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ENSURING STUDENT SUCCESS IN THE VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENT

Abstract:

In 2020, the global pandemic compelled many institutions to pivot quickly to online course delivery. Instructors and students soon realized that there were vast differences between in-person courses and their online counterparts. Additionally, many universities began to understand that teaching online was more complex than merely moving existing materials into the virtual space. Successful navigation of online education involves increasing faculty presence and student engagement to create active learning experiences using high-impact practices. This session will examine the use of innovative ways that faculty can leverage online tools to enhance their presence and bring their subject-matter expertise into the online classroom. The presenters will also discuss multiple methods for amplifying student engagement through the use of emerging technologies that encourage high-quality participation. Finally, the session will explore how high-impact practices, such as electronic portfolios, as well as pedagogical shifts to integrative, interdisciplinary experiences can create students who are equipped with the communication, critical thinking, and creative problem-solving skills that employers increasingly value. Online education, then, is not an inferior substitute to the traditional classroom. Instead, technologically mediated learning can offer even more opportunities for student success by providing innovative ways to create a community of engaged learners.

Both presenters are experienced course developers, faculty members, and administrators at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University Worldwide. The Worldwide campus has an enrollment of 23,000 students, delivering courses globally online, synchronously to both homes and classrooms, in blended formats, and face-to-face at over 130 locations. ERAU-W earned a Top 5 ranking during the past seven years for Best Online Bachelor's programs from U.S. News & World Report and has a stellar reputation for innovative online course development.

Keywords:

online education, student success, active learning