry. I used interviews because they allowed for the collection of rich responses with

the depth and breadth that helped me better understand the situations of the participants (Vockell & Asher, 1995). By using interviews, I was able to look specifically at the experiences of faculty and generate a clear picture and description of how faculty were prepared to teach online. The research design, interview format and protocol, and study procedures were designed to address the following research questions:

1. In what ways are faculty being prepared to teach at a distance through faculty development programs?
2. What professional development strategies do faculty find to be most effective in preparing them to teach at a distance?
3. In what areas do faculty perceive they need further preparation to enhance their distance teaching experience?

The Researcher

I became interested in this particular topic because I served in the capacity of faculty trainer for faculty who were teaching both totally online and web-enhanced courses. As a faculty trainer for a campus that served over 11,000 students, I was constantly faced with the dilemma of creating appropriate training activities that would prepare faculty to have successful experiences in the online environment. These activities had to be properly developed, but they also had to be activities in which faculty were interested in partaking.

While several activities were offered throughout the academic year, attendance was not at the level that it should have been, especially with the number of faculty who were teaching in the online environment. It was determined that an investigation of how faculty were being prepared at other institutions of higher education would be

undertaken. The anticipation was that findings from this study would help faculty trainers and institutions of higher education design activities that were desired by faculty and were thorough enough to effectively prepare faculty for teaching online.

Research Sites

This study was conducted using a limited number of institutions in the University of North Carolina (UNC) System. All public four-year institutions in the state of North Carolina are a part of the University of North Carolina (UNC) System. The decision to use four-year institutions as a foundation for this study was made because the setting was similar to the setting in which I was involved.

Fifteen of the 16 institutions in the UNC System offered courses online. Three of the institutions that offered courses online were purposely selected for the study based on the collaborative efforts that existed between the institutions and their proximity and accessibility (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2005). I selected these institutions, hereafter referred to by the fictional names of Public Institution-1 (PI-1), Public Institution-2 (PI-2), and Public Institution-3 (PI-3), because they proved to have a more manageable research setting for me while the interviews were being conducted.

Public Institution-1 was a small urban institution with a student enrollment of fewer than 10,000 students. The institution offered both bachelor's and master's level degree programs, with online courses that supported more than five online and off-campus programs. Two faculty who taught online were interviewed from Public Institution-1.

Public Institution-2 was a large urban institution with a student enrollment of fewer than 15,000 students. The institution offered bachelor's, master's, and doctoral

level degree programs. Public Institution-2 offered online courses that supported over 15 online, off-campus, and certificate programs. Two faculty who taught online at Public Institution-2 were interviewed for this study.

Public Institution-3 was a large urban institution with a student enrollment of almost 15,000 graduate and undergraduate students. The institution offered bachelor's, master's, and doctoral level degree programs. Public Institution-3 offered a host of online courses that supported over eight online and off-campus degree programs. Two faculty who participated in teaching online at Public Institution-3 were interviewed.

Research Participants

A total of six participants were purposely selected to participate in the study. Participants were selected based on their experience teaching online. From each institution, one experienced faculty member (with three or more years of experience teaching online) and one non-experienced faculty member (with less than two years of experience teaching online) were selected from each of the three institutions for a total of six participants. No other criteria (e.g., sex, gender, ethnicity, academic rank) were considered in the selection process. Based upon the literature, it was determined that six was a sufficient number (Seidman, 1998) to reflect the experiences of experienced and non-experienced faculty from the three institutions.

Participant Selection Procedures

After Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval (see Appendix A) was granted from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech), the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at each of the three institutions was contacted to ascertain whether approval would be needed at each of the institutions to interview the study participants

(Creswell, 1998). The first institution contacted, Public Institution-1 (PI-1) did not require any IRB approval because faculty would be participating on a voluntary basis (see Appendix B for email communication). The second institution contacted, Public Institution-2 (PI-2), required the submission of a study synopsis along with a copy of the IRB approval letter from Virginia Tech. Approval to conduct the interviews at PI-2 was granted within one day. A full IRB application was required to conduct interviews at Public Institution-3 (PI-3). Approval was granted after a period of two weeks. IRB approval letters from PI-2 and PI-3 can be found in Appendix C and Appendix D.

Although no formal gatekeeper was needed for this study (Richardson et al., 1965 as cited in Seidman, 1998), an informal gatekeeper, the distance education unit at each institution, was contacted. The distance education unit was defined as the organization designated by the institution to provide distance education programs and activities. The person who served in the capacity of leader or director of the unit was contacted via email (see Appendix E) and asked to provide the names of two faculty, one experienced and one non-experienced, for participation in the study. A total of six participants from all three institutions were selected to participate.

Public Institution-1. The contact person from Public Institution-1 (PI-1) was contacted via email. After a period of one week, a follow-up phone call was made to the contact person at PI-1. The contact person was not reached during the follow-up phone call; therefore a second person was contacted. The second contact person from PI-1 provided the names of two faculty members, one experienced and one non-experienced, along with alternates.

Using the contact information provided by the second distance education contact person, potential participants were phoned and asked to participate in the study (Seidman, 1998). The purpose of the study along with an overview of the interview process was explained to each of the potential participants. Each of the two participants agreed to participate. Interview dates, times, and locations were determined by the participants based on their schedules.

Public Institution-2. The contact person from Public Institution-2 (PI-2) was contacted via email. After a period of one week, a follow-up phone call was made to the contact person at PI-2. The contact person was not reached during the follow-up phone call; therefore a second person was contacted. No information was provided by either of the contact persons at PI-2. Because no contact information was supplied from PI-2 and access to the faculty was not required through either of the contact persons (Seidman, 1998), I purposely selected names of instructors who taught online from the institution's distance education website.

Potential participants from PI-2 were emailed and asked to participate in the study. A copy of the invitational email can be found in Appendix F. Out of the six participants from PI-2 who were emailed, four responded. Each of the four potential participants was phoned to determine their prior experience teaching online. From the four, one experienced faculty member and one non-experienced faculty member were purposely selected to participate. Each of these participants was provided with an overview of the study's purpose and the interview procedures. Interview dates, times, and locations for these participants were determined by the participants based on their schedules.

Public Institution-3. The contact person from Public Institution-3 (PI-3) was contacted via email. A response was provided within the same day via email. The names of two faculty members, one experienced and one non-experienced, were provided along with alternates.

Using the contact information provided by the distance education contact person, potential participants were phoned and asked to participate in the study (Seidman, 1998). The purpose of the study along with an overview of the interview process was explained to each of the potential participants. Each of the two participants agreed to participate. Interview dates, times, and locations were determined by the participants based on their schedules.

The six participants in this study were purposely selected. Participants were selected based on their backgrounds in online teaching and their ability to answer the research questions. Participants were selected to provide information regarding the systems of preparation on their campuses based on their views as experienced and non-experienced instructors (Vockell & Asher, 1995). Therefore, no attempts were made to randomly select participants for this study (Creswell, 2005). Participant information, including pseudonyms and demographic data, can be found in Appendix G.

Interview Format

In order to understand the experiences of the participants and to have them reconstruct their preparation experiences, I developed in-depth interview questions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). I designed the interviews in a semi-structured format that would allow participants to offer information outside of the responses that I expected. The semi-structured format was used because I had a planned set of topics that would be

addressed, but in a conversational manner. This format allowed participants to offer additional information on their own terms without feeling restricted (Vockell & Asher, 1995).

The initial research design included the use of an online survey. However, because of the superficial nature of the questions, I determined that in-depth interviews would garner richer data and would allow participants to share supplementary information on their preparation and the challenges that were faced during the transition to the online environment. Specific interview questions were determined, but additional questions were asked based on the flow and/or context of each individual's responses. Each question on the interview protocol was assigned an identification code that was also used during the data analysis procedures.

Interview Protocol Development

In order to generate a comprehensive picture of faculty preparation, an interview protocol was developed to address the research questions and to outline key questions that were to be asked of each participant (Creswell, 2005). Interview questions addressed both formal and informal preparation activities. The interview protocol also addressed courses faculty taught in the online environment, their experiences in the traditional setting, and their transition from the traditional to online environment. The interview protocol was divided into four sections: (a) a section for demographic information; (b) a section on preparation for teaching online; (c) a section on additional assistance provided by institutions; and (d) a section that allowed faculty to provide additional comments on their preparation experiences.

The demographics section included five questions that described the participants' backgrounds in online instruction. Questions that addressed the length of time faculty had been teaching online, the number of online courses faculty had taught in the past, and the number and type of courses faculty were currently teaching were included. The demographics section requested information on when faculty had participated in their last instances of preparation or training activities for teaching online. This section did not include any demographic information such as age, gender, ethnicity, or academic ranking because I did not feel this information would be relevant in addressing the research questions. Therefore, these questions were intentionally omitted.

The section on preparation for teaching online inquired about how faculty were prepared to teach online. Questions were organized based on the possible response(s) to the question of how they were prepared. Questions branched off based on up to four responses that faculty could have provided: (a) colleague; (b) formal training; (c) informal training; and (d) no preparation. Specific questions were generated for each branch, but there were also general questions that were included for all branches. This section also inquired about faculty experiences in the traditional educational setting and challenges they may have faced transitioning to the online environment. Training relative to this transition was also addressed. The section on the preparation for teaching online also included questions that addressed the most and least beneficial training activities for preparing faculty to teach online and areas in which faculty felt they needed further development for teaching online.

The section on the interview protocol that allowed faculty to provide information on additional assistance afforded faculty the opportunity to discuss the areas of support

that would have enhanced their online teaching experiences. The questions in this section also elicited responses as to how faculty might have prepared differently for the online teaching experience after they had experience in the field. Faculty were also invited to make preparation recommendations for novice instructors in the online environment.

The last section in the interview protocol allowed faculty the opportunity to provide additional comments about their preparation to teach online. A copy of the interview protocol is included in Appendix H.

Revisions and Pilot Testing

Interview questions were reviewed by four of five committee members and revisions were made accordingly. The interview protocol was pilot tested with a Sociology professor at one of the institutions included as a research site and an Instructional Technology professor from another institution included as a research site. Both professors had extensive experience in qualitative research, particularly with interviewing procedures. Little feedback was provided relative to the interview questions, but rather on the speed and tone in which the questions were delivered. One reviewer suggested altering a small portion of the introductory prompt on the interview protocol to be more consistent with the definitions of formal and informal training. Revisions were made accordingly.

Data Collection Procedures

Interviews were scheduled to be conducted over a 10-day period, based on the interview schedule. Over the course of the 10-day period, I visited each of the three institutions on two separate occasions to conduct the six in-depth interviews. Prior to the start of each interview, participants were provided with an Informed Consent document

to review and sign (see Appendix I). The procedures outlined in the Informed Consent document were based on guidelines determined by the Institutional Review Board at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. After the Informed Consent document, which outlined the need to tape-record the interview (Creswell, 1998), was signed, each participant verbally verified his or her permission to have the interview tape-recorded. Interviews were tape-recorded because of the potential length of each interview and because of the need for accuracy during the data analysis process (Creswell, 2005). Transcripts of the interviews were generated to help preserve and cross-check information provided during the interviews (Vockell & Asher, 1995).

At the conclusion of each interview, each participant was provided with a \$5 gift card to Barnes and Noble Bookstore for participating in the study. Each participant who completed the interview was also provided with another \$5 gift card to Barnes and Noble Bookstore. The gift card amounts were kept at nominal amounts to prevent any potential bias of the participants' reasons for participating in the study (Creswell, 2005).

Participants were made aware of the compensation in the Informed Consent document prior to the start of the interview. They were, however, unaware of this compensation prior to agreeing to participate in the study. Had participants withdrawn from the interview, compensation for participating in the study would have still been provided.

The interviews lasted an average of 45 minutes each. During each interview, I recorded notes and comments based on the participants' responses to each interview question. After each interview was completed, each tape was locked in a cabinet in my office. To ensure anonymity and confidentiality, I was the only person with access to the tapes. To further increase anonymity and confidentiality, and any other potential risks to

the participants, the interviews were conducted in locations determined by the interviewees at dates and times determined by each interviewee (Seidman, 1998).

Data Analysis

The research questions outlined in Chapter One were addressed by using qualitative research methods that included the use of interviews. Following the data collection process, the interviews were transcribed using a computer-based word processing program (Seidman, 1998). Each of the participants was identified with a code based on the institution, the order in which they had been interviewed, and whether they were an experienced or non-experienced online instructor. All interviews were transcribed verbatim, with the exception of any names, position titles, or any other personal identifiers mentioned by the interviewees. All names, position titles, and personal identifiers were typed with pseudonyms or with XXXX in the place of the item. This process was used to further ensure anonymity of the study participants. Two-inch margins were left on both sides of the pages to allow for my coding and comments.

After the tapes were transcribed, each transcript was printed. I listened to each interview two additional times along with the interview transcript to verify the content of each transcript. During the process of triangulation, the interview transcripts were checked against the notes and comments that I recorded during each interview (Creswell, 2003).

Once the final copies were verified, I began reading through the transcripts. Each transcript was marked with a code to identify whether the participant was experienced = E or non-experienced = NE. In the next phase, notes were made in the margins that indicated the presence of themes that were outlined in the original scope the study. Other

significant themes, key words, and phrases that emerged during the analysis process were also identified for each participant. Each of the six transcripts was analyzed using this process. Each transcript was read twice. I examined each participant's transcript and made an individual list of the themes that had been identified. I then compared the lists of themes from the participants to identify any commonalities. Themes that were identified as common (evident with two or more participants) throughout the interviews were identified as emerging themes and can be found in Appendix J.

In the next phase, responses in the transcripts were coded based on the interview question codes found on the Research Question/Interview Question (RQ/IQ) Table (Appendix K). The RQ/IQ Table summarized how the interview questions were used to address each of the three research questions. During the second phase, I coded the responses to interview questions based on the corresponding research questions found in the RQ/IQ Table. Codes used were: (a) R1=Research Question 1; (b) R2=Research Question 2; and (c) R3=Research Question 3.

I analyzed the themes and other data in the transcripts to answer the research questions. Comparisons on how experienced and non-experienced online instructors perceived their preparation to teach online were also made. An analysis of the findings for each research question can be found in Appendix L.

