

Student Success: Course Redesign to Improve Students Academic Success

Dr. Emily Lewis, Academic Dean
Charter Oak State College
Faculty Advisory Committee Conference on Shared Governance and Student Success
Housatonic Community College
Friday, April 8, 2016

ABOUT THE SESSION FACILITATOR

EMILY LEWIS, ACADEMIC DEAN, CHARTER OAK STATE COLLEGE (CT)

Dr. Emily Lewis is the Academic Dean at Charter Oak State College. As the Academic Dean at Charter Oak, she provides leadership for the College's distance online education programs (non-credit and credit certificates, concentrations, majors and the graduate degree).

Dr. Lewis has over 20 years of experience as a higher education administrator and faculty member. She has been involved in identifying and implementing programs that support the needs of a changing community. She defines herself as an administrator that has the ability to work with people from diverse backgrounds to accomplish the institution's mission.

One of her passions is to continue to explore new and emerging trends in online learning to deliver quality educational programs from a faculty and student perspective. Dr. Lewis has presented her research at regional and national conferences on distance online education and facilitating programs for adult learners.

AGENDA

- ▶ Charter Oak State College Course Redesign Story
 - ▶ Research Goal and Purpose
 - ▶ Research Design
 - ▶ Research Questions & Results
- ▶ Key elements of a Course Redesign Process
 - ▶ Defining the Course Redesign
 - ▶ Course Redesign Assumptions
 - ▶ Essentials for a Course Redesign
 - ▶ Course Redesign - Literature
 - ▶ Course Redesign Strategy - Identify the Course(s)
 - ▶ Course Redesign Strategy - Instructional Needs
 - ▶ Course Redesign Strategy - Select the Course Redesign Model
- ▶ Redesign Considerations and Challenges

CHARTER OAK STATE COLLEGE'S COURSE REDESIGN STORY

RESEARCH GOAL & PURPOSE

- ▶ This study examined the grades, specifically grades “C-“and below, of student taking the institution’s residency course.
- ▶ The goal of this study was to identify processes to reduce the failure rates for students taking the residency course.
- ▶ The purpose of this study was to redesign the residency course to promote the College’s strategic initiative to improve the retention rate for first-year students.
- ▶ The study examined the grades of students taking the residency course prior to the redesign process took place with the grades of students taking the redesigned course.

STUDY LIMITATIONS

▶ Limitation

- ▶ This study does not include information regarding students retaking the course for the second time or being dismissed from the College for failing it twice
- ▶ This study also does not include information regarding students that withdrew from the course or were administratively withdrawn from the course

RESEARCH DESIGN

The study is a quasi-experimental design research, with the students enrolled in 2013-2014 residency course as the control group, and students enrolled in 2014-2015 as the experimental group. The independent variable was these two groups of students, whereas the dependent variables were their grades and their end-of-course satisfaction survey.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS & RESULTS

- ▶ How many students enrolled in the course?
 - ▶ 721 students enrolled in the residency course for 2013-14
 - ▶ 943 students enrolled in the residency course for 2014-15
- ▶ What was the student failure rates for the residency course before the course was redesigned?
 - ▶ Failure rate was 17% in 2013-14 academic year
 - ▶ Failure rate was 12% in 2014-15 academic year
- ▶ Did the failure rate decrease after redesigning the residency course?
 - ▶ Yes, the failure rate declined by 5% after the course redesign was implemented.
- ▶ Did student's satisfaction rate increase after the course redesign?
 - ▶ Increase in overall student satisfaction for redesigned course

DEFINING THE COURSE REDESIGN PROCESS

The National Center for Academic Transformation (2014) defines course redesign as a “process of redesigning whole courses (rather than individual classes or sections) to achieve better learning outcomes at low costs by taking advantage of the capabilities of information technology” (p.1).

COURSE REDESIGN ASSUMPTIONS

Reasons for a course redesign:

- ▶ High student failure rates negatively effect institutional retention initiatives
- ▶ Courses where students perform poorly also has a negatively effect on graduation rates
- ▶ Budget cuts that leaves an institution with fewer resources to serve the same or more students
- ▶ Courses with high student enrollments

ESSENTIALS FOR A COURSE REDESIGN

1. Redesign entire course
2. Use student-centered approaches
3. Developing an interactive learning environment
4. Assessments that are designed to ensure learning outcomes are accomplished
5. Provide additional student support systems
6. Appropriate time on task
7. Student monitoring processes for intervention purposes
8. Ongoing measurement of student success in the redesigned course

COURSE REDESIGN - LITERATURE

The National Center for Academic Transformation (NCAT) with its partner colleges and universities:

- Initiated 195 redesign projects, 80% were completed
- Of the 156 completed projects:
 - 72% improved student performance
- 153 completed projects
 - Institution's experienced a reduction in cost by 34% on average
- 253 courses redesigned that enrolled 250,000 students annually

COURSE REDESIGN STRATEGY: IDENTIFY THE COURSE(S)

- ▶ Gather the student data
 - ▶ Five years of student grades for each course (include additional sections)
 - ▶ Course that have a history of high student failure rates
 - ▶ Begin with courses with high student enrollments

Course Redesign Strategy - COURSE RESIGN MODELS

1. Supplemental Model
2. Replacement Model
3. Emporium Model
4. Fully Online Model
5. Linked Workshop Model
6. Buffet Model

INSTRUCTIONAL NEEDS

- ▶ Identify a course redesign team member that taught the course to ensure you do not repeat past mistakes
- ▶ Select someone that is a subject matter expert that has taught the course
- ▶ If the learning outcomes for the course are changed, evaluate the professional and academic credentials of the instructors that are teaching the course
- ▶ An instructional designer should be a member of the team for a distance online course

COURSE REDESIGN CONSIDERATIONS & CHALLENGES

- ▶ On-going Assessment

- ▶ Use as a part of internal program assessment process

- ▶ Phase II

- ▶ Try to identify and address issues associated with students that are Administratively Withdrawn (AW) and that withdrew from their courses

- ▶ Issue of “Change”

“You appear dangerous to people when you question their values, beliefs or habits of a lifetime” Heifetz & Linsky

QUESTIONS

Thank you for
Your Participation