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Exploring the Needs and Perceptions of Online Faculty towards Faculty Professional Development: A Qualitative Study

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Exploring the Needs and Perceptions of Online Faculty towards Faculty Professional Development: A Qualitative Study

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Education

by

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Exploring the Needs and Perceptions of
Online Faculty towards Faculty Professional Development:
A Qualitative Study

by

Rosemary Tyrrell

Doctor of Education

University of California, Los Angeles, 2015

Professor Christina A. Christie, Co-Chair

Professor Linda P. Rose, Co-Chair

This dissertation examined the perceptions, motivations and needs of online instructors for professional development and the way evaluation is used to improve online teaching. This study informs our understanding of how to best serve the needs of online instructors for professional development which improves the quality of their online teaching. Using a descriptive, qualitative method, surveys, instructor interviews, instructor focus groups, and administrator interviews were conducted at two university extension programs in the Western United States. The survey data were examined using frequency analysis and independent

sample t-tests to compare the needs of instructors at the two institutions, to compare new and veteran instructors, and to compare instructors teaching one course with those teaching multiple courses. Interview and focus group data were coded according to categories developed from the research questions. Interview and focus group data were then compared to identify consistent themes between the types of data. The findings from the research suggest that instructors perceive faculty professional development as not fully meeting their needs; the perceptions of faculty development are strongly influenced by messages sent at different levels of the organization; that instructors' motivations to attend faculty professional development is directly related to how they perceive its value; and that instructors have a need for community and faculty development that serves their needs at various stages of their careers. The findings are discussed and recommendations are made for professional development practice and future research.

The dissertation of Rosemary Tyrrell is approved.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my husband, Mark Robertson, who has always sustained me, cheered me, and inspired me to reach for my dreams. It was his deep and abiding faith in me that gave me the strength of will to complete this journey.

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Chapter One

The quality of teaching in higher education has been a hotly debated topic since at least 1828 when The Yale Report raised an alarm regarding the departure from the classic curriculum. In the 1980's, a flurry of commission reports found fault with teaching methods and curriculum (Terenzini, 1999). Today, higher education is again facing increasing pressures from outside sources to respond to a variety of market forces and changing populations and environments. As college costs grow ever higher, calls for accountability grow ever louder (Dill, 1999; Gillespie, 2010).

Institutions of higher education are under enormous pressure to improve student outcomes at the same time many students are arriving unprepared to do college-level work (Chickering & Gamson, 1999; Cross, 2001; Schrum, Burbank, Engle, Chambers, & Glassett, 2005). According to both the National Center for Educational Statistics and Complete College America, at two-year degree granting institutions, only 31% of first-time, full-time undergraduate students who began their pursuit of a certificate or associate's degree in fall 2009 attained it within 150% of the normal time required to do it, and students who attend part-time have even lower completion rates (S. Jones, 2012). Completion rates in online programs can be significantly lower (David P. Diaz, 2002).

More and more institutions of higher education are expanding online offerings (Allen & Seaman, 2011; Huber & Lowry, 2003); however, the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (Markowitz & Russell, 2006) suggests that the needs of online learners are not being met. They further claim that there is a gap between the growth of online course offerings and the institutions' ability to provide qualified faculty.

Despite the popularity of online courses, a challenge facing online educators and administrators is that online courses have substantially higher dropout rates than face-to-face courses (David P. Diaz, 2002; Y. Lee & Choi, 2011; Morris & Finnegan, 2009). Dropout rates in online courses can be high. In one study at West Texas A&M University, which examined 15 graduate business courses taught by the same professor both on campus and online, Terry (2001) found students enrolled more often in online courses than face-to-face courses, but the online courses suffered a greater dropout rate. The attrition rate in face-to-face classes was 14% while the online attrition rate was 21%.

This dropout rate is a concern for many reasons. Failure in their first online class may discourage students from enrolling in other online courses (Poellhuber, Chomienne, & Karsenti, 2008). When a student leaves an online program, nearly all connection with the student is lost which can make it difficult to determine why the student left the program. Further, institutions see a large dropout rate as an indicator that their online programs are of poor quality (Willging & Johnson, 2009).

Research shows that the reasons students drop out of online classes are many, complex, and often interrelated. Many educators believe that students drop out from online courses for the same reasons that they drop out of traditional, face-to-face classes; however, the impact of the quality of teaching in an online course cannot be ignored. While students drop out of online courses for a variety of reasons, clearly one of those reasons is poor quality teaching (Ivankova & Stick, 2007).

Even though the reasons for student attrition vary, a large body of research shows that interactions with instructors have a strong influence on student persistence and graduation rates in all coursework (Cruce, Wolniak, Seifert, & Pascarella, 2006; Lillis, 2011; Tyler,

Taylor, Kane, & Wooten, 2010). Tyler et al. (2010) show compelling evidence that instructional skills in the area of classroom climate and instructional strategies predicts students outcomes. Links have been shown through hundreds of studies between student perceptions of effective teaching practice such as timely student feedback, course organization, class preparation and teaching techniques to student mastery of course materials (Brashkamp et al., 2000; Chickering & Gamson, 1987, 1999; Kenneth Eugene Eble, 1988; Hutchins, 2003; Wilbert J. McKeachie, 1997; Wilbert James McKeachie & Svinicki, 2014; Prosser, Ramsden, Trigwell, & Martin, 2003; Prosser & Trigwell, 1999). Therefore, it would be safe to conclude that better teaching can result in better student outcomes.

Some research shows the same teaching issues exist in online courses as in traditional courses. Ivankova and Stick (2007) found a lack of faculty commitment and sense of community in online courses. In one case, approximately 70% of student messages were left unanswered by faculty. They found that the quality of interaction significantly contributed to student persistence. Students who received more timely, meaningful and constructive feedback were more likely to persist. Students' persistence was positively affected by the faculty member's ability to provide personal assistance, encouragement and support. Ivankova and Stick (2007) further found that the quality of faculty feedback depended on the readiness of the faculty to teach online.

While quality teaching is essential to student success, many instructors in higher education have little to no training in teaching (Hativa, 2000). This is a condition that is common across institution types, where new instructors may be experts in their particular content area, but have little familiarity with the scholarship of teaching. The problem can be exacerbated by both written and unwritten institutional policies that place other priorities over

teaching when it comes to promotion and compensation. Since most new instructors simply teach the way they were taught, old pedagogical practices continue even though better methods can result in improved student outcomes (Gaff & Pruitt-Logan, 1998).