Validity of Findings

Validity in a qualitative study determines the accuracy of the research findings from the viewpoint of the researcher, the participant, or the persons who are reading the study material (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Creswell (2003) recommends eight strategies that can be used to check the trustworthiness or the accuracy of the findings. I used a

process called triangulation to check the accuracy of the data I collected. During each interview, I recorded notes and comments for each participant. During the data analysis process, I checked each transcript and used the notes and comments made during each individual interview to verify the accuracy of the data. I also attempted to use rich, thick descriptions to describe the findings (Myers, 2000). Using detailed descriptions of their experiences allowed me to recreate a clear account of each participant's experiences, which provided a means for each reader to share in each experience.

Summary

This chapter outlines the methodology that was used to conduct this research study. An account of the research design, research sites and participants, and the interview format and protocol development were included. Data collection procedures and procedures for analyzing the data were also provided. The next chapter outlines the findings that transpired as a result of this study.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to examine how faculty were prepared to teach in online environments at institutions of higher education. This examination was accomplished by reviewing faculty descriptions of their preparation at public four-year institutions in the State of North Carolina. Descriptions of their preparation were based on information provided during in-depth interviews with faculty, which included an assessment of formal and informal preparation activities in which they participated.

This chapter presents the findings from these interviews and provides a description of how faculty were prepared to teach online. During the data process, interviews were coded using the themes outlined in Appendix J. This chapter will also explore other themes that emerged during the interview process, which can also be found in Appendix J. A description of the research study participants' experiences will be presented in this chapter along with an analysis of the findings as they relate to the following research questions:

1. In what ways are faculty being prepared to teach at a distance through faculty development programs?
2. What professional development strategies do faculty find to be most effective in preparing them to teach at a distance?
3. In what areas do faculty perceive they need further preparation to enhance their distance teaching experience?

Description of Participants

Mary Parker

The first participant was Mary Parker. Mary, who had been teaching online in the areas of Technology and Technology Across the K-12 Curriculum, was in her second year of teaching online and was teaching only one online course. My first interaction with Mary was via phone. When I called to schedule her interview, we talked about the background of the study and why she was selected to participate. Mary confirmed that she was willing to participate and was eager to share her experiences as a “new” or “non-experienced” online instructor.

Prior to teaching online, Mary taught over 10 years in a traditional setting. Throughout the course of her transition into the online environment, Mary was challenged with course management issues and “making sure the students enrolled in the online courses were skilled or knowledgeable in a particular area” before they began. Mary, who had taught over nine online courses, was concerned that management of these issues was taking too much of her time. Mary was hopeful that the results of this study would help her resolve some of these issues. Although Mary had not participated in any training that prepared her to make the transition to the online environment, she had participated in training for teaching online within the past semester.

I met Mary in her office, which was located off campus, during the morning. We briefly talked about the study before we began. I took notes during the interview, which lasted 37 minutes. I asked questions during and after the interview to clarify any questions that I had.

Grayson Ford

Grayson, a non-experienced online instructor, was the second participant that I interviewed. I had communicated with Grayson several times via email to arrange his interview session, but I spoke with him for the first time on the day of the interview. He called me to make sure I was coming and to provide directions. Upon my arrival, Grayson and I started talking immediately as if we had known each other for years. Grayson, who was more than twice my age and quite a “seasoned” instructor, was extremely eager to get started and share with me all that he had learned about the computer.

You see, Grayson had only been using the computer for just seven years! Within that seven years, he learned enough to become an online instructor. Grayson had been teaching the same online course in the History Department for about two years. Aside from the extra work it took to build the course and the process of “learning a new language,” Grayson, after teaching in a traditional setting for 36 years, did not experience any major challenges during the transitioning process.

Grayson, who had taught a correspondence course (a form of distance education) prior to teaching online, did not receive any kind of training that was geared specifically towards transitioning into the online environment before he actually began the transition. He did, however, receive quite a bit of training after that point and had even received training the day before I arrived to conduct his interview. Ironically, I stayed after his interview, which lasted for about an hour and 30 minutes, to assist him with adding pieces of content to his online course.

Andy Smith

Andy was interviewed during an afternoon session. I arrived at a time when he was actually responding via email to some of the students in his online course, so he was anxious to talk about some of the experiences he'd had with the students.

Andy, who had taught and developed more than 50 Agricultural courses online, had been teaching online for seven years. Andy actually began teaching online during the same semester he started teaching in a traditional higher education setting. He considered himself to be quite experienced in the areas of instructional design and distance education. Because of his background, he did not experience any real challenges when he started teaching online and he did not participate in any workshops that helped him prepare for the online experience. He was quite frank in sharing his background and opinions on the support that he had received from his institution. Andy, who had received training during the current semester, was teaching two online courses and was in the process of developing an additional course.

My interview with Andy lasted for a little over one hour. We continued talking after the interview. Because of the similarities in our backgrounds, we actually entertained the idea of doing some collaborative projects in the future.

Mark Greene

Mark was the fourth person that I interviewed. When I arrived to interview Mark, he was on his computer responding to some of his students in the online course that he was teaching at that time. Mark, who was considered to be experienced in teaching online in his department, had taught the same online course repeatedly for about three years.

Prior to teaching online, Mark taught for 15 years in a traditional classroom setting. When he transitioned out of this environment, he was faced with the challenge of not seeing and interacting with his students face-to-face. Although he worked with a development team to build the course, he had not participated in any training for teaching online. Mark had actually never participated in any formal or structured training for teaching online.

My interview with Mark lasted for about 35 minutes. After the interview, we talked for some time on the support systems at our respective institutions. Mark also showed me some of the features that he implemented in his online course.

Matthew Watson

Upon my arrival, Matthew and I talked for quite some time about our experiences at our different institutions. We also found that we had worked with some of the same colleagues. Once we started, I detected that Matthew, who was an experienced online instructor, was quite proud of the online course that he had produced. Matthew's course, which he had taught online for four years, was a music course; he had taught the course for several years in a traditional setting.

When making the transition to the online environment after nine years of working in a traditional setting, Matthew was challenged with not being able to see his students in the online environment, especially in his particular subject area. Although he did not participate in any training for teaching online prior to starting this experience, he participated in several trainings shortly after beginning, with his latest training occurring during the past semester.

My interview with Matthew lasted for about 45 minutes. After the interview, Matthew and I continued our conversation. He mentioned difficulties he had experienced managing the discussion board. After hearing of his issues, I actually assisted Matthew with using some of the features in Blackboard.

Diane Sanders

Diane was the last instructor that I interviewed. Upon arriving to conduct the interview, Diane and I began the interview immediately. Diane had taught about five online courses in the School of Education during the two years in which she had been teaching online. At the time of the interview, she was actually arranging assignments and material for the three courses that she was teaching this semester.

Prior to teaching online, Diane taught in a traditional setting for five years. I detected that Diane's transition to the online environment was not by choice. During the transition, however, she did not encounter any major challenges with the new environment. Prior to teaching her first online course, she was provided with training that was designed to prepare her for the online experience.

During the interview, which lasted less than 30 minutes, Diane shared with me that she had actually attended a training session during the previous semester. Diane did not seem to enthusiastic about teaching online, particularly because of the time it had taken her to grade assignments. After the interview, she actually commented that she would have provided more information during the interview but she "had to get caught up" in her courses.

Overview of Participants

The six participants had been teaching online for an average of three years. Collectively, they had taught a total of over 76 online courses in the areas of Agriculture, Education, Technology, Economics, Technology Across the K-12 Curriculum, African American Music, and History. Most of the participants were only teaching one online course this semester (four out of six). The participants, who had taught an average of 12 years in the traditional setting before transitioning into the online environment, experienced very few challenges with the transition. Faculty were concerned with not being able to see and interact with their students face-to-face, the time it takes to build and manage an online course, and just basically learning a new language. Although only one faculty participated in some type of training for transitioning into the online environment, more than half of the faculty had participated in some type of training within the past two semesters.

Findings for Research Question One:

In what ways are faculty being prepared to teach at a distance through faculty development programs?

Types of Faculty Preparation Activities

Interviews conducted with six online instructors in the UNC System were analyzed and coded to determine how those faculty were prepared to teach online. In preparation for their online teaching experiences, faculty participated in a host of preparation activities that afforded them knowledge and skills that could be used in the online environment.

Workshops. Most of the faculty in this study participated in some type of preparation activity for teaching at a distance, whether through formal or informal activities. Over half of the faculty participated in a workshop of some kind. In an effort to prepare for his online teaching experience, Matthew participated in a program that offered a series of workshops for preparing an online course. Matthew stated:

From the very outset, they had trainings from the [XXXX] program in the library, which is a formal training. They held my hand for about a six to eight-week situation where we went back and forth.

Grayson also participated in a program with a series of workshops that lasted over a period of time. His views of the program were:

We had to start and check in and present our work as soon as you reached a benchmark for approval. This wasn't a "work on an online course until you get it ready [process]." You had to go through a committee to approve it. They looked at it online in the computer and okayed it and suggested some changes. So it was pretty rigorous.

Although the literature on distance education supports the incorporation of pedagogical principles into the design of online instruction (Kosak et al., 2004), the series of workshops attended by Matthew and Grayson seemed to have the strongest pedagogical foundation. When asked to describe the topics covered in the workshops in which he participated, Matthew stated that the workshops:

Mostly included marrying the curriculum with online activities...trying to make sure you had your goals set for each class...taking a lesson plan and basically making it electronic...putting it in an electronic environment.

Mary and Diane attended workshops to prepare them for the online experience, but their workshops focused on the more technical aspects of course preparation. Diane attended a structured workshop that demonstrated “basically how to post announcements...how to upload materials, and so forth.” Diane attended introduction, intermediate, and advanced workshops that all, according to Diane, “basically prepared us to move small amounts into a course shell.”

Mary attended a workshop that was “basically teaching how to utilize the online grading system.” She also attended another technical workshop on “utilizing different features within Blackboard such as the communications features with the students.” Although the workshops that Mary attended were not focused on pedagogy, she did participate in discussions on pedagogy during the course of a session:

I think the discussion generating the type of pedagogy, as far as being aware of ... being familiar with the types of learners that we have to instruct online...being familiar with the different types of delivery modes that we had to utilize.

One to One Assistance. Most of the faculty who participated in workshops also participated in one-to-one assistance and informal training that was provided by a University support organization. Grayson, who also attended a series of structured workshops, received most of his preparation through one-to-one assistance:

At the first workshop, I met Dr. Jones. So, I worked with him one semester...I went over there and he had the camera set up. I tried to tailor [videos] for that [online delivery] and I did eight [lectures]. So, he recorded them and we did some good lectures...I was the first one to use

my lectures on CD. He worked with me all throughout the semester so we got all those lectures. At first, I met Dr. Jones and then I met Ms. Avery. She took me over as a prodigy. I don't know a thing except what Ms. Avery and Dr. Jones showed me to get me started.

Grayson went on to comment that:

I would call or email Ms. Avery or go over there and after a while, she started coming down here to help me. I was her little project and she took me in.

Most of Grayson's needs for one-to-one assistance seemed to fall along the more technical aspects of the courses rather than the issues that were more related to pedagogy. When asked to provide some examples of what might have been shared with him as far as managing his course, Grayson replied:

It was basically just technical stuff. Ms. Avery sat here and I took notes. We're doing now...how to handle the discussion boards. It's mostly technical stuff...how to do the discussion board; how to open the papers; how to save them; how to make a folder on the h drive. It's for storage. So, I backup everything on the h drive. She taught me that and a lot that I didn't know. Mostly technical things...how to use a computer when you're doing online courses.

Andy also seemed pleased with the one-to-one assistance that he received. He commented:

I'll tell you what I found helpful was just the one-to-one advisement. One of the things we tend to do as PhDs is we tend to think that once we're out

of school, the learning stops. I mean, we do a lot of research, but you tend to think that nobody can tell you anything, which is one of the wrong things...one of the worst things to do as an educator! You never stop learning. You always can learn from somebody else and you're never too good to learn. So how are you going to be a scholar training others if you're not up to date yourself? So, I'll say that session was very helpful and of course the handout was very helpful.

Andy, whose assistance also seemed focused on the more technical aspects, also commented:

I happened to be over in the office [distance learning] one day and I was just talking about how the dropbox would get on your last nerve as far as keeping track of those assignments and so I sat down with the [trainer]. She sat me down in that office and said she had another way that might be better for me. And from that day forward, my life has been totally different.

Colleagues. Half of the participants received assistance from their colleagues. Mark, who was considered to be an experienced online instructor, received the small amount of assistance that he did from his colleagues. When asked about his last preparation or training experiences, Mark stated:

I largely prepared myself and listened to informal hallway conversations about what works and what doesn't work to create a good class and motivate your discussion boards.

Andy, who was also considered to be an experienced online instructor, had also received assistance from his colleague. His colleague had been teaching online for about the same amount of time as had Andy. Andy appreciated the fact that they could share information as colleagues. He also mentioned that they were viewed as leaders in their department and were often viewed as “Batman and Robin.” In his interactions with his colleague, Andy received both technical and pedagogical assistance:

One of my teaching partners shared with me, with PowerPoint, how I could upload...we were having problems with one student or students who did not have PowerPoint software...but that’s an example and by doing that, it increased the accessibility of my course to a greater extent.

The main thing we discussed with pedagogy is just that whole thing of being organized. If you have your course materials up there, whether you have an interactive PowerPoint, you have weblinks, reading sites, or whatever...the thing is to make sure you have it organized in a succinct manner that it makes sense. You know, that it’s aligned with that week’s topic. Make sure everything is available and periodically check your links to make sure everything’s still current because you know people take stuff offline all the time.

Mary sought assistance from her colleagues; not to obtain technical or pedagogical assistance, but to gather content-specific information for a course. When asked what her colleague had shared with her, Mary expressed that:

There was nothing specifically shared with me as to how to deliver instruction online. The only thing that was done was minimize my

obtaining information to teach online. So I just gained content information from them for the course, but nothing more.

