Transitioning from Traditional Courses to Technologically Supported Classrooms

IDEA Paper #62 • November 2016

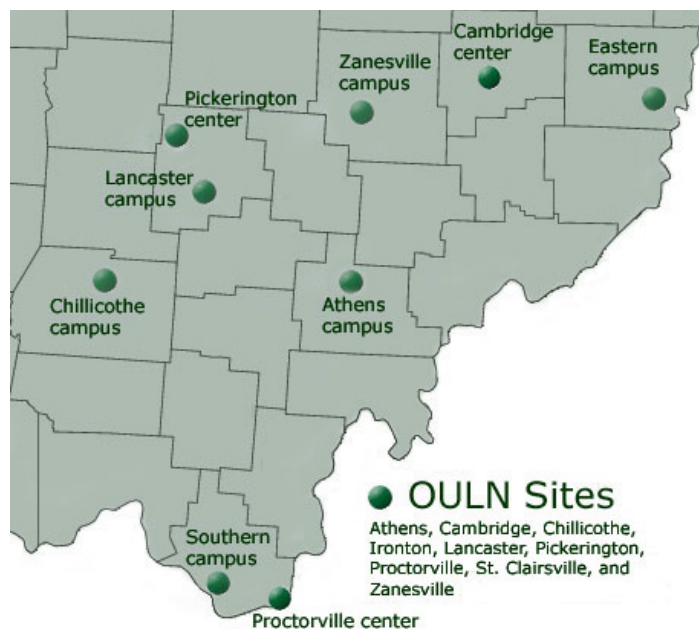*Janice Proctor and Tiffany Bumgardner • Ohio University's Eastern Campus*

Abstract

This paper focuses on the authors' experiences teaching on Ohio University's Learning Network (OULN), which uses interactive television and real-time face-to-face interaction as a distance-education (DE) delivery tool. One of the authors is a sociology professor, and the other is her former student and an experienced OULN system operator. The transition to DE from a traditional, less technological approach presents numerous challenges as well as opportunities. This paper compares the semester-long progress of two different sociology courses that used the OULN. It presents an analysis of each class's strengths and weaknesses, along with qualitative data based on interviews with each class's students, as recorded in a diary that the authors kept throughout the semester on the progress of each class. One class experienced more success than the other, which presented numerous teaching challenges. The paper concludes by offering guidance for integrating traditional teaching methods, including group work, into DE environments.

One way that higher education is evolving to increase enrollment and meet the needs of students who are unable to leave their home communities is to use interactive television to broadcast courses to other campuses. Miller, Walker, and Ayala (2003) define distance education (DE) as a "formal, student-teacher arrangement in which the student and teacher are separated by space and/or time." This paper describes how its primary author, a sociology faculty member, modified her teaching methods to transition from a traditional format to DE on an interactive television that broadcasts in real time throughout the main and regional campuses of Ohio University. The second author, an experienced operator on this interactive television learning system, was able to provide support and assistance to a professor new to DE, enabling her to make a smoother transition.

OULN—Ohio University's Learning Network

The Ohio University's Learning Network (OULN) broadcasts to nine campuses and, according to its Web site, has a "mission to support telecommunications needs of Ohio University's teaching, research and administrative activities and other cooperating institutions throughout the world." Currently, OULN utilizes a total of 21 classrooms throughout the system. The system served 55 classes, Monday through Saturday, for the fall 2014 semester. In the fall of 2016 the system served 61 classes Monday through Saturday. Between fall semester 2011 and spring semester 2015, the total number of students enrolled on OULN increased, from 105, for a total of 69 hours, to 382, for a total of 108 hours.

Faculty at some of Ohio University's regional campuses are being encouraged to teach more courses on OULN in order to expand student enrollment at such campuses. Ohio University Eastern (OUE) is the smallest of the regional campuses and is located in St. Clairsville, 135 miles from the main campus of Ohio University in Athens. As the total number of students enrolled at OUE has decreased due to a declining population from shrinking industry and employment opportunities, more OUE faculty are making the transition to teaching on OULN to increase student participation from elsewhere in the Ohio University system. In fall semester 2014, a total of 25

OULN Sites
Athens, Cambridge, Chillicothe, Ironton, Lancaster, Pickerington, Proctorville, St. Clairsville, and Zanesville

OUE faculty members were teaching 22 out of the 33 total courses on OULN. In fall semester 2015, OUE originated 28 of the 58 total courses on OULN. In general, OUE previously was an "importer" of courses from other campuses. In the past three years, OUE has been an "exporter" of courses.