In this qualitative research study, I looked at what perceptions online faculty held of faculty professional development, what motivations they had to attend such programs, what needs they said were not being met by current faculty professional development programs, and how they felt online teaching should be evaluated. For the purpose of this study, I examined the fully online course, defined as formalized instruction where content is delivered completely online and all communication with the instructor is conducted virtually. Frequently, students may be distance learners who are far from the campus location and will never see the online instructor face-to-face. Students may be conducting only part of their entire program online.

Research Questions

1. What are the perceptions that online university instructors have about faculty professional development?
    a. What motivates online instructors to participate in faculty professional development programs?
2. What do online instructors say are their needs for faculty professional development?
    a. What elements of faculty professional development do online instructors consider to be effective?
    b. What content do online instructors consider to be most important to include in faculty professional development?

3. According to online instructors and program administrators, what should be included in an evaluation instrument for teaching in online courses?
    a. How do online instructors say an evaluation instrument will affect their teaching of online courses?

Statement of the Problem

"The completely incorrect assumption is that anyone with a good degree will automatically be able to impart this knowledge to others. So often are students bored by uninspired teaching or disenchanted by badly taught material" (Entwisle, 1985). A large body of research shows that few new instructors receive any training prior to teaching (Gaff & Pruitt-Logan, 1998; Hativa, 2000; A. Jones, 2008; Kember & Kwan, 2000; Robinson & Hope, 2013; Van Note Chism, 2002). Terenzini (1999) points out that even though we know learning is a complex task which involves leaps of understanding, imagination and creative thinking, we talk about foundational knowledge, building on prior coursework, and capstone courses, implying that learning is additive. Most instructors behave as if a student simply "builds" knowledge brick by brick like constructing a house. Part of the challenge is that many instructors begin a teaching career upon the completion of graduate level education, where most instructors emerge from a doctoral program as experts in their particular field but with minimal or no foundation in pedagogy (Hativa, 2000; Lieberman, 2005). Many college instructors gain their pedagogical skills through trial and error and by reflecting on student evaluations (Hativa, 2000).

The lack of proper preparation can also lead to negative beliefs and thinking about teaching and students (Hativa, 2000; Samuelowicz & Bain, 1992, 2001). Hativa posits that

these negative beliefs can damage the effectiveness of instruction. She identifies six beliefs related to student learning that hinder improving teaching practice:

1. *A simplistic model of teaching as the transmission of knowledge wherein instructors see teaching as the mere transmittal of content knowledge*. Instructors who hold this view are more likely to believe that the only criterion for teaching well is keeping current in their field.
2. *Putting the sole responsibility for learning on the students*. Instructors who hold this belief, according to Hativa, reject any responsibility for students' failures in learning the content.
3. *Perception of the ultimate essentiality of content coverage*. Instructors who accept this view often define their sole problem in teaching with "too much content, too little time."
4. *Misconception of adapting instruction to students as watering down the material presented and thus lowering the level of teaching*. Some instructors who believe this may resist any attempts to change teaching practice.
5. *Perceiving students as unfit and unequipped to appreciate instruction . . . without some time lapse. . .* Instructors hold onto a belief that students will appreciate their teaching "someday."
6. *Viewing long teaching experience as detrimental to fundamental changes in instruction*. Many instructors may feel it is too late to change long-held teaching practices (Hativa, 2000).

Not only do many new instructors enter the field poorly prepared to teach and with some detrimental beliefs about teaching and learning, as new technologies emerge, many

faculty members find it too challenging to keep up with the moving target of innovative teaching methods. Some mid-career instructors feel ill-equipped to handle the increasing demands of integrating technology into their courses (Surry & Land, 2000). Nowhere is the issue more significant than when an instructor takes on an online course. Ongoing faculty development is needed to keep current with an educational environment that is rapidly changing.

The rising tide of online courses in higher education has fueled a debate over the quality of these online programs. Many instructors are reluctant to embrace online learning because they are suspicious of its efficacy (Amundsen & Wilson, 2012; Bangert, 2006; Coppola, Hiltz, & Rotter, 2002; Steinert, Naismith, & Mann, 2012; Stes, Coertjens, & Van Petegem, 2010). Moreover, many educators remain concerned that online courses will not deliver the same quality learning as their traditional courses.

While a lack of faculty training is a problem endemic in higher education generally, it is even more pervasive in online teaching. A challenge that many institutions face is how to ensure that the quality of online courses equals or exceed those that are taught face-to-face. Since many online instructors have been pressed into service with minimal preparation, a need for effective training and development for online educators has grown. Coppola et al. (2002) found instructors did not always feel well prepared for teaching online. For example, one instructor indicated:

> I found that my persona did not work well online. Here the instructor has to be more proactive, more aggressive, and directive in terms of a leadership role; however, that's not my style. I found myself in a position where I needed to change my teaching style, and I didn't know how to do that (2002, p. 181).

Despite any faculty reluctance, online learning is popular with students. The Department of Education reports that in 2007-08, 20% of undergraduates took at least one online course, while 4% took their entire program online. This represents a 16% rise from the 2003-04 numbers (Walton-Radford, 2011). In 2010 the Sloan Consortium reported that over 6.1 million students took at least one online course representing an annual growth rate of 10%, which far exceeds the 2% growth rate in higher education overall (Allen & Seaman, 2011). According to Sloan, 65% of higher education institutions now say online learning is part of their long-term strategy.

As the demand for online courses grows, the urgency to improve these programs increases. Institutions in higher education are faced with the challenge of finding faculty who are capable and willing to teach online (Koehler, Mishra, & Hershey, 2004). Faculty members are often not technologically savvy. Many learned to teach without the use of technology and question the need to incorporate these skills into their teaching practice. Evidence shows that attitudes and perceptions are greater barriers than technological expertise in influencing instructors to teach online (T. Clark, 1993; Dillon & Walsh, 1992).

In addition to the rising demand for online courses, accreditors are starting to set specific expectations for online courses. The Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) requires evidence of faculty-to-student interactions and of on-going faculty professional development. To meet all these demands, institutions need ongoing faculty professional development that is efficacious, well attended, and cost effective. The Online Learning Consortium, (formerly the Sloan Consortium), a leading advocate for quality in online learning, details five quality categories for online courses which include, “faculty satisfaction with including faculty support and training, recognition, promotion, and

opportunities for publication and professional development" (Schedler & Pellett, 2012). Most importantly, faculty professional development for online faculty is a key element to ensuring quality courses and positive learning outcomes for students.