No Preparation. Two of the instructors felt that they had not received any training or assistance that actually prepared them to teach online. All of the participants participated in some type of preparation activity, whether through formal or informal activities. However, some still felt as though they had had little to no preparation for teaching online, particularly those faculty who had informal preparation interactions. Most of the faculty who participated in informal interactions and those who participated in more structured activities with technical foundations did not equate those types of activities to preparation for actually teaching online. Mark, who participated in informal activities with his colleagues, stated:

I'm not sure I've ever received a tremendous amount of training and assistance. We've had a group that's helped organize and put together content, but in terms of how to teach online, we've never done any workshops...There's not a lot of organized training for teaching online...so far, it's been faculty who were interested in doing it to take it upon themselves and these faculty are likely to become targets for training in a more formal setting.

Mary also felt that she had not received any training or assistance for teaching online. Although she had had interactions with her colleagues and she had attended a workshop, she commented that:

I've not received any type of training or assistance for teaching online.

I've done basically my own research...seeking out faculty on my own to get some information and drawing upon my past experiences.

When asked if she had been "prepared" by colleagues, Mary stated:

I won't say I've been prepared by them to teach online. I just gathered some information...but I never received any type of assistance as to how to deliver instruction online...There was nothing specifically shared with me as to how to deliver the instruction online.

These participants felt that they had not received preparation for teaching online.

Some faculty, however, chose not to participate in preparation activities for teaching online primarily because of their prior experience in technology. When asked if she learned anything specific about technology during the interaction with her colleagues, Mary commented, "No, most of the stuff about technology...I knew some from past experience while a student."

Findings for Research Question Two:

What professional development strategies do faculty find to be most effective in preparing them to teach online?

Effective Preparation Strategies

Interviews conducted with six online instructors in the UNC System were analyzed and coded to determine the most effective strategies for preparing faculty to teach online. Faculty in this study outlined a host of activities that were beneficial in preparing them to teach online. Faculty identified the preparation activities that were

most beneficial in preparing them to teach online. Faculty also identified specific aspects about these preparation activities that were beneficial to faculty.

Overall, faculty found the one-to-one sessions and the formal workshops to be most beneficial in preparing them to teach online. When asked what types of assistance had been most beneficial, Diane commented, “Probably the one-to-one. There were just some questions I had as to how to do certain activities or how to do something online.”

Grayson echoed how one-to-one assistance was most beneficial to him by highly praising the trainer who worked with him so closely. When asked why one-to-one assistance worked so much better for him, Grayson responded, “Because I get special training...home schooling. She has helped me so much. I have been her little project.”

Grayson also found the workshops he attended to be beneficial in preparing him to teach online. When asked what was most beneficial about the workshops he attended, he stated:

Oh, it did everything. I didn't know anything basically. I didn't know anything about Blackboard and it was just there...so I started from scratch. I had never used it in a class. In fact, I still haven't used it in connection with a [campus] class. I use it online because that is what I was taught. I never really seemed to use it. I thought about it and I knew basically how it worked but I was not good at it because I'd never used it in a regular class. Oh definitely...that's what got me started.

Matthew, who also found the workshops he attended to be beneficial, stated that the technical assistance he received with Blackboard was most beneficial in preparing

him to teach online. When asked to describe the ways in which this assistance was helpful, he stated:

Just getting it up and running. Even though I'd used it for other classes, I had problems with the shell. It was confusing to me sometimes. After I got the shell, I could teach myself. I would go to the Help [section] and I'd work things out myself. But if I needed anything...whenever I needed anything...they often respond. But if I ever needed anything, they have plenty of workshops. But I feel like I've gotten everything.

Andy also found the assistance he received with the more technical aspects of Blackboard to be beneficial. When speaking on the one-to-one assistance that he had received, Andy commented that:

[The trainer] showed me how I could integrate...and upload those assignments right into the Gradebook. So, that was one of the biggest helps, I would say, with my online training. That one piece right there totally changed the way I set up that part of my course.

When asked what was most beneficial about the one-to-one assistance he received, Andy commented:

Well, just the patience that person had. And I'll tell you one thing that I like more importantly than anything was just the general overall welcoming attitude. Just the professionalism, I mean, that's the key. You run into a lot of people that just don't have patience. And I just don't feel that you could be a faculty trainer or in any kind of teaching mode if you're not willing to take the time to just talk to people and just say,

“Look, I know you don’t know this, but I’m going to show you this” instead of having an attitude like “you ought to know this.” A lot of people would say, “Well, why don’t you know this.” Well, I don’t. That’s why I’m here for you to teach me.

Diane also agreed that the more personable aspects of the training were beneficial to her. She stated that the session she attended was beneficial in “getting them comfortable before digging into fully online courses.” Mary found the more personable aspects of the environment as well as the sense of community in her workshops to be beneficial in preparing her to teach online:

I think one of the greatest aspects of it was being in an environment with other faculty or colleagues who are actually utilizing the tool and hearing what they had to say...giving information about the pitfalls to watch out for. Now the thing that I liked about our training session was the facilitator was able to input a lot of...well, talk about some of the areas and minimize some of the problem areas as well.

Faculty found the technical assistance they received in both the one-to-one sessions and the workshops to be beneficial not only in using various pieces of technology in their online courses, but also in using different aspects of the Learning Management System, Blackboard, to enhance their courses.

Faculty also found the pedagogical assistance they received in the workshops and one-to-one sessions to be beneficial in preparing them to teach online. When asked why his one-to-one session was beneficial to him, Matthew commented:

The one on one...mainly the organization of all of the materials and getting them so that they kinda work together...making sure my objectives were evenly defined.

Matthew found the pedagogical strategies that he learned to use in his online course so beneficial that he actually transferred these skills to his traditional courses:

Those things I learned there I have put them in my regular class and it has really made a difference. Being able to set these rubrics. I mean, I've used them before, but now I really use them and I understand how to take their rubric when some of the students ask about their grades, I can pull up the rubric or they can pull up the rubric and see.

The majority of the participants did not identify any aspects of their trainings, whether formal or informal, to be irrelevant in preparing them to teach online. Mary said:

I don't think there was anything in that particular workshop. I think that everything that was taught in that particular workshop was useful for me. So there was nothing that I did not use.

There was only one participant who found that there were aspects about his training that were irrelevant to teaching online. When asked what was irrelevant about the workshop he had attended, Grayson commented:

Well, nothing against the teaching department or School of Education. They tend to do a lot of busy work. Well, it's quite a bit of busy work [in the workshop]. But there was some in this thing we had to go through

[series of workshops]...the benchmarks, with some busy work that I don't think really benefited me that much.

The majority of the faculty also found most of the assistance they received to be beneficial in preparing them to teach online. When asked to identify the types of assistance that had been least beneficial in preparing them to teach online, five out of the six participants said that everything they attended or had participated in was beneficial to them.

Grayson, however, did participate in a workshop that was not beneficial to him in preparing him to teach online. When asked to describe what had been least beneficial to him, he said:

Well, probably ...like the workshop I went to three weeks ago....how to teach. That was very general and they all used PowerPoints. I mean, you can't seem to be with it unless you use PowerPoint. If you don't do PowerPoint, it's like...what's the matter? One of the people from [XXXX] just came down and spoke in the old fashion way. She had some handouts if you wanted any, but she didn't have the screens. That hasn't been helpful to me.

Suggestions for Improving Preparation

Although the majority of the faculty felt the training opportunities and assistance they received had been beneficial in their preparation to teach online, several of the participants made suggestions as to how the preparation and support for teaching online could be improved. When asked what areas of support would have enhanced their online teaching experience, both Andy and Matthew believed that more assistance with

technology, specifically with video and audio, would have enhanced their online teaching experience. When asked about additional support, Andy commented:

If I would have had...going back to that video piece...if we would have had the infrastructure in place...if I would have had somebody who actually knew what they were doing with video and actually was able to record me doing my lecture...or even if we did it in audio format, that would have been helpful. I think that was one thing lacking with my courses. But it's because we have not really, on this campus, got to a point where we're using a lot of that.

Matthew agreed that the video aspect was also lacking in his online courses:

The only thing that I was really short of might have been the video aspect of the technology. And I knew at that time even that the podcasting was on its way. I just had not ventured out into it. But since then, it has been a part of the class [workshop] too. So I didn't do podcasting that much.

As noted, Andy attributed the absence of technology in his courses to issues with infrastructure. He felt as if the video piece was missing in his online courses because of the lack of assistance in this area on this campus. When speaking of his experience with developing and teaching online, Andy implied that his courses were comparable to those at larger institutions. However, when speaking of his courses, Andy seemed slightly disappointed that the lack of videos in his courses may give the impression that the courses are not up to par. Andy further commented, "If I was able to do some podcasting

or some of these other things where we had the infrastructure on a more consistent basis...now I'd really be dynamic.”

Although the majority of the faculty did not mention any logistical issues that stood out during their preparation, Mary felt that the addition of course management strategies in the preparation programs would be beneficial to her:

I wish there were more as far as management. I don't think it was management for the delivery system, but the management for me as an instructor. How do I go about managing my courses...because I have three online courses? So when you teach more than two online courses, how do you effectively manage those courses where you're not constantly overlapping and you're not always busy?

Both Mary and Diane implied that time to develop courses was an issue and support to address these issues would have enhanced their online teaching experience. When asked if her institution or department could have done anything differently as far as preparation, Diane stated, “Release time...maybe if you're developing an online course and you plan to teach an online course. You'll need time to work on that course.”

Mary concurred that she, too, had issues with time management and the time provided by her department and school to develop the course. When asked what would have enhanced her online teaching experience, Mary stated:

Maybe identifying the course a semester in advance...giving me a semester to develop the course...preparation for that. And then teach the course online the next semester as opposed to getting the course during that semester and only having a week preparation. So I think the

management of time earlier than delivery...for the preparation of that course would really help. I'm expecting that from the department as well as the school administration within the School of Education.

Mary also believed that her department and her school [School of Education] could have done more to support her by increasing her awareness of the training workshops that were available. When asked if she knew about any opportunities for training or assistance that may have been available, she stated:

No, I didn't. I wish I had known or been aware of any prior to being told to teach online courses. And I think that's been one of the problems. You get thrust into online courses without any preparation.

Mary further commented:

I probably would have gained that type of knowledge [course management] had I known of other workshops prior to teaching online...I would like to know when other workshops are available so that I could avail myself to them. Even when information is distributed to the department or schools, sometimes that can get lost in distribution someplace. Maybe the faculties that are teaching online...if there were distribution lists for those. If information could be distributed directly through a listserv to that particular faculty, that would be very helpful.

Mark believed that being in an environment with other faculty where they could share ideas and discuss issues would be beneficial to his online experience:

I think some community among online educators would be valuable.

Something as simple as a brown-bag lunch session where people could

show what they're doing and discuss where they're having issues or something more formal. But it doesn't feel like there is a department of online education in which you kinda have a place for all of the faculty to say okay, we've got an economics department and we have some meetings because we have a common interest. I can see some value in creating some membership into an online teaching department and have some sort of incentive in order to get these people together. And that could even be an online community. But there's something about the face-to-face interaction of the online educators...that would be valuable.

Mary also supported the idea of institutions creating an environment that would foster a sense of community for online faculty:

When you're engaging with other colleagues in that same environment, then you get to hear different types of things going on in their classes. And having a workshop is a great place where we can start talking about those things in addition to gaining whatever skills and knowledge that workshop is primarily geared towards.

Personal Changes in Preparation

Faculty had multiple suggestions about the support that could have been provided to them that would have enhanced their online teaching experience. Faculty were also willing to share things that they would have done differently as far as their own preparation to teach online. Half of the participants stated that they would not have done anything differently to prepare for the online teaching experience.

The other three participants all agreed that they would have changed some aspects of the way they managed their online courses. When asked if there was anything that he would have done differently as far as preparation to teach online, Matthew commented:

This semester, I probably would change classroom management and managing the activities with the number of students, especially with the discussion board.

Andy also commented that he would have prepared differently for being able to manage the number of assignments and activities in his online course:

Well, to be honest with you, in the beginning I would have done my Gradebook differently as far as the digital dropbox and having all of the student submissions of assignments. Also, in some cases, I wouldn't have had as many written assignments for some courses. It works you to death.

Mark discovered that being able to manage his time and organize his schedule required different methods of preparation for teaching in an online environment, which would be beneficial to him and his students:

I would make sure that I had my whole calendar set out in the beginning...have the entire course designed. One of the things I find is the online learners are a very different breed in terms of time management and work schedules and when they're going to fit in their coursework. I think it's important to have all of that laid out extremely clearly and also concretely before the course begins. With the in-class, you can change things like that. But in an online class, you kinda need to say when all of this stuff is going to happen.

Mark further commented:

I think it's important for me to have a schedule where I say to myself on a regular basis that this is when I'm going to do online. And treat it as a classroom time. Not only is it valuable to me, but it keeps me on task. It's valuable to students if you've got an instant message where you can have office hours and students know okay...he's always going to be in here during these times. If I'm a good student and I really want the interactivity, this is where I can find him. I think it's just as easy for faculty to get behind when teaching an online course as it is for students.

Suggestions for Faculty Preparation

Faculty participants shared ideas of what could have been done differently to prepare them, what they could have done differently to prepare themselves, and they also provided feedback on what others could do to prepare for the online teaching experience. Both Mary and Andy suggested attending all of the trainings and professional development activities that are available. Andy stated:

Go to a workshop on instructional design and on basic teaching. I believe first of all, a person needs to know how to teach on campus before they can begin teaching online. I think a basic workshop in pedagogy...higher education pedagogy. Anybody that wants to teach online should definitely take advantage of any kind of professional development that's offered on their campus in relation to that. And to take their time, don't be afraid to ask questions.

Mark also suggested that faculty should:

Read some articles or take a class online. Maybe for a week...before you even think about developing a class. For me, that would have helped a lot. Something to help them develop the class...a course for helping prepare the content.

Andy suggested that not only should faculty attend preparation sessions before they begin teaching online, they should be required to teach at least one web-enhanced course before teaching online:

I would encourage faculty to be required to teach at least one course web-enhanced before they teach it online. If you know how to teach face-to-face, while at the same time having your materials online, you know, that's one step away from going totally online. And I believe in designing a web-enhanced website where it is just like a totally online course.