Literature Review

In a qualitative study of the social relationships that occur in DE, Zhao (2011) describes the various types of DE that are available in higher education:

> Although today's distance learning takes various formats, the most frequently used arrangements in the United States include online courses (synchronous and asynchronous), two-way interactive video, and one-way pre-recorded video. Interactive television (ITV), also known as interactive video or videoconference, connects several sites by audio and video links, so that one instructor can teach to a few sites at the same time. ITV is interactive and synchronous: it is capable of real-time, two-way communication between the instructor and the student, and among students at different sites (p. 1).

Theories about DE are still in their formative state, and they emphasize how to make the DE experience replicate in-person and group-based learning as closely as possible (Zhao, 2011). Therefore, studies of DE investigate its capacity to correspond to in-person learning encounters. According to Zhao, research into DE or ITV has focused primarily on quantitative studies, with fewer qualitative studies and less attention to the teaching-learning process within DE. The qualitative studies have examined (1) students' evaluation of DE courses, achievement in such classes, and their satisfaction with DE; (2) the teaching-learning process, based on the instructor and learners' personal experiences; and (3) difficulties reported by instructors and students engaged in DE (Zhao, 2011). Pardasani, Goldkind, Heyman, and Cross-Denny (2012) have conducted a qualitative study comprising 25 students to analyze how effective a master of social work program was in delivering two specific social-work courses—a nonprofit-administration course and a program-evaluation course. Interviews with students revealed four central themes—autonomy (the ability of students to control their academic options), emotional connectedness to professors and other students, technological challenges, and knowledge acquisition (Pardasani et al., 2012). DE was viewed favorably for its ability to provide otherwise unavailable courses and programs (increasing student autonomy) and in terms of knowledge acquisition. Experiences of DE were more ambivalent regarding emotional connectedness to professors and other students and in terms of technological challenges. Emotional connectedness was an issue for some students who found it difficult to get to know students on other campuses (Pardasani et al., 2012).

In their analysis of how effective DE can be in delivering a master's-level social-work program, Horvath and Mills (2011) highlight the advantages as well as the challenges that DE presents to students. These researchers maintain that DE enables professors of social work to "develop a cadre of master's prepared social-work professionals who are able to provide services and address needs in communities which are rural, underserved, and/or not easily accessed, such as island communities" (Horvath and Mills, 2011, p. 35). Johnsrud, Harada, and Tabata (2006) have noted that DE increased flexibility in terms of time, place, pace of study, and delivery of instructional content. These authors have stressed how important this was in the delivery of education at the University of Hawaii, in view of Hawaii's geographical dispersal of its population over several islands. Thus, in a variety of disciplines, DE made the achievement of college degrees possible in areas where they were not previously available. Davies, Yeung, Mori, and Nixon (2012) have discussed how DE can be modified to educate physical therapists. These authors have utilized small learning groups and facilitators at remote sites to help train health-care providers and enhance skill building. Focus groups were utilized to evaluate this novel approach to health-care education. Although technological glitches (such as audio, video, and connection failures) posed by DE were highlighted in the focus group, these researchers "were surprised to discover how the addition of a remote facilitator heightened the importance of attending the abilities of the facilitator as well as significance of the group's dynamics" (Davies et al., 2012, Discussion section, para. 1).

In terms of student learning outcomes, Horvath and Mills (2011) found no significant differences between traditional courses and DE courses but noted that students on distant campuses evaluated DE as more beneficial, because a college degree might not have been easily accessible otherwise. Hylton and Albers (2007), who compared campus-based bachelor of social work (BSW) students with distance BSW students, also found that distance students had more favorable opinions of DE, because it was the only way they could obtain a BSW. Overall, Hylton and Albers found that campus-based students were more apt to perceive DE unfavorably, because they saw technology as interfering with their learning experience.