The ability of institutions to meet the growing demand for online courses is directly tied to the ability of higher education to meet the needs of faculty who teach online courses (Z. L. Berge & Muilenburg, 2001; Muilenburg & Berge, 2001; Orr, Williams, & Pennington, 2009). Many educators see the need for online courses but lack the skills to teach online. Even some educators who are already teaching online say that they lack the knowledge and skills to teach online effectively (Karsenti, 2001; J. L. Lee & Hirumi, 2004; Wallace, 2003). Teaching online is far more complicated than teaching face-to-face. (Young, 2004). Instructors must not only master content and technology, but must learn new effective pedagogy. When asked the kind of training given before teaching online one instructor shared:

> Zero. I was given the course and the date that it started. All I was given at that time was a very bullet pointed kind of list of information. "Here's how quickly you are expected to respond to students." "Here is the Tuesday date that we set for close and then open of the next week's modules." Very general things. That was it (Tyrrell, 2014, p. 23).

One challenge is getting instructors to participate in training and development. To ensure quality online courses, we must understand how online instructors perceive the value of faculty development as they prepare to teach online. We also must find ways to address the specific needs of online educators.

Before attempting to improve online teaching, there must be a method of identifying and evaluating good teaching practice. A body of research shows that frameworks improve the quality of teacher evaluation (Benjamin, 2002; Milanowski & Heneman, 2001; Viviano, 2012).

An advantage of a method for evaluation is the ability to have a shared definition of what constitutes good teaching. According to Danielson (2011), having a common language to describe quality teaching invites educators to analyze teaching practice. Although there has been some attention toward developing a conceptual framework for teaching in higher education, no model has achieved the level of acceptance that the Danielson Framework enjoys in K-12 teaching (Bangert, 2004, 2006; Tigelaar, Dolmans, Wolfhagen, & van der Vleuten, 2004). There are models of evaluation for online courses, but most focus on the content and course design, rather than on the online pedagogy (Achtemeier, Morris, & Finnegan, 2003; Anderson, Liam, Garrison, & Archer, 2001; Brew, 2008; Cravener, 1998; Graham, Cagiltay, Lim, Craner, & Duffy, 2001; Means, Toyama, Murphy, Bakia, & Jones, 2009; Sonwalkar, 2002).

Not only is little attention paid to teaching when evaluating online courses, but just like evaluation tools, most of the faculty professional development that does exist for online educators focuses on learning the new technology, rather than on new pedagogies (Bailey & Card, 2009). Many online instructors claim they need pedagogical training (Morris & Finnegan, 2009; Oomen-Early & Murphy, 2009).

A body of research has begun to form around what constitutes best practices in online learning (Bailey & Card, 2009; Finch & Jacobs, 2012; Goodyear, Salmon, Spector, Steeples, & Tickner, 2001; Gustafson & Gibbs, 2000; J. L. Lee & Hirumi, 2004; Morris & Finnegan, 2009; Tremblay, 2006). Chickering and Gamson (1987) defined seven practices of good undergraduate teaching. These seven practices have also been used to identify effective pedagogical practices for online teaching (Brew, 2008; Morris & Finnegan, 2009). These seven practices are:

1. Encourage contacts between students and faculty in and out of classes.
2. Learning is enhanced when it is more like a team effort than a solo race.
3. Active learning is encouraged in classes that use structured exercises, challenging discussions, team projects, and peer critiques.
4. Students need appropriate and timely feedback on their performance to benefit from courses.
5. Learning to use one's time well is critical for students and professionals alike.
6. Communicate higher expectations.
7. Provide a diverse delivery system.

Not only is faculty professional development for online teaching sparse and focused primarily on technology, but traditional faculty professional development is not always adaptable to online learning. Standard methods of teaching pedagogy do not often take into consideration the complexities of blending content, technological knowledge and pedagogy for effective online teaching (Koehler et al., 2004; Mishra & Koehler, 2006). Preparing instructors to teach online is not a simple matter of training them to use technology. Technology and pedagogy must work in synergy and provide consistent methods of evaluation (Koehler et al., 2004). Unfortunately, few concrete models or frameworks exist to help guide educators (Koehler et al., 2004)

Once a common definition of quality online teaching is agreed upon, the next step is to determine effective methods for improving practice. A large body of research clearly demonstrates the efficacy of faculty professional development. Studies routinely show increased use of best teaching practices following faculty professional development programs in higher education (B. Cox, McIntosh, Reason, & Terenzini, 2011; M. D. Cox & Richlin,

2004; Cranton, 1994; Daly, 2011; Eib & Miller, 2006; Feldman & Paulsen, 1999; A. Jones, 2008; Kanuka, 2010). In fact, Rutz et al. (2012) found that not only did teaching strategies improve for the instructors who engaged in faculty professional development, but there was also a "spill over" effect within departments and programs. As faculty members used new strategies and experienced positive outcomes within their classes, they often acted as advocates with other faculty members. Rutz et al. (2012) further found that the changes in teaching practice persisted over time, even after funding for the faculty professional development program ran out.

Not only is faculty professional development an individual concern, but it also impacts organizations. Sorcinelli (2006) posits that faculty professional development is essential not only to the individual instructor, but also to the overall institution. Individual instructors want faculty professional development that allows them an opportunity to build collegiality and collaboration with their peers (Schrum et al., 2005). On the other hand, institutions want faculty professional development that aligns with the organizational mission. In discussing the qualities of a learning institution, Lieberman (2005) claims that part of the requirement of effective faculty professional development is that faculty no longer consider themselves individuals, but as an integral part of the overall institution, and because of this, faculty have a greater commitment to the institution and its mission.

It's important to ask if faculty professional development is widely recognized as beneficial to both instructor and institution, why it isn't used more often and more effectively. The reasons are as varied as the institutions themselves, including limited resources, lack of leadership, and limited time. Faculty professional development programs can also be seen as irrelevant by administrators who sometimes feel that only the "good" teachers attend

development and the "worst" teachers avoid it (Gillespie, 2010). Even when institutions commit sufficient resources and leadership to faculty professional development programs, often such programs develop a stigma. They can become known as places where "bad" teachers get sent (Gillespie, 2010; Sorcinelli et al., 2006).