Because you might have to be gone one day and so the class doesn't need to stop. I totally believe in that interaction.

Andy and Mary both suggested that being organized and prepared were important characteristics for those who are preparing to teach online. Mary emphasized the need for preparation:

One recommendation I would make is...once the class has been identified and you have all of your content prepared, begin putting the structure together right away. Begin putting your units, if you're going to work in units, put them together right away. Don't begin creating units together on a week-to-week basis to deliver instruction. Not saying it won't work, but

it's time-consuming if you have other classes. Then as you go through that development of a unit on a week-by-week, you're going to realize there was something that I omitted...I could've placed something in here that would be more effective. Or I would have been able to delete some things that did not suit the particular outcome that I was looking for. So I would recommend preparation, preparation, preparation.

Mark's suggestion for those preparing to teach online was more along the lines of setting and managing guidelines for the students:

When it comes to teaching undergraduate I think it's really important to play hardball in terms of assignment due dates and in terms requirements for the course. I think it's extremely hard in online to start loose and try to tighten in the reins when things are getting a little bit out of control.

Findings for Research Question Three:

In what areas do faculty perceive they need further preparation to enhance their distance teaching experiences?

Areas for Further Development

Interviews conducted with six online instructors in the UNC System were analyzed and coded to determine the areas in which faculty felt they needed further development. Faculty identified several areas in which they felt they needed further development to have successful online teaching experiences. Over half of the faculty identified areas related to technology or areas that dealt with the technical aspects of using the Learning Management System, Blackboard. Mark expressed his desire for development in using interactive software:

I want to move towards the use of more interactive software like Elluminate and some of the stuff that allows you to do audio/video and live webcam conversations. I look at that technology and it frightens me. And I think if we want to try and make the online environment more like face-to-face...but the faces are over everywhere around the world, there's going to need to be increased training to use that type of technology.

Diane echoed the need for further development with interactive tools and software:

I would like to know how to integrate the online chat sessions more. It's just a feature I have not had a chance to use.

Andy expressed the desire to have further development in incorporating technology. When asked to describe the areas in which he felt he needed further development for teaching online, Andy stated:

Video streaming and podcasting. That's really because we haven't done a lot of that around here. It's because of the infrastructure. I did a lecture at [XXXX] in the Fall and they podcasted my lecture. They recorded and uploaded it later. And I noticed the professors out there, they actually record all of their lectures beforehand and upload them to the course website for students who might have missed an on campus lecture. So I would definitely say I would like training in videoconferencing, webcasting...the whole video piece. That's one of the things I would definitely like.

Matthew felt that he needed further assistance with using some of the technical features of Blackboard. When asked to describe the areas in which he felt he needed further development, Matthew commented:

Probably assessments. Probably all aspects of assessments. Especially the systems. Like now, I haven't had any assessment workshops in like five or six years. If there was a workshop, I'd take it.

Grayson, who relied heavily on the one-to-one assistance that he received on a regular basis, expressed the need for more independence in managing the more technical aspects of his course. When asked to describe areas in which he felt he needed further development, Grayson responded:

I revised my syllabus. Well, I can't put it in Blackboard. I sent it as an email attachment to [faculty trainer]. She puts it in Blackboard and if I could do it myself, I would. I try not to bother her too much. So I guess I don't know enough about putting it in Blackboard.

Mary, who was more interested in managing her courses better, wanted further development in managing activities and structuring her course:

I think I need more structure as far as managing my activities for the courses, if there is anything that would help with that. I'm not sure if there will be. But I think...When I begin to look at my calendar, I realize I have this activity coming up...and this one on this time...overlapping and I don't have any time for anything else.

Mary also expressed an interest in further development for providing feedback to her students:

I'm finding that with my particular courses, I think I'm giving too much feedback whereas it's taking too much of my time. So I think if there was something that would address those type issues or the issues that are so prevalent now with online courses that would probably help me out a lot.

Emerging Themes

During the interview process, eight themes emerged that were outside of the original scope of the project. The themes were described, in most cases, by more than one participant. These themes were further identified during the coding process of the data analysis procedures. Each theme presented in this section is supported by findings relative to that theme along with supporting statements that demonstrate the themes. The eight themes were:

1. Prior experience with technology.
2. Instructional designers and course builders.
3. Managing student enrollment.
4. Managing course assignments.
5. Student skills for online course participation.
6. Interaction
7. Course organization and structure.
8. Faculty support of workshop attendance.

Theme 1: Prior Experience with Technology

Faculty took the initiative to learn different strategies for teaching online on their own because of their backgrounds in technology and their prior experiences in the field. This was particularly prevalent amongst the experienced online instructors. When asked

how he had been prepared to teach online, Mark commented that, “I have largely prepared myself.” He did not participate in any other trainings because he, “got into the Blackboard and started using it relatively early, so I kinda buckled my way through.”

Prior to teaching online, Andy assisted other faculty by prepping video conferencing rooms, designing PowerPoints, and webpages. When asked how he had been prepared to teach online, Andy commented:

Not to sound arrogant or anything, but I found myself...I had already been training, so really...I actually became a faculty trainer once I got here.

Really, a lot of what I learned has been on my own.

Mary, a non-experienced online instructor, and Matthew, an experienced instructor, both expressed that they had prior experience with technology. When asked if he learned anything specific about technology in the trainings that he had attended, Matthew stated, “Not too much about technology. Technology, I’ve been kinda up on for a while. I’m kinda...I consider myself a leader in technology.” Mary commented that, “Most of the stuff about technology, I knew from past experience while a student.”

In contrast, there was one faculty member who had no prior experience with distance education and had little technical expertise. Therefore, he relied heavily on workshops and assistance that focused on the more technical aspects of using computers and Blackboard for teaching online. Grayson commented:

The earliest workshops I went to were just on the use of computers. The first one I had, it was not the flat screen and that was 2000...Basically, I know how to do very little of what I do. But I don’t know anything outside of what I do.

Theme 2: Instructional Designers and Course Developers

Faculty made mention of instructional designers or course developers several times throughout the course of the interview process. It appeared that faculty with little experience with technology were dependent upon course developers to assist them with building their courses. Grayson, a non-experienced instructor, actually depended so much on the course developers to assist him with his course that he was unable to do the very basics, like uploading materials:

I revised my syllabus. Well, I can't put it in Blackboard. I sent it as an email attachment to [faculty trainer]. She puts it in Blackboard and if I could do it myself, I would. I try not to bother her too much. So I guess I don't know enough about putting it in Blackboard.

Mark, an experienced instructor, had a great deal of technology experience, but he still relied heavily on course developers to help build his course. In fact, Mark commented that he would not have gotten involved with the online teaching experience had it not been for the confidence that we would have assistance with the development process:

I wouldn't have done it if it weren't for the sense that there was a very good development group over there that was going to work hard to make sure the content came out right and when I gave them things like MPR clips and things, that it was going to get integrated successfully. So I think although it wasn't formal training about how to teach online, the fact that there's a confidence in terms of the design and getting the course up and having the content look...the discussion boards designed the way you

want them to be designed...that was a huge help. I don't think I would have just said, "Okay, I'm going to build an online course" by myself in Blackboard.

Andy, who was quite experienced in online instruction, also expressed an interest in having the assistance of an instructional designer:

I'll tell you what would have made my life easier. A lot of your centers for distance learning have what's called instructional designers where you actually....not only do you teach you about organizing it, but they actually have people who you actually give your course materials to, and they organize them for you to put them online. You might have some lecture notes you want converted into a PowerPoint, well they do it for you. I'm going to tell you something. As much as I like doing my own stuff...a lot of this I could've probably done it quicker. But if I had this kind of person, oh that would have been nice. You know, just give them some of the materials and they upload it for you and they put it together for you. And all you have to do is just teach it.

In speaking of instructional designers, Andy also spoke of how having the assistance of instructional designers would allow him to focus more on the actual instruction of his courses. Andy expressed how the role of faculty should be teaching and dispersing knowledge; he felt that having to build courses took away from his role as an instructor:

You know, one of the things I believe is that the job of the faculty member is to think and put the knowledge out. I think you take away from that

time if you have them sitting here having to develop all of these course materials from scratch. I really think....take someone from like Biology or one of the hard sciences. Can you imagine a Biology professor sitting here? They have to put the PowerPoints together, they have to put the website together. I mean they're trained in how to do labs. They're not trained in that. So it would have been so helpful if I would have had an instructional designer. It would have really been helpful to have someone to work with me on that.

Theme 3: Managing Student Enrollment

One theme that emerged during the interviews was the issue of managing the number of students enrolled in the online courses. This theme seemed prevalent with two out of the three non-experienced instructors. Most of the non-experienced faculty felt that they had excessive numbers of students enrolled in their courses and they found it difficult to manage these numbers. When asked about University policies for online courses, Grayson commented:

I complained about one...there's nothing to be done about it...but too many students. It's not set up. But I talked to the head of the department and he said the University wants to look good by having a lot of students. They want to look good. I got up to 38...I had 48 once. Can you believe that with online? But fortunately, Mrs. Libby (pseudonym) got it cut down to 30 and at least a third didn't pass the course. So if you get too many students, it makes them look good.

Mary was not only concerned about the number of students, but she was also concerned about the number of actual courses that she was teaching:

How do I go about managing my courses...because I have three online courses.

So when you teach more than two online courses, how do you effectively manage those courses where you're not constantly overlapping...always busy?

In contrast, Andy felt that online instructors should be able to populate their own courses and populate them with as many students as they could handle (as long as they were properly compensated). He felt that it was the job of the instructor to educate the public:

I could run out here and load a class with 30, but what's wrong with that?

If I'm teaching the students and my job is to educate the public, shouldn't

I...and I agree, at a certain point you can have too many, and I will admit that. But, shouldn't you try to maximize the number of students in your class if that's your job...if we're talking about this thing of recruitment and retention and they're talking about building numbers?

Theme 4: Managing Course Assignments

Not only did the theme of managing student enrollment arise, the faculty in this study also spoke frequently about managing the number of assignments. Half of the participants found it difficult to manage the number of student assignments and two of these instructors were experienced with the teaching online. Matthew commented that one of the adjustments he planned to make in his course was with the manner in which he managed the activities in his course with the number of students that he had, especially

with the discussion board. Grayson, who was non-experienced, also felt that he may need to modify the number of assignments he had in his online course:

I think I put too many assignments. I asked Ms. Avery and Dr. Jones if I was requiring too much and they both said, “No, no”. Some require more than that. And none of the students have ever complained and they’ve never said too much work. Even the ones that can’t do it; they never say it’s too much...they just don’t do it.

Mark alluded to the fact that he had experiences where students begin to turn assignments in late, which may have been difficult for him to manage:

The other thing I would change is my willingness to allow things to be turned in late. I think that can get really abused and out of hand quickly, especially when you can’t have a face-to face.

Mark, perhaps because of his experiences with receiving late assignments, further expressed the need to be firm when setting requirements and guidelines for assignments. He emphasized the need to adhere to those guidelines in an online course once they have been set:

When it comes to teaching undergraduate I think it’s really important to play hardball in terms of assignment due dates and in terms requirements for the course. I think it’s extremely hard in online to start loose and try to tighten in the reigns when things are getting a little bit out of control.

Andy, in contrast, had a difference of opinion as far as accepting assignments in online courses. Andy did not feel that instructors should be as stringent with their

requirements for the first assignments that are submitted. Andy believed instructors should:

Have realistic expectations for your students. Have patience with your students. Sometimes they might not be able to get it in by the exact deadline. Be patient with them at least the first time.

Theme 5: Student Skills for Online Course Participation

Two out of three of the non-experienced faculty were challenged with the types of skills that students possess when they enroll in online courses. Faculty expressed concern with students not having the appropriate skills or knowledge in a particular area for participation in an online course. Mary stated that some of the students enrolled in her classes weren't able to use the technology required for participation. She, in turn, spent a great deal of time assisting them with technology, which limited the amount of time she was able to spend on the actual instruction of the course:

One of the challenges I'm facing is that students are not capable of utilizing the technology itself prior to taking online courses. My time...I spend quite a bit of time trying to talk students through how to get to and manipulate on Blackboard. I don't think that should be my primary job at that time. When they enroll in an online course and I direct them to the website and say these are the technologies that you need to be aware of, I'm expecting that knowledge base before you come into the classroom...I spent more of my time away from my coursework showing them how to do it, so I don't think that should have been the primary purpose for the instructor of that class.

Grayson reiterated Mary's concern with the abilities of his students. Grayson commented that a large number of his students were not prepared for the course, which affected the way they performed in the course:

Between a third and a half of the students I get in this course are not ready. It should be a screening process so that students who are just regular freshman...they see this and they say, "You don't have to go to class" and they register. Many of them have to drop out and waste their money or some of them don't drop out and they get F's. Right now, I have 33 students... I have 32. Out of the 32, I have heard nothing, absolutely nothing, from 10. They haven't done any assignments. Three or four others have done one or two assignments. That happens and that's pretty common with online courses. Now this is a freshman course; it's not like it's a senior level course. They don't really know what they're getting into. There should be some kind of screening...some kind of way. It's not a matter of smartness, it's a matter of discipline and they're not keeping up. They just can't keep up.

Theme 6: Interaction

Half of the faculty shared concerns with not being able to see their students and interact with them face-to-face. This issue was prevalent with both experienced and non-experienced faculty. When asked to describe the challenges he faced when transitioning into the online environment, Matthew commented that "being prepared to know that you're not going to be able to see your students" was his biggest challenge. Mark commented that this was also an issue he faced when making the transition:

The biggest challenge is not having face-to-face contact with students to be able to read their body language...their eyes and get a sense for whether or not they get what you're saying.

Mary felt that interaction was an area that should be addressed when faculty are making the transition to online environments. Mary entertained the idea of having a face-to-face meeting with the students prior to actually starting the course. Although she felt that this interaction was necessary, she was concerned that meeting with the students would take away from the whole idea of providing instruction at a distance:

One of the things I've said... if it's an online course and we can meet with the students first to talk to the students prior to actually taking the first unit, than that would minimize a lot of the forecoming problems. But then if we do that, that takes away from what the capabilities are with online courses. So I'm still dealing with that. I don't know how to address that issue.