Literature on making the transition from in-person teaching to DE is scarce. Horvath and Mills (2011) have pointed out that certain accommodations have to be made to effectively utilize DE technology and revise instructional material to fit the DE mode. Prather (2003) has delineated the difficulties he faced in adapting a linear algebra course for DE: connection failures; delays in the transmission of his lecture via ITV; an inability to respond to the class work and homework of students in person; not being able to use a blackboard to deliver course concepts; and not being able to respond outside of class to go over troublesome math problems. Chakradhar and Chavis (2010) have discussed how the transition to DE from a traditional in-person model of teaching can be improved by participating in a teaching circle, where faculty share their pedagogical strategies for making such an adjustment. The teaching circle was developed to build knowledge, provide affirmation of shared teaching experiences, and create workable strategies (Chakradhar &

Chavis, 2010). The circle was viewed as necessary because "it is not a matter of simply transferring teaching strategies from the traditional setting and is in fact a source of pressure for instructors in efficacy building" (Chakradhar & Chavis, 2010, p. 206). According to Johnsrud et al. (2006), further research is needed to convince faculty to embrace DE and to help "identify the particular variables that explain how faculty members acquired their technology skills, particularly those who are more likely to participate in distance education" (p. 6).

Johnsrud et al. (2006) have compared faculty who were involved in DE with those who were not. These researchers have found that training alone will not increase the likelihood that faculty will participate in DE; they must have an attitude or belief that it is advantageous to move away from a strictly "chalk and talk" instructional delivery method. Faculty must view moving into the DE mode as essential and relevant to their work in higher education.

New challenges for professors making the transition to DE include the need to spend additional time—three to five times as much—developing materials for visual presentation and creating strategies to engage remote participants (Johnsrud et al., 2006). Johnsrud et al. have also emphasized that teaching in the DE mode requires additional time for developing course materials, facilitating communication with students, and managing technical difficulties, often exceeding typical class and office hours associated with traditional courses. Therefore, additional compensation or differential compensation should be considered for faculty developing DE courses.

Hylton and Albers (2007) have also stressed the importance of modifying one's teaching style to create a cohesive learning environment for students at all DE sites. They emphasize that in DE, it is extremely important to develop a sense of community despite having students at different sites. According to Hylton and Albers, this effort requires significant classroom-management skills, such as focusing on the meaning of community and how to form it. These researchers have stressed how important it is for professors to engage distance learners from all sites in classroom interactions.

Establishing a sense of community within the DE framework requires an increased effort to foster social relationships, in order to address the "relational barriers" (Chakradhar & Chavis, 2010, p. 215) inherent to DE. Zhao's (2011) study analyzing the social relationships among faculty and students within DE stresses the difficulty of building personal connections. Zhao found that both faculty and students discussed how challenging it can be to establish rapport and a connection without in-person contact. Faculty felt less connected to their students at distant sites—they have reiterated how difficult it was to meet someone over a television screen compared to in person. Students also have felt alienated from their professors and from the university's main campus due to a lack of in-person interaction with fellow students and faculty. To improve social relationships in DE mode, some professors made in-person contact with students at distant sites, and these visits were found to be appreciated and helpful in bridging the gap (Zhao, 2011). Another way to improve social relationships within the context of DE is for the faculty member to share responsibility with his or her students for promoting a classroom environment that supports positive interaction and learning autonomy (Chakradhar & Chavis, 2010). Researchers Chakradhar and Chavis attempted an exercise in training social workers called "hot seat" to complete a psychosocial evaluation. When one student struggled in the evaluation, another student assisted to foster learning and engagement within the classroom (Chakradhar & Chavis, 2010). Therefore, to overcome challenges in DE, it is important to develop strategies to increase and improve social interaction among faculty and students at all DE sites.