Achieving buy-in from both faculty and administration, therefore, is a key goal for any faculty professional development program. Many researchers have posited that a sense of ownership among faculty can be an effective method for overcoming resistance to development programs (Austin & Sorcinelli, 2013; Cross, 2001; Daly, 2011; Dee & Daly, 2009a; Eib & Miller, 2006; Feldman & Paulsen, 1999; Gillespie, 2010; Sorcinelli et al., 2006). Involving faculty members directly in the dialog allows for a common definition of effective teaching practice, an important component of achieving a sense of faculty ownership (Danielson, 2011).

The problem I explored is represented graphically in Figure 1 (below).

Figure 1. Statement of Problem.

Study Design

To answer the above research questions, I selected a qualitative approach because this method helped me gain a deep understanding of the needs, perceptions and motives of online instructors. I needed to examine a range of interconnected issues related to teaching and

faculty professional development. Understanding the context within which faculty professional development exists at the two university sites and examining the influence of that context on instructors' actions was also important.

The study was conducted on two campuses of a large state university in the Western United States. The University system encompasses multiple campuses, medical centers, more than 200,000 students and more than 100,000 faculty and staff. The University offers over 20,000 extension courses, both face-to-face and online. This large university system provided an ideal opportunity for a study focused on online faculty professional development because of its large number of online courses and certificate programs.

Moreover, the results of this study adds to the body of research on how to create effective online faculty professional development programs that instructors will welcome and that have the best chance to improve online teaching in higher education.

Chapter Two: Review of the Literature

Over the last few decades extensive research has focused on faculty professional development in higher education (Amundsen & Wilson, 2012; Bangert, 2004; Graham et al., 2001; Reilly, Vandenhouten, Gallagher-Lepak, & Ralston-Berg, 2012; Steinert et al., 2012; Wilson & Stacey, 2004). Despite this research interest, few instructors teaching in higher education have a clear understanding of what constitutes good teaching practice or how to improve their own teaching. New faculty frequently share similar stories about their orientation to teaching, which amounted to being told the title of the course and handed a textbook (Van Note Chism, 2002). Yet, higher education faces increasing pressures to demonstrate value and calls for accountability grow ever louder (Dill, 1999; Gillespie, 2010).

Literally hundreds of studies have shown links between effective teaching practices such as timely student feedback, course organization, class preparation and teaching techniques to student mastery of course materials (Brashkamp et al., 2000; Chickering & Gamson, 1987, 1999; Kenneth Eugene Eble, 1988; Hutchins, 2003; Wilbert J. McKeachie, 1997; Wilbert James McKeachie & Svinicki, 2014; Prosser et al., 2003; Prosser & Trigwell, 1999). Many instructors enter the teaching profession with little to no training in pedagogy and have a strong need for effective faculty professional development and training (Hativa, 2000; Olsen & Sorcinelli, 1992; Wilkerson & Irby, 1998). Online instructors particularly have special needs for faculty professional development and are often unable to participate in available faculty professional development due to scheduling conflicts, distance from campus, and part-time status. This study will investigate perceptions of online instructors, investigate what faculty professional development will meet their needs, look at what motivates them to

participate in faculty professional development, and consider what forms of evaluation will help improve their teaching.

After a brief discussion of the context, key terms and theoretical framework for the study, this literature review will: 1) review the history of research and practices in faculty professional development in higher education; 2) explore research on the impact of faculty professional development on teaching practice including perceptions held by instructors and motivations for participating in faculty professional development; and 3) discuss literature on the use of evaluation to improve teaching practice.

Context and Key Terms

With the rapid growth of online learning, instructors new to online teaching are asked to develop many new roles. In addition to content expertise, online instructors merge roles such as content facilitator, course designer, technical expert, and process facilitator (Coppola et al., 2002; J. A. Gaytan & McEwen, 2010; Guasch, Alvarez, & Espasa, 2010). As a content facilitator, the instructor ensures that students are able to access and understand the course content. As the course designer, the instructor creates the content with which students will engage. As a technical expert, the instructor resolves any technical problems the students may have with the learning management system. Finally, as the process facilitator, the instructor guides the students to understand the process of taking the online course.

Coppola et al. (2002) specifically studied role changes when instructors move from face-to-face (F2F) to online courses. In 20 semi-structured interviews, Coppola et al. explored course preparation and delivery, instructor motivation, training and support, and faculty attitudes toward policy issues. They identified role changes enacted by online instructors. Instructors identified three categories including: 1) cognitive roles related to learning,

thinking, information storage, and other areas of deeper cognitive complexity; 2) affective roles related to relationships between students, students and instructors, and classroom atmosphere; and 3) managerial roles related to class and course management.

When exploring the cognitive role, rather than diminishing teaching, Coppola et al. found that professors engaged in deeper levels of mental processing when teaching online courses. Instructors reported learning from student experiences and engaging in deeper mental processing while editing questions and responses within the class discussion forum and while responding to student questions. One instructor commented:

> I give myself more time to think about what they're saying before I respond to them. In the classroom, I'm more prone to avoid the silence. That should probably be easier, the silence, but I hear the question or a read the question and this allows me to really sit back and really think about giving a reasonable response rather than something that's right there. In class, they want the immediacy, they want my response (2002, p. 177).

During the affective role, the faculty noted the absence of nonverbal clues in relationship building, but they found relationships with students were more intimate and connected in online courses. One instructor noted: "Even though the richness of exchanges reduce, there is a possibility for more intimacy online than in the regular classroom. That's definitely a plus. (2002, p. 179)." On the other hand, faculty noted that their interactions with students were more formal and they used less humor.

When enacting the management role, faculty reported that it required greater attention to detail, more structure, and additional student monitoring then their F2F classes. Instructors reported that they put more effort into organizing online courses. Instructors particularly found more student monitoring was required. One instructor stated:

> With 30 to 40 students, to give each of them individual feedback on everything they write, every week, becomes sort of daunting . . . It is still much more time than I ever

> spent in a classroom, obviously. . . With a normal classroom, you have a discussion and it's over. But if you're monitoring people and keeping track of how many comments they do and deciding which ones you want to answer and deciding which ones you want other people to answer, to keep track of that would take three or four hours a week . . . In a traditional classroom, it is an hour (2002, pp. 181–182).

Nearly all of the faculty interviewed said teaching online required substantially more time and effort; however, instructors reported a change in their teaching practice which included more precision in the presentation of materials and instructions and a shift to a more Socratic methodology.