Theme 7: Course Organization and Structure

Organization was a theme that seemed common amongst all of the experienced instructors and even one of the non-experienced instructors. Faculty found that having a well-organized course was the key to avoiding problems and management issues in online courses. Mark talked about how course materials should be organized and set in advance. Because students have to fit the coursework into their schedules and manage their time appropriately, it is more difficult to go back and make changes in an online environment than it would be in a more traditional setting:

One of the things I find is the online learners are a very different breed in terms of time management and work schedules and when they're going to fit it in their coursework. I think it's important to have all of that laid out extremely clearly and also concretely before the course begins. With the in-class, you can change things like that. But in an online class, you kinda need to say when all of this stuff is going to happen.

Mary also suggested working on the organization and structure of the course as soon as possible. Mary stressed proper preparation because she felt that the lack of organization and any haste in completing the course could cause material to be omitted or inadvertently added:

One recommendation I would make is...once the class has been identified and you have all of your content prepared, begin putting the structure together right away. Begin putting your units, if you're going to work in units, put them together right away. Don't begin creating units together on a week-to-week basis to deliver instruction. Not saying it won't work, but it's time-consuming if you have other classes. Then as you go through that development of a unit on a week-by-week, you're going to realize there was something that I omitted...I could've placed something in here that would be more effective. Or I would have been able to delete some things that did not suit the particular outcome that I was looking for. So I would recommend preparation, preparation, preparation.

Theme 8: Faculty Support for Workshop Attendance

Although more than half of the participants did not attend as much training as they would have liked, all of them stressed the importance of attending workshops and other training activities in preparation for the online teaching experience. Andy, who did not attend very many training activities because he did not have the time, suggested that anyone who was preparing to teach online should:

Go to a workshop on instructional design and on basic teaching. I believe first of all, a person needs to know how to teach on campus before they can begin teaching online. I think a basic workshop in pedagogy...higher education pedagogy. Anybody that wants to teach online should definitely take advantage of any kind of professional development that's offered on their campus in relation to that. And to take their time, don't be afraid to ask questions.

Diane also suggested that anyone who is preparing for the online experience should "attend all trainings if possible".

Summary of Findings

This chapter presented an overview of the findings for this study along with documents of how the findings supported the research questions.

Research Question One

The findings for Research Question One addressed the types of faculty preparation that were provided by institutions of higher education. The types of development activities that were made available to faculty in this study were workshops and one-to-one sessions. Faculty in this study participated in the following activities to prepare them for teaching online:

1. Workshops.
2. One-to-one sessions (by University support personnel).
3. Informal sessions with colleagues.

Research Question Two

The findings for Research Question Two outlined the preparation activities that faculty found to be most beneficial in preparing them to teach online. Findings for Research Question Two also addressed suggestions faculty made for improving preparation, personal changes faculty wanted to make for improving their own preparation, and preparation suggestions for novice online educators.

Faculty found workshops and one-to-one sessions to be most beneficial for their preparation to teach online. These aspects of the activities were most beneficial to faculty:

1. Having someone present to answer questions (one-to-one sessions).

2. Patience and professionalism (one-to-one sessions).
3. Assistance with the technical aspects (workshops).
4. Sense of community found in the environment (workshops).

Faculty suggested that their online experiences could be enhanced if the following were incorporated into the preparation activities:

1. Incorporating audio and video into online courses.
2. Changing the infrastructure at institutions.
3. Support for developing courses.
4. Better notification of faculty development activities.
5. Incorporating a sense of community.

Faculty also provided examples of ways in which they would change their own personal methods of preparation. Half of the participants had no suggestions, but the other faculty would change:

1. Management of activities.
2. Management of assignments.
3. Management of time.
4. Methods of organization.

Both experienced and non-experienced faculty made recommendations for faculty who were preparing to teach online. New online instructors were encouraged to:

1. Attend all faculty development activities.
2. Teach a web-enhanced course prior to teaching online.
3. Improve organization and preparation skills.
4. Work on skills for managing online course guidelines.

Research Question Three

Findings for Research Question Three addressed areas in which faculty felt they needed further development for teaching online. Those areas were:

1. Technology.
2. Technical aspects of Blackboard.
3. Building and managing their own courses.
4. Overall course management.

Emerging Themes

During the course of the interview process and the data analysis process, eight themes emerged that were outside of the original scope of the study. Those themes were:

1. Prior experience with technology.
2. Instructional designers and course developers.
3. Managing student enrollment.
4. Managing course assignments.
5. Student skills for online course participation.
6. Interaction.
7. Course organization and structure.
8. Faculty support of workshop attendance.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter presents a summary of the research study. The purpose of the study and the research questions are presented. A discussion of the findings that address each research question, along with the implications of this study for faculty who are preparing to teach online and institutions that are providing faculty development activities to prepare faculty to teach online will also be presented

Research Purpose and Research Questions

The major purpose of this research study was to examine the preparation of faculty to teach online at institutions of higher education. This study used a qualitative research approach, which entailed the use of in-depth interviews, to answer the following research questions:

1. In what ways are faculty being prepared to teach at a distance through faculty development programs?
2. What professional development strategies do faculty find to be most effective in preparing them to teach at a distance?
3. In what areas do faculty perceive they need further preparation to enhance their distance teaching experience?

Summary and Discussion of Findings

Participants

According to the literature, both experienced and non-experienced faculty play a significant role in guiding the faculty development activities provided by institutions (Rockwell, Schauer, Fritz, & Marx, 2000). The six participants in this study included

both experienced faculty, who had been teaching online for three or more years, and non-experienced faculty, who had been teaching online for less than two years. Collectively, the participants in this study had taught online for an average of three years. As a group, they had taught a total of over 76 online courses in several areas including Agriculture, Education , Technology, African American Music, History, and Economics. Over half of the participants, four out of six, were only teaching one only course during the time the interviews were conducted.

During the process of transitioning to the online environment, the participants, who had been teaching an average of 12 years in the traditional setting, experienced very few challenges with the transition. Those who did experience challenges were concerned with the lack of face-to-face interaction with students and engaging in a new instructional environment. These findings are in accordance with the literature that suggests that faculty who transition to the online environment must adjust to the structural differences that no longer include the traditional face-to-face setting (Wiesenberg, 1999; Caviedes, 1998; Rahman, 2001). Faculty were also challenged with building and managing their courses. According to Byun, Hallett, and Essex (2000), faculty who transition into the distance environment are challenged with redesigning their courses for online delivery.

According to Thach (1995), faculty who are making the transition would need training for the design of the online courses and the development of instructional skills and strategies. However, only one participant actually engaged in training designed for the transition to the online environment. Although most participants did not participate in training prior to making the actual transition, more than half of the participants had participated in some type of training for teaching online within the past two semesters.

Effective Preparation Strategies

Faculty who are making the transition from traditional instructional environments to online environments must be prepared to provide instruction in this new setting. Based on the literature, preparation for faculty in distance environments typically includes both formal and informal activities (Irani & Telg, 2002). Findings from this study were consistent with the literature in that institutions in this study provided faculty who were preparing to teach online preparation activities in the form of both formal and information activities. Faculty participated in workshops and one-to-one sessions that were presented by University representatives. Faculty also engaged in informal interactions with their colleagues in the form of discussions and one-to-one sessions.

According to the literature, faculty should be provided with instructional skills and strategies for delivering instruction in an online course (Lee, 2001). Although most faculty participated in some type of preparation activity, half of the participants maintained that they had not actually been prepared to *teach* online, which contradicts what the literature suggests. The faculty did not liken the preparation activities in which they had participated to activities that were actually designed to prepare them for the actual instruction of online courses, which indicates that there was little information about pedagogy and actual instructional strategies for the online environment provided in the activities. According to the literature (Kosak et al., 2004), faculty must adjust their teaching styles when they transition to the online environment and utilize those pedagogical strategies that are specific to the online environment. In contrast to the literature that expresses the need for pedagogical training (Byun, Hallet, & Essex, 2000; Thach, 1995), these faculty did not receive a great deal of training in this area.

Based on the literature, faculty must be prepared to use both pedagogy and technology in their online courses (Lorenzetti, 2002). However, faculty did not describe any preparation activities that incorporated the use of both pedagogy and technology in an online course. In accordance with the literature that suggests that faculty need preparation in enhancing their technical skills (Eastmond & Lawrence, 1997-1998), over half of the participants had participated in some type activity that had a technical foundation. These activities either demonstrated to faculty how to build the course in the Learning Management System, Blackboard, or the activity demonstrated to faculty how to use the various aspects of Blackboard. The use of pedagogy and instructional strategies may have emerged during some of the conversations in the sessions, but pedagogy was not the basis for the activities. Only two participants had actually participated in workshops or activities with a strong pedagogical foundation.

Although the literature shows that both technical and instructional skills are the most commonly used and the most requested during preparation activities for distance education (Betts, 1998; Schifter, 2000; Milheim, 2001; Rockwell et al., 1999), participants did not participate in faculty development activities that enhanced their skills in both areas. Those faculty who participated in workshops that focused on technology had strong skills in working with the technical aspects of their courses, but some of the faculty clearly struggled with incorporating pedagogical strategies into their online courses. One of the faculty members who had participated in a series of workshops that were based on pedagogy struggled with incorporating the more technical aspects into his online course.

In contrast to the literature that suggests providing faculty with strategies that combine content, pedagogy, and technology (Koehler, Mishra, Hershey, & Perushi, 2004), it was evident which institutions (Public Institution-1 and Public Institution-3) placed a greater amount of focus on incorporating pedagogy into their faculty development activities. At each of the institutions, there were no activities that did a solid job of incorporating both technology and pedagogy into the curriculum of their faculty development activities. This lack of preparation indicates the need for faculty development activities that incorporate both pedagogy and technology, which would be consistent with the literature.

In the literature (Betts, 1998; Schifter, 2000; Milheim, 2001; Rockwell et al., 1999), faculty consistently requested support that would assist them with both their technical and instructional skills. Ironically, when faculty were asked to describe the types of activities that would enhance their online teaching experiences, most of them did not request training that was related to pedagogy. Most of them requested activities that would assist them with building courses and the more technical aspects of using Blackboard.

Although faculty participated in a variation of preparation activities, they found one-to-one sessions and formal workshops to be most beneficial in preparing them to teach online. According to the literature, one-to-one training was identified as the most effective type of training for instructors in distance environments (Clay, 1999). In accordance with the literature, faculty found one-to-one sessions to be most beneficial. Clay (1999) found that one-to-one sessions focused on the individual needs of faculty, which is what the faculty in this study found most beneficial. Faculty appreciated having

someone present to answer questions if they needed and one faculty member found the patience and professionalism provided during the one-to-one session to be beneficial. Faculty also found that having someone to assist them one-to-one would allow them to inquire about using features in Blackboard, organizing their courses, and managing their courses on a first-hand basis.

Faculty found formal workshops to be beneficial mainly for getting started with using Blackboard and the day-to-day use of Blackboard, which was consistent with the need for training that shows faculty how to use and apply technology in distance education (Lorenzetti, 2002). This was especially the case for those who lacked strong technical skills and had little experience with using computers. The workshops also provided faculty with a sense of community for gathering with other colleagues and discussing issues related to teaching online.

Although the faculty had not received any training that prepared them to *teach* online, only one faculty found the assistance that he received to be irrelevant to teaching online. This same participant also found that some of the aspects of an activity he had attended were not beneficial to preparing him to teach online. In the literature, faculty had negative perceptions of the instructional support that they were provided (Lee, 2001). However, in this study, faculty found the information they received to be both beneficial and relevant to preparing them to teach online.

Suggestions for Improving Preparation

While faculty did not have major issues with the preparation that had been received, they did make suggestions for various areas of support that if provided by their institutions, would have enhanced their online teaching experiences. Faculty wanted

assistance with incorporating more audio and video into their online courses, which is consistent with the literature on the desires of faculty to mix various types of technology in their distance education courses (Schauer, Rockwell, Fritz, & Marx, 1998). One faculty believed that changes in the infrastructure at his institution would affect the incorporation of more technology in the online courses. Their requests for more audio and video in their online courses was consistent with the desires of students to have more technology and interaction in their online courses (Cuellar, 2002).

One of the perks of online learning for students is being able to communicate instantly in an unbiased environment (Cuellar, 2002). Because students have an increased desire to communicate instantly, the expectation of faculty's increased use of technology will rise. If faculty are not abreast of how to use the technology or the technology is not available for them to use, then in the eyes of the students, the courses will not be as convenient (Simonson et al., 2006) and the quality of an online education may decrease.

Because of the rapid changes in technology, faculty must improve their technical skills on a regular basis. In order to manage some of the more technologically savvy students, instructors must be able to use some of the more advanced technologies (Wiesenberg, 1999). Institutions must also be willing to provide the infrastructure and support of the purchase of the more advanced technologies. According to the literature (Ascough, 2002), instruction should be conveyed through the use of the computer, the Internet, audio, and video. This literature is consistent with the requests of participants to have assistance incorporating videos and audio into their courses.

In the literature (Butler & Sellbom, 2002), faculty were concerned with the time it took to learn new technology and use it effectively. Findings from the study were consistent with the literature in that faculty had issues with the time required for “learning a new language.” This indicates that institutions may need to examine other methods of dispersing information regarding faculty development activities that are available for preparing faculty to teach online.

The literature suggests that faculty will need assistance with the design and development of their courses for online instruction (Byun, Hallett, & Essex, 2000; Moore & Kearsley, 1996), which is consistent with the desires of faculty in this study to have more support for developing their courses. Faculty believed that they could be supported with release time for designing and developing their courses, which is consistent with the literature that faculty may need to devote additional time for online course preparation (Willis, 1998; Gunawardena & Zittle, 1995). Faculty also believed that more timely and more efficient notifications of course development activities would enhance their online teaching experiences. Faculty also expressed an interest in the institutions creating a sense of community for faculty where they could meet and share ideas.