Challenges and Strategies
Challenges
Fall semester 2014 was the first time that I, the first author of this paper, had ever taught on OULN. In the beginning, I was such a novice at DE that I did not know where to look on the ITV screens for students at different sites or where I should stand so that I could be viewed from all campuses. In adapting to OULN, I had to surmount numerous other challenges, such as how to effectively share instructional information with students enrolled on the system. A major concern was how my semester-long group work that involves student presentations could be carried out by students not in my physical classroom: It was evident that it would be more challenging when the small groups were located at distant classroom sites. Other concerns about launching into DE included how I would become acquainted with students on distant campuses. It can be a challenge to get to know individual students in traditional classrooms, but when they are in DE classes it becomes even more difficult.

In making the transition from a traditional classroom to a DE classroom, we made a conscious effort throughout fall semester 2014 to compare the progress of two DE courses, which were broadcast for the first time from the OUE. At around the second or third week of the semester, the members of Class A, taking the Sociology of Mental Illness, were observed to be interacting in a much more successful way than those of Class B, studying the Sociology of Class and Social Inequalities. Although one of the small groups in Class B was attending, interacting, and moving forward on its group project, the groups at two other campuses were not showing up for classes or making steadfast progress in preparation for their presentations. These students in Class B, because of absences and lack of commitment, as well as lack of reading, did not even understand the overall topic of the course—they lacked even a basic understanding of the concept of social inequality. It was clear that in Class B there was a poor work ethic, demonstrated by students who failed to attend class on a regular basis. This situation was demoralizing to students on the various campuses who were committed to class attendance and quality work.

Strategies

Partnering with the second author of this paper, an experienced OULN system operator, helped orient me to teaching on OULN. She helped me adapt my own teaching style to the challenges of DE. Thus, with some modifications to traditional ways of teaching, including group work, we made a successful transition to the DE mode together, employing a number of effective strategies. For example, instead of the operator serving in only a background, or support, role on the OULN system, she became part of a teaching team, similar to the professor–teaching-assistant model. Her responsibilities included taking attendance, answering student questions, and sharing what worked or did not work, because she herself was a former student in the sociology courses that were being offered. In addition, the operator was able to offer real-world sociological experiences based on extensive travel in underdeveloped areas, as well as help students modify and create group-work proposals.

Because interaction among students in a class is especially important in the DE mode—otherwise students not in the physical classroom disengage from class discussion and topics—the involvement of all students in a DE course becomes critical. To encourage the necessary interaction among all students in a DE setting, it becomes important to move the cameras closer to the students in order to have face-to-face contact and really get to know them. To encourage a sense of involvement of all groups at all sites, we focused on hearing from each small group at the beginning of each class session. Groups were expected to report on class discussion questions and share with the whole class at all sites their proposals for presentations and progress made toward their presentations. To get to know individuals at all sites, we also focused on learning about the strengths and weakness of each individual in terms of their group involvement.

At around the second or third week of fall semester 2014, the groups in Class A were observed to be engaged, because they had chosen topics and started to conduct research for their presentations. The progress of Class A could be attributed to exercises at the beginning of class assigned to small groups and the fact that the topic of the course, the Sociology of Mental Illness, was easier to understand than the topic of Class B, Sociology of Class and Social Inequalities. Because there was such a disparity between Class A and Class B in terms of the quality of class engagement, we began to ask both classes what was and was not working for them. Some of the students in Class B did not understand why they had to attend class; they seemed to confuse OULN with an online course. One way to encourage better attendance is to require small groups to develop quality-assurance and social-control plans that address deviant group members who do not show up, participate in class discussions, or contribute to the preparation of the class presentations.

In retrospect, there were reasons that Class B was more difficult to teach. The topic was more challenging, especially the theoretical explanations of various types of inequality.

To address this problem, the text was reviewed more thoroughly, and students were asked to apply the theories to real-life situations. Another reason that Class B was less successful was the lack of attendance. To ensure that students who did attend class regularly benefited from it, we made an effort to reach out one-on-one to the few students at various campuses who attended consistently. We also gave them guidance on how to complete group projects without full group cooperation. We wanted to demonstrate an appreciation for the efforts of engaged students when faced with the challenge of disconnected classmates. To encourage participation, bonus points were offered on the final exam for students whose attendance was good for the second half of the semester. It is essential to be honest with the students in a DE course about the challenges of teaching it and to involve them in problem-solving, empowering them to change the DE classroom environment.