An online instructor not only must adopt new and varied roles, but must also possess vast technical knowledge. In addition to learning to navigate the institution's course management system, instructors may be expected to use a wide variety of e-learning tools such as wikis, social media, virtual reality, enhanced reality, podcasting, and so forth (Coppola et al., 2002; Guasch et al., 2010; Reilly et al., 2012). Reilly et al. (2012) report that it is critical for faculty to feel confident in the online environment because students can sense an instructor's discomfort in managing an online course or working with the technology.

Given the numerous approaches to online learning, the terminology used to define each is constantly shifting. Online teaching, online learning, and e-learning are used with frequency and can be defined as any use of the online environment to support course content or delivery. The variety of online learning methods can be seen on a continuum from web-enhanced classes to fully online coursework. Currently, web-enhanced learning is defined as a traditional F2F class supported by some online content. This may include significant course content, such as lecture materials and required reading, or merely supplemental content, such as recommended readings and lecture notes. Hybrid courses and/or blended learning are defined as coursework where instruction is split between online sessions and traditional F2F

classes. For example, a typical ten-session course might include five sessions online and five sessions delivered face-to-face.

For the purpose of this study, I focus on the fully online course, defined as formalized instruction where content is delivered completely online and all communication with the instructor is conducted virtually. Frequently, students may be distance learners who are far from the campus location and will never see the online instructor face-to-face. Students may be conducting only part or their entire program online.

The terms faculty professional development, instructional development, educational development, and academic development are used interchangeably within the literature. For the purpose of this review, the phrase faculty professional development will be used to refer to any formalized program that seeks to improve instruction and pedagogical methodology.

Theoretical Framework: Faculty Professional Development

Shulman's (1986, p. 13) theory of pedagogical content knowledge is appropriate for creating faculty professional development for online instructors. According to Shulman, "A professional is capable not only of practicing and understanding his or her craft, but of communicating the reasons for professional decisions and actions to others." This framework provides a rationale for both the collection of data and as a method for interpreting findings.

Historically, preparation for teaching focused entirely on content knowledge; however, in the 1970s the focus shifted almost entirely to pedagogy (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). Shulman (1986) moved the field of faculty professional development forward by introducing the idea of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK). PCK includes knowing what specific teaching methods will best serve the content and knowing how to arrange content for better teaching and student understanding (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). PCK includes an

understanding of what makes particular concepts within a discipline difficult or easy to learn. Shulman (1986, p. 6) raises the following question: "Has it always been asserted that one either knows content and pedagogy is secondary and unimportant, or that one knows pedagogy and is not held accountable for content?" He argues having subject knowledge and general pedagogical methods does not go far enough and proposes that there is a necessary relationship between both pedagogy and content (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). This blending of content and pedagogy improves the ability of instructors to address key challenges students face in learning a particular subject (Major & Palmer, 2006; Mishra & Koehler, 2006; Shulman, 1986). It is not enough that instructors have general teaching skills. They must be able to apply specific techniques to the particular challenges students face when trying to learn a given subject. For example, a biology professor must be able to apply particular pedagogy to the challenges of learning biology. Moreover, when online learning is added into the mix, an instructor must now be able to determine what particular online pedagogy will best help students learn biology online.

These links have been examined in the literature. Major and Palmer (2006) in a study at a private, religious university found that faculty indicated a strong link between subject matter and the discipline. Faculty members believed that a specific discipline, whether or not it was their own, should be taught in a particular way. This belief influenced a faculty member's willingness to learn new pedagogy. Through the faculty professional development program, which engaged teams in problem-based learning, Major and Palmer (2006) found that participants began seeing their own disciplines in new ways. This made them feel more rejuvenated by their own fields, and it helped them to look at learning outcomes in a more specific way and to begin to ask, "What is important for my students to learn?" Not only did

participants begin to have a deeper understanding of pedagogy, but they saw it as a subject worthy of study which was closely linked to their own discipline. Additionally, they began to see students in positive, new ways. One professor began seeing her students as professionals within the field.

Similarly, Mishra and Koehler (2006) created a framework based on the idea that teaching is complex and requires many kinds of knowledge including both content and pedagogy. They developed a class of theories about both the process of learning and programs created to support learning.

PCK would seem likely to serve the needs of online instructors well as they have limited time and resources to devote to improving their teaching practice. PCK might also serve as a key motivator for instructors who may feel that faculty professional development programs do not address the needs of their particular content area.

Another theoretical frame which may be useful for this study comes from Mortimer J. Adler, the American philosopher. Adler suggests some basic tenets of adult education. First, adult education must be voluntary. Second, adult education is characterized by equality. Conversation between learner and teacher is that of equals. Third, and most importantly, adult education is without limits. It does not end with the acquisition of a diploma or degree but continues throughout life. Adler posits that since the goal of learning is wisdom, it is a process that must go on for a lifetime. Just as the body must continue to receive daily sustenance to go on living, Adler (1952, p. 67) argues, so too the mind must be fed regularly or risk paralysis. "Just as we know that we cannot support the life of the body this week on the basis of last week's feeding, so we ought to realize that we cannot support the life of the mind this week on last week's reading, much less last year's reading, or the reading done in college."

A third framework considered is the pioneering work of Malcolm Knowles (1984, 2011) in the area of andragogy, which is defined as learning methodologies focused specifically on adult learners. Andragogy is based on the understanding that adult learners bring a set of life experience into the learning environment. Knowles' theories are associated with six assumptions related to adult learning: 1) adults need to know the reason for learning something; 2) experience provides the basis for learning activities; 3) adults need to be responsible for their decisions and involved in the planning and evaluation of their own instruction; 4) adults are most interested in learning material with immediate relevance to their work or personal life; 5) adult learning is primarily problem-centered rather than content-centered; and 6) adults respond better to internal versus external motivation. Andragogy provides a useful framework for any type of professional training or development and is particularly relevant to the area of faculty professional development.

With Shulman's PCK, Adler's adult education, and Knowles andragogy firmly in mind, next I will explore the history of faculty professional development and the main practices that exist within it today.

History of Research on Faculty Professional Development

There was a time when anyone who held a degree was considered qualified to teach. It eventually became apparent that teaching itself was a nuanced set of skills. The field of faculty professional development grew out of a desire to teach the "art" of teaching.