Personal Changes in Preparation

When asked if they would have done anything differently to personally prepare for teaching online, half of the participants would not have made any changes to the manner in which they were prepared. This finding is significant, considering the number of faculty who begin the online teaching experience with little to no experience in designing, developing, and instructing an online course (Cuellar, 2002; Irani & Telg, 2002). The other participants would have changed the way they managed their online

courses, including the management of activities, the management of assignments, the management of time, and their methods of organization.

Suggestions for Faculty Preparation

Although the literature suggests that most faculty had negative perceptions of the instructional support they had been provided (Lee, 2001), over half of the faculty suggested that those faculty who were preparing to teach online attend all of the trainings and development activities that were available to them. One faculty suggested that those faculty who are preparing to teach totally online should teach a web-enhanced course first to gain experience instructing and managing this type of environment, which, according to the literature, may be a setting in which they are unfamiliar (Rahman, 2001). Faculty also suggested that novice online instructors work on their organization skills, early preparation skills, and skills for managing guidelines for student assignments.

Areas for Further Development

Faculty in this study were interested in receiving further development mainly in the areas of technology. Over half of the participants identified areas related to technology or the technical aspects of using Blackboard as areas in which they would like further development. Some of the areas in which faculty would like assistance included using videos, video-streaming, and podcasting, which is consistent with the literature that suggests that faculty need assistance with using interactive media in online environments (Eaton, 2001).

Faculty also wanted more independence in managing their own courses. Although half of the faculty relied on or requested the assistance of instructional designers and course developers to build their courses, one faculty member wanted more

independence in adding various pieces of course material to his online course. Faculty also wanted to receive further development in the overall management of their classes, including managing activities, structuring the course, and providing feedback to students within the course. These findings align with the literature that suggests that faculty find different ways of communicating with students and dispersing course content and information (Wiesenberg, 1999).

Experienced vs. Non-Experienced Faculty

Participants in this study were purposely selected based on their experience teaching online. Three experienced faculty, who had taught online for three or more years, and three non-experienced faculty, who had taught for less than two years online, were selected to participate. When analyzing the differences between the experienced and non-experienced faculty using the themes in the original scope of the study, there were very few differences in the experiences of the two groups. One particular difference that did exist between the groups related to faculty preparation to teach online. Some faculty, rather than waiting to receive formal training, took the initiative to learn different strategies for teaching online based on their own backgrounds in technology and their prior experiences in the field. This theme was particularly prevalent with the experienced online instructors. Because of their technical backgrounds and experience, they were able to grasp the basic concepts of using Blackboard without the assistance of any support persons. This finding contrasts with the literature that suggests that a significant number of faculty begin teaching online with very little experience (Cuellar, 2002; Irani & Telg, 2002).

Other differences that existed between the experienced and non-experienced instructors were detected in the themes that emerged outside of the original scope of the study. Managing the number of students enrolled in online courses was an issue that seemed prevalent with two out of the three non-experienced instructors. Most of the non-experienced instructors expressed concern with the excessive numbers of students that had been allowed to enroll in their online courses, which made it difficult for them to manage the course.

Along with managing the enrollment in online courses, the theme of managing the number of assignments also had some distinction between the experiences of experienced faculty and non-experienced faculty. Half of the participants found it difficult to manage multiple student assignments; two of these instructors were actually experienced with online instruction.

Two out of the three non-experienced faculty expressed concerns with the skills that students possessed when beginning their courses. Faculty were concerned that students were not prepared for the courses due to the lack of skills and prior knowledge for participating in certain courses. The literature, however, states that faculty must be prepared for distance environments that might be unfamiliar not only to the instructors, but to the students as well.

One theme that was most prevalent amongst the largest number of faculty was the idea of organization. The literature stresses the importance of designing courses that have been appropriately planned to incorporate both pedagogy and technology (Byun, Hallet, & Essex, 2000). Four out of six instructors were in accordance with the need for

being organized and having structure in online courses. Three of these faculty members were experienced and the other faculty member was non-experienced.

Emerging Themes

Eight themes emerged that were outside the scope of the original study. These themes were common among more than one participant and were of interest to me.

While some of the themes were used as a basis to address aspects of the research questions, some of the themes were still noted as important to the study. A list of the themes can be found in Appendix J.

Conclusions

This study provides suggestions for the design and development of activities to prepare faculty for teaching online. This study indicates the types of preparation activities that faculty prefer and aspects of those activities that faculty find to be most beneficial in preparing them to teach online. This study also highlights the need to include faculty input, from both experienced and non-experienced faculty, in determining the types of activities that should be offered.

While faculty focus on the use of technology in their online courses, this does not suggest that institutions should structure activities around this subject. This study highlights the need to incorporate not only technology, but also instructional strategies into the preparation activities. Findings from this study support the literature that suggests that both pedagogical and technological activities and strategies be provided to faculty who are teaching online. The incorporation of both technical and pedagogical aspects may be beneficial to both faculty and institutions, particularly in the efforts of

institutions to provide activities that will better prepare faculty to use both technical and instructional strategies in their online courses.

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APPENDIX A

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL – VIRGINIA TECH



Office of Research Compliance
 Institutional Review Board
 1880 Pratt Drive (0497)
 Blacksburg, Virginia 24061
 540/231-4991 Fax: 540/231-0959
 E-mail: moored@vt.edu
 www.irb.vt.edu
 FWA00000572(expires 7/20/07)
 IRB # is IRB00000667.

DATE: January 8, 2007

MEMORANDUM

TO: Barbara B. Lockee
 Tracie Lewis

FROM: David M. Moore 

Approval date: 1/5/2007
 Continuing Review Due Date: 12/21/2007
 Expiration Date: 1/4/2008

SUBJECT: **IRB Expedited Approval:** "The Preparation of Faculty to Teach Online" , IRB # 07-006

This memo is regarding the above-mentioned protocol. The proposed research is eligible for expedited review according to the specifications authorized by 45 CFR 46.110 and 21 CFR 56.110. As Chair of the Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board, I have granted approval to the study for a period of 12 months, effective January 5, 2007.

As an investigator of human subjects, your responsibilities include the following:

1. Report promptly proposed changes in previously approved human subject research activities to the IRB, including changes to your study forms, procedures and investigators, regardless of how minor. The proposed changes must not be initiated without IRB review and approval, except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects.
2. Report promptly to the IRB any injuries or other unanticipated or adverse events involving risks or harms to human research subjects or others.
3. Report promptly to the IRB of the study's closing (i.e., data collecting and data analysis complete at Virginia Tech). If the study is to continue past the expiration date (listed above), investigators must submit a request for continuing review prior to the continuing review due date (listed above). It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain re-approval from the IRB before the study's expiration date.
4. If re-approval is not obtained (unless the study has been reported to the IRB as closed) prior to the expiration date, all activities involving human subjects and data analysis must cease immediately, except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects.

Important:

If you are conducting **federally funded non-exempt research**, this approval letter must state that the IRB has compared the OSP grant application and IRB application and found the documents to be consistent. Otherwise, this approval letter is invalid for OSP to release funds. Visit our website at <http://www.irb.vt.edu/pages/newstudy.htm#OSP> for further information.

cc: File

Invent the Future

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY
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APPENDIX B

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD EMAIL REQUEST – PUBLIC INSTITUTION-1

From: XXXX
 Sent: Wednesday, January 17, 2007 12:30 PM
 To: tolewis@ncat.edu [mailto:tolewis@ncat.edu]
 Subject: IRB Request

We do not approve research that is being conducted by other universities that does not involve our employees or students as part of the research team. As I understand it, you are seeking volunteers as participants in your study. Volunteering is an individual response and not under the IRB control.

XXXX
 Public Institution 1

-----Original Message-----

Dr. XXXX:

I am a doctoral candidate at Virginia Tech and I spoke with you via phone last week regarding IRB approval for my dissertation research study. I inquired about the approval process to interview 2 faculty at your institution. Based on the information I provided via phone, you stated that I would not need to seek IRB approval to interview 2 faculty at [Public Institution 3]. I wanted to ask you if you could provide that information to me in writing? I am going to contact the office on your campus that handles distance education to request the names of the faculty and I would like to let them know that I did seek approval and that the IRB process was not necessary. If you could provide a brief letter or email, that would be most appreciated. I have also attached a summary of my study just in case you need it for any reason.

If you need additional information, please let me know. Thank you in advance for any assistance you can provide!

Tracie O. Lewis, Doctoral Candidate
 Instructional Design and Technology Program
 Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

APPENDIX C

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL – PUBLIC INSTITUTION-2

Ms. Tracie Lewis

Date: February 8, 2007

Curriculum and Instruction

Refer to: IRB # 06-0000-07-H35

Dear Ms. Lewis:

As required by University policy the Student IRB (SIRB) has given your protocol for a project entitled, “The Preparation of Faculty to Teach Online” (IRB# 06-0000-07-H37) an audit review. Your proposal is exempt from 45 CER 46 as it represents only minimal risk to subjects and no minors will be surveyed. As per Federal-Wide Assurance (FWA000000I 3) with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) of the Department of Health and Human Services, all exempt research must be conducted in accordance with the Belmont Report (DHI-iW Publication No. (OS) 78-0012) which requires voluntary, informed consent from research subjects. You are required to use only the stamped consent and other supporting documents and maintain originals for a period of 3 years. **You should be aware that any changes in your protocol must be submitted to the IRB before they are implemented.** Likewise, any problems or complaints involving human subjects must be promptly reported to the SIRB.

Thank you for your cooperation on this matter and best wishes on your project.

Sincerely,

* This document was recreated without any names or logos to maintain anonymity.

APPENDIX D

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL – PUBLIC INSTITUTION-3

January 17, 2007

Tracie Lewis
Center for Distance Learning
NC A&T SU
1020 East Wendover Avenue – Suite 202
Greensboro, North Carolina 27411

Dear Ms. Lewis:

The IRB for the Protection of Human Participants in Research at _____ is willing to accept the approval of project “The Preparation of Faculty to Teach Online” by Virginia Tech IRB. You may proceed with your research on the _____ campus.

If you have any questions, please contact me at _____

Sincerely,

* This document was recreated without any names or logos to maintain anonymity.

APPENDIX E

EMAIL TO DISTANCE EDUCATION UNIT

From: Tracie O. Lewis/NCAT
To:
bcc:

Dr.

My name is Tracie Lewis and I am a doctoral candidate in the Instructional Design and Technology program at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. I am currently conducting my dissertation research on the preparation of faculty to teach online at institutions of higher education. I am particularly interested in a comprehensive picture of how faculty at your institution are prepared to teach online, both formally and informally.

I would like to request your assistance. I am in need of two (2) participants from your institution – one experienced faculty member (with 3 or more years of experience teaching totally online) and one non-experienced faculty member (with 1 to 2 years of experience teaching totally online). Participants will be interviewed at a time and location of their choice for a period of no more than one hour. Participants will also be compensated for their participation.

I am requesting that you recommend two (2) faculty from your institution who meet the aforementioned criteria. I am also requesting that you provide contact information (Name and Email Address) for the potential participants. In the event the suggested faculty decline participation, please recommend alternates from your institution for each category (experienced and non-experienced).

For your perusal, I have provided a copy of the IRB approval letter from my institution to conduct this study as well as a brief summary of my study. Your faculty recommendations would be greatly appreciated, as I am eager to begin my project. I am excited about the information your faculty could share and I look forward to providing to you a synopsis of the collected data.

Thank you in advance for your recommendations and assistance, and please feel free to contact me if you have questions regarding the study.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tracie O. Lewis, Doctoral Candidate
Instructional Design and Technology Program
Virginia Tech

* This document was recreated without any names or logos to maintain anonymity.

APPENDIX F

INVITATIONAL EMAIL

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY**Invitational Email for Participants**

Title of Project: The Preparation of Faculty to Teach Online

Investigators: Tracie O. Lewis, Doctoral Candidate and Co-Investigator
Dr. Barbara B. Lockee, Faculty Advisor and Principal Investigator

Dear Participant:

Upon recommendation from the Distance Education Unit at your institution, you are invited to participate in a study to explore the preparation of faculty who transition from traditional environments to teach online. Your experience and opinions are extremely valuable to our study and we would like to ask for your participation. I would like to request an interview with you to discuss your preparation to teach online. The interview, which would last no more than 1 hour, would be held at your institution at a date and time most convenient for you. Involvement in the project will not involve any risks or costs for you and you may withdraw from the interview at any time. You will not be questioned about any University or personal activities other than those relative to your preparation to teach online.

If you are interested in participating, please respond to this email (or call 336-255-7404) no later than _____. Thank you in advance for your participation and we look forward to talking with you!

Tracie O. Lewis, Doctoral Candidate
Instructional Design and Technology Doctoral Program

APPENDIX G
PARTICIPANT DATA

Name	Institution	E or NE	# of Years Teaching Online	# of Years Teaching in a Traditional Setting	Instructional Areas	# of Courses Currently Teaching
Grayson Ford	PI1	NE	2	36	History	1
Matthew Watson	PI1	E	4	9	Music	1
Diane Sanders	PI2	NE	2	5	Education	3
Mark Green	PI2	E	3	15	Economics	1
Mary Parker	PI3	NE	2	10	Technology	1
Andy Smith	PI3	E	7	7	Agriculture	2

APPENDIX H
INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

The Preparation of Faculty to Teach Online
Interview Protocol

Participant ID: _____ **Interviewer:** _____ **Date:** _____

Spoken Introduction:

We are conducting a study on the preparation of faculty to teach online at institutions of higher education. We are particularly interested in a comprehensive picture of how you went about preparing to teach online, both formally and informally. Formal preparation would include individual assistance that you may have received, opportunities provided by your institution, workshops, or other formal activities. Informal preparation would include assistance provided by your colleagues, information gained through reading about online learning, or any other unplanned assistance you may have received. Your views of your preparation are extremely valuable to us, therefore, we would like for you to share as much information as you can for each question. We have scheduled an hour for the interview, but you may take as much time as you need to answer each question. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Part A. Background Information

1. How long have you been teaching online?
2. How many courses have you taught online?
3. What courses have you taught online?
4. Can you describe the online courses you are currently teaching?
5. When did you last receive any kind of training or assistance for teaching online?