Learning Goals

In making the transition from the traditional mode of teaching to the DE mode, we had specific goals in mind to ensure its success. These included distinct objectives for each of us as well as joint ones, and goals that we envisioned on behalf of our students.

Professor's Goals

I had specific expectations for my transition to DE. I was concerned about maintaining the quality of my teaching in spite of being a novice on the OULN system, because I am not always comfortable with new technology. In adapting my courses to DE mode, I hoped that my usual semester-long group work could be incorporated successfully. In addition, I expected to alter my preparation schedule to ensure that my teaching materials were available in a timely fashion to students enrolled at other campuses. I did encounter some obstacles that I had to address, such as the problem of students who were not on camera disengaging from course activities.

Operator's Goals

The operator expected to acclimate me to the OULN system and enable me and other professors to modify our teaching methods while still utilizing our own teaching styles. To better assist professors in DE courses, the operator evolved into more of a collaborative partner rather than remaining

in a mere technical advisory role. For example, as a former student in the courses that were later offered on the OULN system, she was able to guide me in adapting my teaching style to DE. Also, over the course of supporting DE sociology courses, the operator became jointly engaged in improving the delivery of course materials.

Students' Goals

Both of us envisioned certain goals for students participating in DE. We felt that they needed to engage in classroom activities with students at distant campuses for a positive DE environment to develop. In my traditional courses, I had focused on helping my students become better small-group members, and I wanted to continue this practice in the DE mode. Furthermore, I expected that students in DE courses would be as able to learn as much about sociological theories and concepts related to the classes they were enrolled in as students had in my previous, traditional courses. In those traditional classrooms, I tried to elicit the lived experiences of students, to help them better understand and develop a sociology outlook. I expected to modify but continue this practice in my DE courses. We were convinced that DE offered some unique advantages to students. They would be able to share their different regional identities with each other—DE enables students to become familiar with the social context of other regions in Ohio besides their own.

Professor and Operator's Joint Goals

We developed a strategy to document our transition from the traditional classroom to the DE mode, which entailed keeping a diary and notes on Class A and B. We decided to use our documentation as the basis for a presentation at the North Central Sociological Association's annual conference, held in Cleveland, Ohio, in April 2015, and for this paper.

Analysis and Results

Assessment/Evaluation of Group and Class Involvement

At the end of each semester, I require students to provide feedback on their small-group experiences in a brief, one- or two-page paper. In transitioning to DE, we compared two sociology courses, Sociology of Mental Illness and Sociology of Class and Social Inequalities. The final group papers reflected the students' DE experience as well as how successful their groups were, after they had time to reflect on the quality of their final class presentation.

Class A. A Class A group member from an off-site location assessed her group's participation: The members of her group "attack[ed] the assignment with teamwork, intellect and vigilance. The research team communicated through social media sites, like Facebook and email. The personalities of the 3 team members enmeshed like peanut butter and jelly."

Another group member of Class A reported the following in her group-assessment paper:

> At first it was like we were hitting a lot of dead ends with our interviews not working out but in the end the fact that we didn't give up on one another was a deciding factor on our project turning out great. Sometimes it's hard with a lot of hands in the same pot but we were able to work together as a team the whole way through. Some days we each straggled behind but we each were willing to help one another remember our goal so that we could reach it together.

A group member at the OUE, the campus from which the course was broadcasting, attributed her group's success to taking the time to "discuss our strengths and weaknesses and forming a list to divide out teamwork." In addition, she pointed out, "By mid-semester all the group members were utilizing social media to keep in touch outside the classroom and to work on the group project." The quality-assurance and social-control document signed by all the group members was instrumental in contending with a group member who was skipping classes and not fulfilling his obligations.

A Class A group member from another site also stressed working with group members' strengths: ". . . each member could be relied upon to pull their own weight for the project and stayed in contact with each other when it was necessary. This is what I believed ultimately made the group successful."

