

[DOI: 10.20472/IAC.2015.015.170](https://doi.org/10.20472/IAC.2015.015.170)

PAMELA CARTER SPEAKS

Northeastern State University, United States

RONALD M. CAMBIANO

Northeastern State University, United States

CARL FARINELLI

Northeastern State University, United States

RENEE L. CAMBIANO

Northeastern State University, United States

ONLINE TEACHING AND THE IMPACT ON THE PROFESSORIAT

Abstract:

Availability of online courses has many benefits for students who want to receive a higher education degree. According to Varonis (2013), there are two widely known student benefits of online learning: “convenient access and flexibility” (p. 304). However, with these benefits comes extensive time and commitment from the faculty in planning and preparation of delivering course content in an online environment. What universities don't discuss is the impact that teaching online can have on faculty promotion and tenure possibilities. The high demand by students and universities to continually increase online course options without a quality assurance component prevents best practice in online instruction and course development and design due to the absence of time for piloting and revising courses based on practitioner feedback to best meet student needs and maintaining the integrity of course content. The probability that instructors are reduced to being teachers of how to assist students in being successful in the online learning environment forces mastery of course content to a secondary level. Couple that with the possibility of course changes causing faculty to teach online courses with new content and untested course design, the recipe for frustration and mediocrity for the sake of keeping up with demand results in the high possibility of negative faculty evaluations by students taking courses offered in an online setting. Sullivan, Polnick, Nickson, Maniger and Butler (2013) state that there are apparent differences in student evaluations between faculty who teach online and those instructors of more traditional methods or with proven online courses. The impact of these student evaluations as well as traditional courses are used in the decision making of faculty attempting tenure and promotion. In many instances, “if all other resources of measure are equal, then administrators rate faculty for merit, tenure, and promotion exclusively on student evaluations” (p. 52). During this presentation, the potential impact teaching online has on the professoriat as well how teaching online has evolved at a regional university in the United States will be discussed.

Keywords:

Online Teaching, Professoriat