Part B. Preparation for Teaching Online

1. How were you prepared to teach online?

1.1 If response is “colleague”:

- 1.1.1 What was taught or shared with you by your colleague.
 - 1.1.1.1 Describe the specifics of the training. What was the format? Did your colleague share with you any documents or handouts? Can you recall the general topics that were covered?
 - 1.1.1.2 Describe the aspects of the “training”.
 - 1.1.1.3 What did you learn specifically about technology during this preparation? Please describe.
 - 1.1.1.4 What did you learn or discuss specifically about pedagogy during this training or preparation? Please describe.
 - 1.1.1.5 Were there any logistical issues (course management strategies such as communication issues, course procedures, etc.) discussed during this preparation that stand out? Was there anything pressing that you’d like to share? If so, please describe.
 - 1.1.1.6 Was the incorporation of University policies and procedures for online learning (i.e. enrollment, course drop/add, etc.) discussed during this preparation? If so, please describe.
 - 1.1.1.7 Are there any other topics that I haven’t mentioned that you were prepared for during this training? If so, please describe.

1.2 If response is “formal training through a faculty development program”:

- 1.2.1 What was the curriculum of the program? What topics were covered? Were you provided with any handouts from the session that you’d like to share?
 - 1.2.1.1 Describe the specifics of the program. What was the format?
 - 1.2.1.2 Describe what was learned.
 - 1.2.1.3 What was beneficial about the training (in preparing you to teach online)?
 - 1.2.1.4 What was not relevant to preparing you to teach online?

- 1.2.1.5 What did you learn specifically about technology during this training? Please describe.
- 1.2.1.6 What did you learn or discuss specifically about pedagogy during this training? Please describe.
- 1.2.1.7 Were there any logistical issues (course management strategies such as communication issues, course procedures, etc.) discussed during this training that stand out? Was there anything pressing that you'd like to share? If so, please describe.
- 1.2.1.8 Was the incorporation of University policies and procedures for online learning (i.e. enrollment, course drop/add, etc.) discussed during this training? If so, please describe.
- 1.2.1.9 Are there any other topics that I haven't mentioned that you were prepared for during this training? If so, please describe.

1.3 If response is “informal training through one-to-one assistance from a University support organization”:

- 1.3.1 What topics were covered? Were you provided with any handouts from the session that you'd like to share?
 - 1.3.1.1 Describe the specifics of the program. What was the format?
 - 1.3.1.2 Describe what was learned.
 - 1.3.1.3 What was beneficial about the training (in preparing you to teach online)?
 - 1.3.1.4 What was not relevant to preparing you to teach online?
 - 1.3.1.5 What did you learn specifically about technology during this preparation? Please describe.
 - 1.3.1.6 What did you learn or discuss specifically about pedagogy during this training? Please describe.
 - 1.3.1.7 Were there any logistical issues (course management strategies such as communication issues, course procedures, etc.) discussed during this training that stand

out? Was there anything pressing that you'd like to share? If so, please describe.

- 1.3.1.8 Was the incorporation of University policies and procedures for online learning (i.e. enrollment, course drop/add, etc.) discussed during this training? If so, please describe.
- 1.3.1.9 Are there any other topics that I haven't mentioned that you were prepared for during this training? If so, please describe.

1.4 If response is "no preparation":

- 1.4.1 What do you know about opportunities for training or assistance that may have been available at your institution?
 - 1.4.1.1 What reasons can you share for why you chose not to take advantage of the available training opportunities?
2. Prior to teaching online, how many years did you teach in a traditional setting?
 - 2.1 What challenges, if any, did you face in the transition to the online environment?
 - 2.2 What components of a traditional environment do you feel should be modified for the transition to the online environment?
 - 2.3 Did you participate in training that prepared you to make the transition to the online environment? If so, please describe.
 3. Did you receive any other assistance that I haven't asked you about? If so, please describe. (*Prompt if necessary*)

Now, I'd like to talk with you about an overall assessment of the training and assistance that you have received.

4. Overall, what types of assistance have been most beneficial in preparing you to teach online? Why?
5. Overall, what types of assistance have been least beneficial in preparing you to teach online? Why?
6. Based on your experience teaching online, what areas do you feel you need further development for teaching online? Why?

Part C. Additional Assistance

1. Think about your earlier experiences teaching online. Now that you have some experience teaching online, is there anything that you would have done differently as far as preparation?
2. What areas of support do you feel would have enhanced your online teaching experience?
3. Are there any recommendations you could make to help someone prepare for the online experience?

Part D. Other Comments

1. Do you have anything else you would like to share about your preparation to teach online?

Spoken Closing:

Thank you very much for your time. We appreciate your feedback and participation.

APPENDIX I

INFORMED CONSENT

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

**Consent Form and Information Sheet for Participants in
Research Projects Involving Human Subjects**

Title of Project: The Preparation of Faculty to Teach Online

Investigators: Tracie O. Lewis, Doctoral Candidate and Co-Investigator
Dr. Barbara B. Lockee, Faculty Advisor and Principal Investigator

I. Purpose of this Research/Project

The purpose of this research study is to examine the preparation of faculty, both formal and informal, for teaching in an online setting. This study will identify faculty development approaches and activities currently provided at universities to prepare faculty to teach at a distance. The purpose of this study is to also identify those activities that faculty find to be most beneficial as well as those areas in which faculty feel they need additional training and assistance as they transition to the online environment.

There will be a total of six (6) subjects involved in the study; three experienced faculty (with 3-5 years of online teaching experience) and three (3) non-experienced faculty (with 1-2 years of online teaching experience).

II. Procedures

As a participant, you will be asked to participate in one (1) interview, which may last up to an hour. Your interview will be unstructured in that you will be asked a series of open-ended questions and then asked to provide responses for each question. You may add additional comments based on the flow and/or context of the interview. You will be interviewed at your institution in a location of your choice. No other parties will be present.

By signing this form, you agree to participate in the interview and you agree to have your interview tape recorded. After the interview, your tape will be transcribed and a written copy will be sent to you at your request. Only pseudonyms and/or code numbers will be used as identifiers on each tape and each transcript. At the conclusion of the research project, the taped recording of your interview will be destroyed.

III. Risks

Your participation in this study does not involve any risks other than what you would normally encounter in your daily life.

IV. Potential Benefits

Your participation in this study may aid in our understanding of the preparation of faculty to teach in online environments. By signing this form, you agree that no promise or guarantee of benefits has been made to encourage you to participate in this research project.

V. Anonymity and Confidentiality

Unless required by law, only the study investigator(s), representatives of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, and the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University Institutional Review Board will have authority to review your study records. They are required to maintain confidentiality. At no time will the researchers release the results of the study to anyone other than individuals working on the project without your written consent. Results of this study, however, may be used for teaching, research, publications, or presentations. If your individual results are discussed, your identity will be concealed by the use of pseudonyms and/or code numbers rather than your name or any other identifiers. It is possible that the Institutional Review Board (IRB) may view this study's collected data for auditing purposes. The IRB is responsible for the oversight of the protection of human subjects involved in research.

Your interview will be tape recorded because of the potential length of the interview and the need for accuracy when analyzing the data. After the interview, your taped recording will be stored in a locked file cabinet in the office of the researcher, Tracie O. Lewis, who will be the sole individual with access to the tape. Your taped recording will be removed during the transcription process, which will be completed by the researcher. The taped recording will be destroyed at the conclusion of the research project.

VI. Compensation

You may receive up to \$10.00 in gift cards to Barnes and Noble Bookstore for participation in this research project and participating in the interview. You will receive a \$5 gift card for participating in the research project. If you participate in the interview, you will receive an additional \$5 gift card. During the interview process, you may ask that the tape recorder be turned off at any time, which will terminate the interview. If you terminate the interview, you will still receive the initial \$5 gift card for participating in the research project.

VII. Freedom to Withdraw

You are free to withdraw from this study at any time without penalty. If you choose to withdraw, you will still be compensated for the portion of time that you did participate. A \$5 gift card to Barnes and Noble will be provided for your participation. You are free not to answer any questions and you may ask that the tape recorder be turned off at any time during the interview without penalty.

VIII. Participant's Responsibilities

I voluntarily agree to participate in this study and I agree to abide by the rules of the project. I have the following responsibility: Complete the interview to the best of my ability.

IX. Participant's Permission

I have read and understand the Consent Form and the conditions of this project. Questions that I have had about the project have been answered. I hereby acknowledge the conditions stated above and I give my voluntary consent for participation in this project.

Participant's Signature

Date

Should I have pertinent questions about this research project or its conduct, and research participants' rights, or if I need information on whom to contact in the event of a research-related injury, I may contact:

Dr. Barbara B. Lockee, Faculty Advisor and Principal Investigator (540) 231-9193/lockeebb@vt.edu
 Tracie O. Lewis, Doctoral Candidate and Co-Investigator (336) 256-0355/tolds@vt.edu

If I should have any questions about the protection of human research participants regarding this study, I may contact Dr. David Moore, Chair, Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, telephone: (540) 231-4991; email: moored@vt.edu; address: Research Compliance Office, 1880 Pratt Drive, Suite 2006 (0497), Blacksburg, VA 24061.

APPENDIX J

THEMES

Original Themes	Emerging Themes
Types of Preparation Activities	Prior Experience with Technology
Technology Preparation	Instructional Designers and Course Builders
Pedagogical Preparation	Managing Student Enrollment
Beneficial Types of Preparation	Managing Course Assignments
Faculty Needs for Further Development	Student Skills for Online Course Participation
	Interaction
	Course Organization and Structure
	Faculty Support of Workshop Attendance

APPENDIX K

RESEARCH QUESTIONS/INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (RQ/IQ) TABLE

Research Question	Interview Question
<p>In what ways are faculty being prepared to teach at a distance through faculty development programs?</p>	<p>B1. How were you prepared to teach online?</p> <p>B1.1 If response is “colleague”:</p> <p>B1.1.1 What was taught or shared with you by your colleague?</p> <p>B1.1.1.1 Describe the specifics of the training. What was the format? Did your colleague share with you any documents or handouts? Can you recall the general topics that were covered?</p> <p>B1.1.1.2 Describe the aspects of the “training”.</p> <p>B1.1.1.3 What did you learn specifically about technology during this preparation? Please describe.</p> <p>B1.1.1.4 What did you learn or discuss specifically about pedagogy during this training or preparation? Please describe.</p> <p>B1.1.1.5 Were there any logistical issues (course management strategies such as communication issues, course procedures, etc.) discussed during this preparation that stand out? Was there anything pressing that you’d like to share? If so, please describe.</p>

	<p>B1.1.1.6 Was the incorporation of University policies and procedures for online learning (i.e. enrollment, course drop/add, etc.) discussed during this preparation? If so, please describe.</p> <p>B1.1.1.7 Are there any other topics that I haven't mentioned that you were prepared for during this training? If so, please describe.</p> <p>B1.2 If response is "formal training through a faculty development program":</p> <p>B1.2.1 What was the curriculum of the program? What topics were covered? Were you provided with any handouts from the session that you'd like to share?</p> <p>B1.2.1.1 Describe the specifics of the program. What was the format?</p> <p>B1.2.1.2 Describe what was learned.</p> <p>B1.2.1.5 What did you learn specifically about technology during this training? Please describe.</p> <p>B1.2.1.6 What did you learn or discuss specifically about pedagogy during this training? Please describe.</p> <p>B1.2.1.7 Were there any logistical issues (course management strategies such as communication issues, course procedures, etc.) discussed during this preparation that stand out? Was there anything pressing that you'd like to share? If so, please describe.</p> <p>B1.2.1.8 Was the incorporation of University policies</p>
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	<p>and procedures for online learning (i.e. enrollment, course drop/add, etc.) discussed during this training? If so, please describe.</p> <p>B1.2.1.9 Are there any other topics that I haven't mentioned that you were prepared for during this training? If so, please describe.</p> <p>B1.3 If response is “informal training through one-to-one assistance from a University support organization”:</p> <p>B1.3.1 What topics were covered? Were you provided with any handouts from the session that you'd like to share?</p> <p>B1.3.1.1 Describe the specifics of the program. What was the format?</p> <p>B1.3.1.2 Describe what was learned.</p> <p>B1.3.1.5 What did you learn specifically about technology during this preparation? Please describe.</p> <p>B1.3.1.6 What did you learn or discuss specifically about pedagogy during this training? Please describe.</p> <p>B1.3.1.7 Were there any logistical issues (course management strategies such as communication issues, course procedures, etc.) discussed during this preparation that stand out? Was there anything pressing that you'd like to share? If so, please describe.</p> <p>B1.3.1.8 Was the incorporation of University policies and procedures for online learning (i.e.</p>
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	<p>enrollment, course drop/add, etc.) discussed during this training? If so, please describe.</p> <p>B1.3.1.9 Are there any other topics that I haven't mentioned that you were prepared for during this training? If so, please describe.</p> <p>B3. Did you receive any other assistance that I haven't asked you about? If so, please describe.</p>
<p>What professional development strategies do faculty find to be most effective in preparing them to teach at a distance?</p>	<p>B1.2.1.3 What was beneficial about the training (in preparing you to teach online)?</p> <p>B1.2.1.4 What was not relevant to preparing you to teach online?</p> <p>B1.3.1.3 What was beneficial about the training (in preparing you to teach online)?</p> <p>B1.3.1.4 What was not relevant to preparing you to teach online?</p> <p>B1.4 If response is "no preparation":</p> <p>B1.4.1 What do you know about opportunities for training or assistance that may have been available at your institution?</p> <p>B1.4.1.1 What reasons can you share for why you chose not to take advantage of the available training opportunities?</p> <p>B2.3 Did you participate in training that prepared you to make the transition to the online environment? If so, please describe.</p>

	<p>B4. Overall, what types of assistance have been most beneficial in preparing you to teach online? Why?</p> <p>B5. Overall, what types of assistance have been least beneficial in preparing you to teach online? Why?</p> <p>C1. Think about your earlier experiences teaching online. Now that you have some experience teaching online, is there anything that you would have done differently as far as preparation?</p> <p>C2. What areas of support do you feel would have enhanced your online teaching experience?</p> <p>C3. Are there any recommendations you could make to help someone prepare for the online experience?</p>
<p>In what areas do faculty perceive they need further preparation to enhance their distance teaching experiences?</p>	<p>B2.2 What components of a traditional environment do you feel should be modified for the transition to the online environment?</p> <p>B6. Based on your experience teaching online, what areas do you feel need further development for teaching online? Why?</p>

APPENDIX L
TABLE OF FINDINGS

Research Question	Findings
<p>In what ways are faculty being prepared to teach at a distance through faculty development programs?</p>	<p>The types of development activities that were made available to faculty in this study were workshops and one-to-one sessions. Faculty in this study participated in the following activities to prepare them for teaching online:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Workshops. 2. One-to-one sessions (by University support personnel). 3. Informal sessions with colleagues.
<p>What professional development strategies do faculty find to be most effective in preparing them to teach at a distance?</p>	<p>Faculty found workshops and one-to-one sessions to be most beneficial for their preparation to teach online. These aspects of the activities were most beneficial to faculty:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Having someone present to answer questions (one-to-one sessions). 2. Patience and professionalism (one-to-one sessions). 3. Assistance with the technical aspects (workshops). 4. Sense of community found in the environment (workshops).