The field of faculty professional development has grown since the middle of the 20th century in a response to demands (particularly student protests in the 1960's) for more effective instruction. In the 1970's, in an attempt to define and encourage best teaching practices, new approaches shifted focus to teaching practice. Professional groups such as the

Professional and Organizational Development (POD) Network in Higher Education formed, and a body of research revealed that teaching was a practice that could be learned.

Throughout the 1980's, colleges began to add faculty professional development programs across the country (S. Clark, Corcoran, & Lewis, 1986; Kenneth E. Eble & McKeachie, 1985; Toombs, 1983). Also during the late 1980's, a focus on curriculum change entered the field. Focusing on curriculum requires a new, more collaborative approach. With this new approach, faculty professional development moved beyond promoting a canon of teaching tips towards a more integrated approach, which is aligned with the scholarship of teaching and learning, often referred to in the literature as SoTL.

In 1992, the gigantic pension company, TIAA-CREF established the Hesburgh Awards for exceptional faculty professional development programs. Exemplary faculty professional development programs at the Community College of Denver, Utah Valley State College, Babson College, and the University of Colorado, among others, have won this prestigious award over the years. In only 20 years, the field of faculty professional development moved from a burgeoning idea to a respected, fully recognized program at colleges and universities.

Even given this recognition, the field still faces challenges. Extensive research has been done in higher education in the area of faculty professional development; however, some of the quality of that research has been called into question. Reviews of the literature agree that more study is needed. Since 1981 four comprehensive literature analyses on higher education faculty professional development all concluded that the research is of low quality. All cited a need for more rigorous research, mixed methods, and longitudinal studies (Amundsen & Wilson, 2012; Levinson-Rose & Menges, 1981; Steinert et al., 2012; Stes,

Min-Leliveld, Gijbels, & Van Petegem, 2010). Specifically, there has been a call for more research using program evaluation. According to the literature, little progress has been made evaluating faculty professional development programs in higher education (Amundsen & Wilson, 2012; Bakutes, 1998; Brancato, 2003; Daly, 2011; Shagrir, 2012; Steinert, Cruess, Cruess, & Snell, 2005; Stes et al., 2010).

Few faculty professional development programs are evaluated, and those that are, primarily focus on evaluation of participant satisfaction, rather than on a change in pedagogy, perceptions, attitudes, or a change in student learning outcomes. However, in an attempt to move beyond participant satisfaction as the evaluative criteria for faculty professional development, Rust (1998) compared what faculty reported they intended to change in their teaching practice immediately following a day-long faculty professional development workshop with what they had changed four months later. He found that preliminary intentions were accurate predictors of subsequent change in practice and that the changes were deemed successful by the instructors.

Finally, Sorcinelli (2006) looked toward the future of faculty professional development. She surveyed 494 faculty professional development professionals at 300 colleges to determine where they felt the field should move in the future. One key need identified in her study was providing services for online faculty members.

From this brief history, it is apparent faculty professional development as a serious field of study has been around for over 100 years. As it has grown, it has moved from focusing strictly on content knowledge, through a period of focusing entirely on pedagogy, to a more integrated approach. Throughout its history, much of the research has focused on what kinds of faculty professional development are effective in changing teaching practice.

Practices in faculty professional development for higher education.

Since the beginning of faculty professional development programs in the 1970's, a wide range of development activities including workshops, reflective teaching, communities of practice, and mentorship programs have been tried and evaluated in the literature (Austin & Sorcinelli, 2013; Levinson-Rose & Menges, 1981; Sorcinelli et al., 2006). As the field has grown and matured, the literature has reached some consensus on what constitutes good practice. These "best practices" tend to include programs which are: sustained over time, collaborative, reflective, and responsive to faculty needs.

Nearly all the recent literature in the area of pedagogy favors faculty professional development that is sustained over a period of time, rather than the one-time workshops that are frequently the norm (Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2001; Sorcinelli et al., 2006). In one study, elementary school teachers ranked in-service faculty professional development at the very bottom of a list of 22 options (Sandholtz, 2002). In writing on life-long adult education, which includes faculty professional development, Adler (1952) posits that education in adult life is "without end." While Adler was discussing a broader goal of achieving wisdom, it could also be argued that achieving wisdom within one's profession is equally a life-long learning goal; therefore, faculty professional development should not be confined to a one-time workshop, but like other adult education should be an ongoing commitment to learning and improving.

Not only are one-shot workshops less effective in changing pedagogy, but they do not provide a key motivator for faculty to attend, which is the ability to interact with colleagues. Cross (2001) examined 210 finalists for the Hesburgh Award for exceptional faculty professional development programs. She identified "leading edge" efforts to improve teaching

and found that nearly all the finalists used collaborative approaches. Allowing instructors to come together in ongoing groups for faculty professional development has a number of advantages over one-on-one training. It offers an opportunity for educators to share ideas and teaching resources and to discuss concepts, skills and problems faced in their own teaching (Burbank & Kauchak, 2003; Garet et al., 2001). By focusing on a group of instructors, the development can help sustain changes in pedagogy over time (Garet et al., 2001).

Perhaps most importantly, the consensus view seems to be that the most effective faculty professional development is that which meets the needs of the faculty (Dee & Daly, 2009b; Gillespie, 2010; Kanuka, 2010; Sorcinelli & Aitken, 1994; Sorcinelli et al., 2006). The learner, in this case the instructor, must be engaged in setting goals and objectives for the development (Dewey, 1929; Popkewitz, 1998). Brancato (2003) details five components which should be part of any faculty professional development program: 1) personal mastery with a focus on lifelong learning; 2) team learning, which can involve peer mentoring and review, team teaching, and providing feedback on videos of teaching; 3) mental models, which involves re-examining deeply held assumptions and finding new ways to approach teaching and learning; 4) shared vision, where each individual is committed to the overall learning mission of the organization because they had a hand in crafting it; and 5) systems thinking, which views educators and learners as partners in the learning environment. These components require a certain level of safety in trying out new ideas and strategies and a careful evaluation process. Faculty professional development must be flexible to meet the needs of the individual instructor.

Further evidence supporting the need for faculty driven programs is found in a study where Dee and Daly (2009b) looked at the impact of semester-long faculty professional

development seminars at seven colleges. Interviews with 51 faculty members demonstrated that the free-flowing organic nature of the program that was studied helped fulfill the instructors' needs for self-determination and agency. Instructors reported feeling empowered and eight participants reported having a "significant, transformative experience." All participants reported using a least one new pedagogical technique as a direct result of attending the seminar.