Class B. A group member from the most successful group of Class B stated, "We were able to discuss before class would start and through emails and text messages what we were working on. What made our group successful was that were willing to pull our own weight. We were open to one another and were willing to listen to what the other person had to say."

Another group member said, "We also did well to communicate our opinions and listen to our group members['] opinions. We never turned down an idea; we discussed them as a group then chose whether to include it. We were all on the same page in the beginning and have been on the same page since the end of the project. . . . I believe we all have different types of leadership abilities which went together perfectly."

Throughout fall semester 2014, we observed that Class B was clearly not as productive and successful as Class A. Therefore, it was not surprising that a Class B group member from OUE stated "The group project we had to do was a great idea but would have been better with group members that cared about their grades. I had to do the work myself until the last day before we had to present."

Results and Discussion
As we progressed through the fall semester, we were troubled by the learning environment that existed in Class B. Early on, it was apparent that the students in Class B were much less engaged in learning the content of the course compared to those in Class A. In order to more fully understand where the learning process was going awry, we specifically asked the members of each class to report to us on what was working and what was not working in the DE courses.

Class A: Respondents Had Taken 1 to 5 Previous Courses on OULN
The membership of this class reported that the course succeeded because of the following qualities.

- "It seems like the professor is still in the room."
- "A cohesive group makes it more interactive."
- Small-group work helped students become better acquainted with the students on other campuses.
- The course was "more laid back and interactive where other courses are lecture based and boring."
- "Handouts and expectations are clearly outlined making it feel like a real class."
- The professor, who was not behind the podium, was entertaining, and group involvement made the class more enjoyable.

Class B: Respondents Had Taken 1 to 6 Previous Courses on OULN
In this class, there were generally more comments about how DE was not working instead of comments about what was working on OULN. We, along with some students in this class, observed an overall lack of involvement and commitment to learning.
- Students in this class liked the group work and the outlines as they pertained to the text.
- In thinking about what was wrong with DE, a student in this class stated that it was difficult to engage with the personality of the professor because she was not in the same physical classroom.
- A student was troubled by the television monitors in the

DE mode and said, "It's weird talking to a screen."
- Attendance was an issue with this class; numerous students had excuses for it (e.g., volleyball games, court commitments, child-care responsibilities, and family emergencies).
- Students complained that attendance was required and that this was not the case for other courses. (To us, it seemed that several students were confusing DE courses with online courses.)
- Although in Class A the operator was an integral and valued part of the course, some members of Class B resented the operator's role. The Class B students at a remote site actually made a negative comment about the participation of the operator in a class lecture. I had asked her to share pictures from her travels in South Africa to illustrate social inequalities, but the students at the distant site were unwilling to listen to her and walked out. In contrast, the Class A students at remote sites sought guidance from the operator because she had taken the course before and was familiar with my expectations in terms of assignments.

Usage Suggestions
Ideally, students in DE courses want an experience that is as close as possible to that of traditional, in-person instruction, as if the professor is in the same room. Unfortunately, they find that the technology of DE can interfere with their learning experience. In the worst-case scenario, students will see only PowerPoint presentations on a TV screen, have limited or no interaction with students at other sites, and rarely talk to or even see on screen the professor or other students enrolled in the course. While more effectively creating a DE environment that resembled a traditional classroom, we compared and heard from students about the challenges of DE. By obtaining feedback from experienced operators and analyzing our own experiences of transitioning into OULN, we have developed some usage suggestions for professors who are DE novices.

- The operator should become an integral part of the DE course. Shifting the operator from a background or support role to a teaching-assistant role can be advantageous to the professor—if the operator has previous experience with the topic of the course. This was easier in our transition to DE because the operator had taken both of the courses that I had previously taught. When an operator is familiar with the course content, he or she can assume a more collaborative role in DE, although this will require that the operator's pay be increased. But more experienced operators increase the likelihood that DE courses will provide quality educational experiences.
- Another way operators can be integral to DE course success is by providing feedback on what can be done to improve the quality of the course's delivery, because they are familiar with computers, audio, and cameras.
- Introducing group work at all campuses can help create a cohesive sense of community in the DE course.
- Faculty transitioning from the traditional classroom to

DE may need training as well as an allotment of time to modify classroom materials. Unfortunately, the professor in this paper was given no time to make the transition and adjustments for DE prior to the start of the courses.