Faculty suggested that their online experiences could be enhanced if the following were incorporated into the preparation activities:

1. Incorporating audio and video into online courses.
2. Changing the infrastructure at institutions.
3. Support for developing courses.
4. Better notification of faculty development activities.
5. Incorporating a sense of community.

Faculty also provided examples of ways in which they would change their own personal methods of preparation. Half of the participants had no suggestions, but the other faculty would change:

1. Management of activities.
2. Management of assignments.
3. Management of time.
4. Methods of organization.

Both experienced and non-experienced faculty made recommendations for faculty who were preparing to teach online. New online instructors were encouraged to:

1. Attend all faculty development activities.
2. Teach a web-enhanced course prior to teaching online.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none">3. Improve organization and preparation skills.4. Work on skills for managing online course guidelines.
In what areas do faculty perceive they need further preparation to enhance their distance teaching experiences?	<p>Areas in which faculty felt they needed further development for teaching online included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Technology.2. Technical aspects of Blackboard.3. Building and managing their own courses.4. Overall course management.

Adobe Acrobat 7.0 – Level 1 Training, Fall 2005
 IT Training & Solutions, Inc.
 Greensboro, North Carolina

Quality Matters (QM) Peer Reviewer Training, Fall 2005
 Quality Matters: Inter-Institutional Quality Assurance in Online Learning
 Online Training – Maryland Online

ATLAS.ti Training (Qualitative Data Analysis Software), Spring 2002
 Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Virginia

NVIVO Training (Qualitative Data Analysis Software), Spring 2002
 Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Virginia

Certificate in Distance Education (Online Training), Fall 2000
 Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana

FrontPage 2000 (Beginner), Fall 2000
 North Carolina State University, Raleigh, North Carolina

FrontPage 2000 (Intermediate), Fall 2000
 North Carolina State University, Raleigh, North Carolina

FrontPage 2000 (Advanced), Fall 2000
 North Carolina State University, Raleigh, North Carolina

FOCUS Training, Fall 2000
 North Carolina A&T State University, Greensboro, North Carolina

SIS Plus Training, Fall 2000
 North Carolina A&T State University, Greensboro, North Carolina

RELATED COURSEWORK

Instructional Design	Advanced Educational Psychology
Applied Instructional Design Theory	Educational Applications of Databases
Topics in Instructional Design	Authoring Languages
Learning Theories	Educational Software Evaluation
Developmental Adult Education	Multimedia Development and Evaluation
Curriculum and Development	Visual Media

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Coordinator for Distance Learning, Center for Distance Learning
 North Carolina A&T State University – Greensboro, North Carolina
 February 2005 – Present

- Collaborates with various schools/colleges, academic departments, and units to promote distance learning and online course development, and to improve the preparation of distance education faculty.
- Serves as the faculty liaison and provides continuous support for course design, development, delivery, and enhancement.
- Evaluates instructional design needs for online course development and enhancement.
- Reviews the training needs of faculty for online course development and delivery.
- Develops, maintains, delivers/facilitates professional development activities for distance education faculty.
- Prepares computer-based and technology-based training materials for faculty.
- Researches, evaluates, and recommends appropriate distance education technologies to enhance course development and delivery.
- Assesses current online course delivery platforms.
- Prepares instructional materials for the Blackboard faculty training website.
- Establishes surveys for feedback related to training and instructional course design.
- Prepares an information repository of available services and products for distance education.
- Assists with Blackboard system administration.

Consultant, Special Education Program – Department of Curriculum and Instruction
North Carolina A&T State University – Greensboro, North Carolina
July 2004 – November 2004

- Provided technological support to the special education program area, including website development and the development of training materials.

Adjunct Instructor, Department of Curriculum and Instruction – School of Education
North Carolina A&T State University – Greensboro, North Carolina
August 2003 – June 2004

- Provided instruction for the Instructional Technology Graduate Program.
 - Summer I 2004: Instructed a *Computers in Education* course (web-enhanced).
 - Spring 2004: Designed, developed, and instructed an online course – *Distance Education* using Blackboard (web-based).
 - Spring 2004: Instructed *Programming in LOGO* as a mixed method course (traditional and web-enhanced).
 - Fall 2003: Assisted with the instruction of *Multimedia Development and Evaluation* and *Principles of Instructional Design*.
- Presented workshops to faculty on the use of technology as a part of a federal PT3 (Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers to Use Technology) grant.

Consultant, Center for Distance Learning
 North Carolina A&T State University, Greensboro, North Carolina
 August 2001 – September 2001

- Provided project management support for online programs.

Associate Director of Online Programs, Center for Distance Learning
 North Carolina A&T State University, Greensboro, North Carolina
 June 2000 – July 2001

- Consulted with the online course application service provider, *eCollege.com*, on online programmatic issues.
- Marketed online programs and courses.
- Provided project management support for online programs.
- Identified and implemented emerging distance learning solutions.
- Consulted on grant proposals.
- Assisted the Academy of Teaching and Learning (ATL) in the design, development, and instruction of online courses using a variety of course development platforms.
- Monitored and managed all course offerings to assure adherence to all relevant state, accrediting, and University policies and regulations.
- Assisted in the administration of evaluation instruments via an online survey system.
- Assisted in the generation of collaborative efforts with other Universities, community colleges, and private corporations to deliver distance learning programs and services throughout North Carolina and the nation.
- Assisted students with online course issues including recruitment, registration, payment, and student data processing.

Teacher, Northwest Middle School
 Guilford County Schools, Greensboro, North Carolina
 August 1996 – June 2000

- Provided keyboarding and word processing instruction.
- Provided database and spreadsheet instruction.
- Prepared students for the North Carolina Tests of Computer Skills.
- Provided business computer technology instruction.
- Provided faculty development workshops.

RELATED EXPERIENCE

Intern, Faculty Development Institute, Learning Technologies
 Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Virginia
 May 2003 – July 2003

- Provided lab assistance for faculty development workshops in:
 - Blackboard
 - Content Creation and Manipulation in Dreamweaver
 - Elements of Web Content
 - Web-Based Interaction
 - Copyright Issues Associated with Web-Based Instruction
 - Digital Audio, Imaging, and Video
- Developed instructional modules in Blackboard.

Lab Assistant, McNair Scholars Program
 Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Virginia
 May 2003 – July 2003

- Provided laboratory assistance on the use of Microsoft Office programs.
- Provided laboratory assistance on web authoring tools.
- Provided basic trouble-shooting and problem-solving related to digital equipment and other applications.
- Provided assistance with the development of electronic portfolios.

Graduate Research Assistant, Center for Interdisciplinary Studies
 Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Virginia
 August 2001 – July 2003

- Provided research assistance on an NSF grant entitled, “Women in Information Technology: Pivotal Transitions from School to Careers.”
- Researched factors that influence and support information technology career choices for women of all socio-economic levels.
- Collected and analyzed survey data from over 800 high school, community college, and University students.
- Conducted individual interviews with high school girls.
- Conducted individual interviews with parents and other family members of high school students.
- Transcribed interviews and code transcripts.

Graduate/Clerical Assistant, Special Education Program
 Department of Curriculum and Instruction
 North Carolina A&T State University, Greensboro, North Carolina
 October 1994 – May 2000

- Prepared grants and program correspondence.
- Prepared and managed budgets for grants.
- Prepared reports, articles, and newsletters for publication.

Intern, Interdisciplinary Research and Computing
 North Carolina A&T State University, Greensboro, North Carolina
 July 1999 – December 1999

- Assisted in the design and development of online courses for the Business Education Department in the School of Business and Economics.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

2007 UNC Teaching and Learning with Technology (TLT) Conference – Proposal Reviewer

Raleigh, North Carolina March 21 – 23, 2007

Society for Information Technology and Teacher Education (SITE) Conference

Orlando, Florida March 20 – 24, 2006

2006 UNC Teaching and Learning with Technology (TLT) Conference – Proposal Reviewer

Raleigh, North Carolina March 15 – 17, 2006

North Carolina Collaborative eLearning Conference

Chapel Hill, North Carolina November 1, 2005

UNC Distance Learning Forum

Chapel Hill, North Carolina October 26, 2005

2005 UNC Teaching and Learning with Technology (TLT) Conference – Facilitator

Raleigh, North Carolina March 30 – April 1, 2005

Society for Information Technology and Teacher Education (SITE) Conference

Atlanta, Georgia March 1 – 5, 2004

Center for Internet Technology in Education (CITE) Conference

Denver, Colorado March 7 – 9, 2001

UNC Distance Learning Forum

Boone, North Carolina November 30 – December 1, 2000

HBCU Minority Institute Seminar

Fayetteville, North Carolina November 16 – 17, 2000

The Learning Marketplace: New Resources for Teaching and Learning

Atlanta, Georgia October 25 – 26, 2000

Developing and Implementing an eLearning and eBusiness Campus Environment, VITAE

Clemmons, North Carolina October 19 – 21, 2000

Music Collaboration through Virginia Tech and North Carolina A&T State University,
VITAE

Blacksburg, Virginia

October 13, 2000

Carolina Student Information System Users (C-SISU) Conference

Charleston, South Carolina

October 1 – 3, 2000

4th UNC Workshop on the Use of Technology for Distance Education

Raleigh, North Carolina

September 20 – 21, 2000

How to Design and Build a World-Class Website Workshop, CompuMaster

Charlotte, North Carolina

August 23, 2000

Learning Online: Learning Resources Network (LERN)

Madison, Wisconsin

August 1 – 4, 2000

PRESENTATIONS

Lewis, T. O. (2007, February). Using Respondus to generate exams in Blackboard. Workshop presented at the Blackboard Southeast Users Group 2007 Conference, Atlantic Beach, Florida.

Smith-Gratto, K., LeFlore, D., McCary-Henderson, S., & Olds, T. (2004, March). Evaluating the infusion of technology into teacher education curriculum. Paper presented at the 2004 SITE (Society for Information Technology and Teacher Education) 15th International Conference in Atlanta, Georgia.

Smith-Gratto, K., Armond, R., Olds, T., & LeFlore, D. (2004, March). After the evaluation: Improving implementation of technology integration. Paper presented at the 2004 SITE (Society for Information Technology and Teacher Education) 15th International Conference in Atlanta, Georgia.

Manning, J. & Olds, T. (2003, March). Educational applications of microcomputers. Presentation to teacher education majors at Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Virginia.

Johnson, M. & Olds, T. (2001, April). Stepping Into a New Era: Pathways to a wireless classroom. Poster presented at the Triad Connectivity Expo 2001, Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

PUBLICATIONS

Smith-Gratto, K., LeFlore, D., McCary-Henderson, S., & Olds, T. (2004). Evaluating the infusion of technology into teacher education curriculum. *Society for Information Technology and Teacher Education International Conference 2004(1)*, 3683-3685. [Online]. Available: <http://dl.aace.org/14999>

Smith-Gratto, K., Armond, R., Olds, T., & LeFlore, D. (2004). After the evaluation: Improving implementation of technology integration. In C. Crawford et al. (Eds.), *Proceedings of Society for Information Technology and Teacher Education International Conference 2004* (pp. 3680-3682). Chesapeake, VA: AACE.

GRANTS AND PROPOSALS

Co-Principal Investigator, "Learning Anytime, Anywhere"
 UNC eLearning Collaboration Grant (North Carolina A&T State University and Winston-Salem State University), \$70,000
 Funded Spring 2001

Project Integrator, "Collaborative Asynchronous Learning Model (CALM)"
 Grant proposal submitted March 2001 to the US Department of Education for Learning Anytime, Anywhere Partnerships (LAAP)
 Not Funded

ORGANIZATIONS AND COMMITTEES

Member, Director of Multimedia Search Committee, North Carolina A&T State University (2006)

Member, eLearning Manager Interview Panel and Search Committee, North Carolina A&T State University (2005, 2006)

Member, Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education (AACE) (2006)

Member, North Carolina Distance Learning Alliance (2005-2006)

Member, Association for Educational Communication and Technology (AECT) (2001-2006)

Member, International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) (2004-2005)

Member, National Association for Female Executives (2001-2002)

Member, Black Graduate Student Association, Virginia Tech (2001-2002)

Member, Business Education Alumni Association, North Carolina A&T State University (2000-2002)

Chair, Instructional Designer Interview Committee, North Carolina A&T State University, (2001)

Member, Post Baccalaureate Studies Committee, North Carolina A&T State University, (2000-2001)

Member, Associate Vice Chancellor of Summer School and Continuing Education Interview Panel, North Carolina A&T State University, (2000)

Member, Director of Evening and Weekend Programs Interview Panel, North Carolina A&T State University (2000)

Member, Associate Director of Evening and Weekend Programs Interview Panel, North Carolina A&T State University (2000)

HONORS AND AWARDS

Kappa Omicron Nu Honor Society
International Who's Who of Professionals
Kappa Delta Pi International Education Honor Society
Who's Who Among American Colleges and Universities
National Dean's List
North Carolina Teaching Fellow
Pi Omega Pi Business Education Honor Society