Impact of Faculty Professional Development

While the literature has reached consensus on what constitutes good faculty professional development, there is still some debate regarding its impact. Despite the concern regarding the quality of faculty professional development research, there are many studies which demonstrate its efficacy (Dall'Alba, 2005; Garet et al., 2001; Gibbs & Coffey, 2004; Kreber, 2001; Lackey, 2011; Persellin & Goodrick, 2010; Postareff, Lindblom-Ylanne, & Nevgi, 2008; Saroyan & Amundsen, 2004; Stes et al., 2010; Villar & Alegre, 2007; Whitelaw, Sears, & Campbell, 2004).

The literature on the specific impact of faculty professional development programs falls into two broad categories, outcomes or process (Amundsen & Wilson, 2012). Outcomes programs tend to focus on the particular skill or method being taught, such as computer training, while process programs focus more broadly on the process used in the faculty professional development, such as reflection, inquiry or action research methods. Process-oriented programs take a constructivist approach concentrating on individual meaning making (Dewey, 1938; Duffy & Jonassen, 1992). Many of these programs try to create a "questioning" orientation to teaching and learning, but research indicates that few include a broad view of academic realities (Amundsen & Wilson, 2012). One such process-oriented

program is SUCCEED (Southeastern University and College Coalition for Engineering Education). SUCCEED is a coalition of eight engineering schools in the Southeastern United States that received ten years of funding (Brawner, Felder, Allen, & Brent, 2002). The program included a faculty professional development team to advocate the use of pedagogy that has been shown to improve student learning. Faculty professional development efforts included workshops, teaching centers and brown-bag luncheons on teaching. Brawner et al. (2002) surveyed participating faculty members in 1997, 1999 and 2002 and found that 65% of the faculty reported moving away from lecturing towards a more learner-centered instructional pedagogy as a result of participating in the program.

Showing similar results, Gibbs and Coffey (2004) did an experimental study at 22 universities in which instructors who received training in teaching skills were compared to instructors who had not received training. Instructors in the training group participated in programs that were at least 60 hours in duration in a series of meetings spread over a period of 4 to 18 months, normally with a formal assessment. Training programs were designed for instructors near the beginning of their teaching career. Gibbs and Coffey found that the control group and the training group did not differ significantly at the beginning of the study, but one year later, instructors who had not received the training were significantly less student-focused than those who had. Further, they discovered that the training group's scores on all five scales of the Student Evaluation of Educational Quality (SEEQ) were significantly higher one year after training, while the control group's scores had not changed.

Even though a body of research shows the impact of faculty professional development on teaching and organizations, minimal research has been done on the impact of faculty professional development on instructors specifically identified as being "poor" teachers. The

reason is that few instructors wish to participate in a study where they must admit to being "poor" teachers. Hativa (2000) did one such study on two law professors who consistently received low student ratings in the area of teaching. Her study is limited in scope, but she found that some of the underlying causes of the poor teaching were the teachers' damaging thinking and beliefs regarding instruction, content coverage, and students. Examples of these damaging thoughts included the teachers' beliefs that lecturing is the only possible method of instruction, eschewing discussion, questions, or other methods; thinking they were too old to change ingrained habits; confusing adopting engaging instructional methods with lowering academic standards; and believing students should be punished for behaviors like not reading material. Not only did the instructors in the study have poor knowledge of what made teaching effective, but they also lacked specific pedagogical content knowledge (PCK).

Another way in which faculty professional development programs have a strong impact is within the area of PCK. Content knowledge and pedagogy are integrated parts of quality teaching (Shulman, 1986). The research shows that PCK is affected by how many years an instructor has taught in a particular discipline, the previous training they have had, and how the subject matter was taught to them (Åkerlind, 2005; Major & Palmer, 2006; Shulman, 1986). The research also demonstrates that participants in faculty professional development move beyond surface teaching and begin to have a deeper understanding of pedagogy and the scholarship of teaching and learning. Instructors stated that through development, pedagogy became something worthy of study and something to be closely linked with their discipline (Major & Palmer, 2006; Shulman, 1986). Researchers show that faculty professional development can have a positive impact in how instructors view their discipline, often allowing them to feel more rejuvenated by their own fields (Major & Palmer,

2006; Shulman, 1986). Finally, Gillespie (2010, p. 155) includes PCK in her valid assessment of teaching, which included: "Does the teacher have adequate and up-to-date knowledge of the subject matter, including academic and/or practical experience and efforts to improve."

All of this research points to the fact that many instructors see content knowledge as the key ingredient to teaching. Major and Palmer (2006, p. 633) found that faculty reported strong links between the subject matter and the method of teaching. Instructors often held that a particular discipline should be taught in a particular way. Belief in PCK influenced an instructor's willingness to broaden their pedagogical knowledge base. One instructor stated: "I think that was a major shift for me as a teacher . . . I began to realize something about my discipline that I never realized before and that was the complexity of it." An earlier study by Maxwell and Kazlauskas (1992) also showed that faculty members were more likely to accept pedagogical advice from people within their own field. Not only does research demonstrate that faculty professional development can improve discipline-specific teaching methods, but it can also make an impact in job satisfaction (Murray, 1999, 2001; Sorcinelli & Aitken, 1994). John Murray (2001, p. 488) posits: "The difference between revitalization and burnout may depend on the presence or absence of effective faculty professional development programs."

Not only do some faculty professional development programs provide agreed upon definitions for good teaching and further PCK, they also can create a culture of collaboration within an institution. Professional development can provide "space" for faculty reflection and collaborative inquiry (Major & Palmer, 2006; Sorcinelli, 2000). A large body of research demonstrates that instructors value the ability to collaborate with colleagues (Eib & Miller, 2006; Gillespie, 2010; Major & Palmer, 2006). The research points to an appreciation for community and a collaborative sense of purpose (Eib & Miller, 2006; Major & Palmer, 2006).

Major and Palmer (2006) found that teachers learn not only by doing and reflecting, but also by collaborating with other teachers, looking closely at students' work, and sharing what they see. Eib and Miller (2006) maintain that carefully designed faculty professional development can create a "sense of connectedness and collegiality" which they claim is "vital to continuous innovation and improvement." Likewise, Gillespie (2010) compared a faculty professional development program to a research institute where the best faculty come together for opportunities to learn and collaborate.

In fact, collaborating with other faculty is often described as one of the main benefits of being involved in professional development. The faculty professional development program at an institution plays a central role in developing a culture that values and rewards teaching (Gillespie, 2010).