- We believe that there should be a training period to acclimate to the DE system as well as making the transition from traditional teaching methods to DE. A month or two would be ideal to make the appropriate changes, such as placing teaching materials on Blackboard, understanding how to contact personnel at other sites, and learning how to send and receive students' work as well as exams.
- Instructors teaching in DE mode should rely less on the podium and PowerPoint and focus on strategies for interacting with students at all campuses, such as ensuring that all the students in a class know one another's names and share information about their backgrounds.
- Attendance is key, especially for students who are at distant sites.
- To increase interaction with students off-site, cameras should be adjusted to enable more face-to-face contact with students.
- To engage more students on all campuses, DE professors should rely less on simply lecturing and find ways to encourage discussion on topics and ideas presented in the course reading materials.
- To create a shared sense of community in DE courses, professors should encourage the interaction of students across all campuses. One way this has been achieved is to have students at one campus engage students at other campuses in their final presentations. For example, students have created game shows involving various campus "teams" to foster a sense of class community.
- Ongoing feedback from students and operators about what is working and not working in DE courses is necessary to make continued improvements within the DE classroom.

Conclusion

Universities that establish DE opportunities on various campus sites have the capacity to increase the number of students served by the university system as a whole. A review of literature on DE suggests that it can enable universities to deliver graduate courses to rural communities that are underserved and otherwise lack access to them. DE systems in place throughout a university's campuses can also provide opportunities to students who cannot afford a traditional on-campus learning setting. DE systems have the capacity to serve many nontraditional and less-affluent students on regional campuses, who are unable to complete certain majors and programs available on main campuses. If expanded, DE could assist these students in realizing their professional aspirations without having to relocate. According to Coe Regan (2005), the "single most important challenge in higher education is assisting faculty to integrate technology into instruction" (p. 120). A university-wide emphasis on

assisting regional campus faculty in their transition from traditional instruction to the DE mode can increase student enrollment on DE systems and the overall educational quality of DE courses.

This paper fills a gap in assisting regional campuses in increasing DE enrollment. It offers strategies for faculty who have not ventured into such technologically supported classrooms previously. We have provided a glimpse into the experience of a sociology professor and experienced system operator transitioning from traditional courses into DE on an ITV system using face-to-face, real-time interaction at Ohio University. What we learned from our analyses comparing two different sociology courses on the OULN system was that group work does provide an opportunity to increase student interaction within the context of DE. In addition, professors can adapt their own teaching styles to DE with the assistance of experienced operators, if they are willing to utilize the technical expertise of the operators as well as their experience as former students. Faculty should continue to collaborate with operators to deliver education at various sites, because many of the operators have extensive experience and ideas about improving the quality of courses on DE systems. Additional research on what is working in DE across all campuses should be carried out at universities engaged in the provision of DE.

Janice Proctor is an associate professor of sociology/criminology at Ohio University. She earned a PhD in sociology from the University of Kansas in 2001. Her areas of interest include theoretical explanations for female criminality, studies of incarcerated women, the health-care needs of imprisoned women, and the scholarship of teaching and learning. She has presented numerous papers at the North Central Sociological Association's annual conferences concerning the innovative strategies that she employs in teaching both introductory sociology courses and upper-level ones. She emphasizes team-based learning in all of her courses. Since 2014, she has become increasingly committed to modifying her courses technologically to make them more conducive to the DE mode of teaching.

Tiffany Bumgardner is a research assistant at Ohio University. She is also a professional photographer, who has utilized this expertise at Ohio University. She served for two years as a media assistant for OULN, assisting in the delivery of more than 30 DE courses. In 2015, she earned her BSS, with a focus in psychology and sociology, from Ohio University. She has presented papers on DE at Ohio University and at the North Central Sociological Association's annual conferences. She is experienced in analyzing qualitative data related to the origins of imprisoned women's criminality.

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