Finally, research shows that faculty professional development programs have an impact both on individual instructors and on the organization as a whole. Research indicates that strong institutional support is key in getting faculty to try new things (Biggs, 2001; Gillespie, 2010; Major & Palmer, 2006; Sorcinelli & Aitken, 1994). Gillespie (2010) describes the three main functions of a faculty professional development program as: 1) individual faculty professional development, which focuses on the individual instructor, 2) instructional development, which focuses on student learning and the curriculum, and 3) organizational development, which focuses on the institution's structure and leadership. Gillespie (2010) posits that these three areas often overlap. She further recommends that to implement organizational change, the faculty professional development program needs to be strategically placed at the center of the organizational structure.

Despite this overlap, Biggs (2001, p. 227) states that many faculty professional development programs focus only on individual teachers, not on teaching within the entire institution. “Staff development should focus on teaching within the whole institution, not on those individuals who present themselves at voluntary workshops, who are usually the good teachers anyway.” Too often, faculty professional development is seen as providing “tips” for teachers or as "remedial clinics for poor or beginning teachers." Biggs posits that often the work of faculty professional development focuses on training in information technology as if that was all a teacher needs to be effective. He goes on to say that faculty professional development programs should have a formal relationship with every teaching department so that the curriculum can be designed with an understanding of teaching and learning theory.

While the field may still be debating the amount of impact faculty professional development has on teaching practice, there is growing evidence that it does have positive impact. Next, I will examine the research that shows how faculty perceptions of faculty professional development may affect its impact.

Perceptions of faculty professional development in higher education.

The research seems to indicate that faculty professional development does have an impact, but the level of impact somewhat depends upon the perception that instructors hold. Do they perceive a need for faculty professional development? Do they perceive that faculty professional development can help them improve their teaching? An examination of the research on the perceptions of faculty professional development demonstrates that for many instructors, faculty professional development is not a clearly defined concept. Steinert et al. (2009) found that clinical practitioner faculty at a teaching hospital defined faculty professional development in the broadest possible terms which included both career and

personal development. This lack of clarity is found throughout the literature. In their literature review, Cox and Mayorga (2011) identified a wide range of definitions of faculty professional development including any activity designed to improve teaching, student learning, scholarship, or professionalism. It is not surprising that many instructors hold differing perceptions on what is meant by faculty professional development.

Despite this seeming confusion, research done on perceptions regarding faculty professional development, however it is defined, shows that instructors want more of it (Behar-Horenstein, Schneider-Mitchell, & Graff, 2008; Puri, Graves, Lowenstein, & Hsu, 2012; Steinert et al., 2009, 2010). In a study focused on small colleges, Puri et al. (2012) found that even experienced instructors wanted more comprehensive faculty professional development programs related to their needs. The faculty expressed a desire for orientation and ongoing workshops that provided resources to improve teaching. Faculty complained that the new faculty orientation focused only on human resources issues and did not include teaching and learning. Steinert (2009) similarly found that a lack of attendance at faculty professional development programs did not indicate a lack of interest.

There are many professionals who concede the need for faculty professional development (Biggs, 2001; Brawner et al., 2002; Buczynski & Hansen, 2010; Gillespie, 2010; Sorcinelli, 2000; Sorcinelli & Aitken, 1994; Steinert et al., 2009, 2010). In the same study mentioned above, Sorcinelli (2006) found that changing roles and responsibilities required instructors to engage in ongoing faculty professional development. The study also identified three challenges and forces for change: 1) the changing professoriate, 2) the changing demographics of the students, and 3) the changing nature of teaching, learning, and

scholarship. Potthoff (2001) also cited changing student demographics as a key reason for the need for faculty professional development.

Instructors participating in faculty professional development programs frequently perceive them as beneficial (Biggs, 2001; Brawner et al., 2002; B. Cox et al., 2011; Feldman & Paulsen, 1999; Garet et al., 2001; Gibbs & Coffey, 2004; Kreber, 2001; Penuel, Fishman, Yamaguchi, & Gallagher, 2007; Persellin & Goodrick, 2010; Postareff et al., 2008; Rust, 1998; Stes et al., 2010). Leh (2005) studied a technology training program wherein participants received both group training and individual training. Following the training, faculty members reported an improvement between student/teacher relationships in the area of communication, improved instructional skills, and improvement in technology skills.

Even though participants in faculty professional development programs see them as beneficial, the programs are often seen as being a series of unrelated activities. While studying the Eisenhower Professional Development Program, a federal program that supports K-12 teacher development, Garet (2001) found that faculty professional development that is perceived as a coherent part of a wider program of learning is more likely to be effective in improving teachers' knowledge and skills.

The research on perceptions of faculty professional development seems to clearly indicate that there are instructors who want to improve their teaching and see faculty professional development as beneficial. For example, McLoughlin and Samuels (2002) found that higher education faculty welcomed faculty professional development to become a better teacher, curriculum designer, and to better understand students and student learning.

Faculty professional development for online teaching.

Understanding the motivations for faculty to attend faculty professional development is particularly important when dealing with online instructors. When addressing the needs of online faculty, an entirely new set of issues emerge. Not only is the vocabulary of online learning constantly shifting and adapting to new technologies, but researchers disagree on the best ways to accomplish faculty professional development for online educators (Reilly et al., 2012). While much faculty professional development in this area has centered on technical skills, some researchers urge a focus on pedagogy and skills in the affective domain (Reilly et al., 2012; Wilson & Stacey, 2004). Wilson and Stacey (2004) identified a need for framing online education as one of many new teaching methods, emphasizing innovation, and incorporating online development with faculty professional development generally.

Research also suggests that online instructors can benefit from training and faculty professional development to help them make the transition to online courses (J. L. Lee & Hirumi, 2004). According to Moskal et al. (2006, p. 28), "The question is no longer whether online education is as good as face-to-face instruction, but rather how to prepare and support faculty in the online environment and ensure that students achieve important learning outcomes whether they study in online or face-to-face settings or both."

The most common method of faculty professional development is a short workshop (Bangert, 2004; Graham et al., 2001; Lawless & Pellegrino, 2007). However, researchers generally agree that short-term workshops without follow up are not effective in improving online pedagogy. Lawless and Pellegrino (2007) found that short-term programs often include as little as one hour to one day of development in a year. They found that only 9 of the 21

studies they reviewed used any explicit method for evaluating the changes in teacher skills following short-term programs.

In addition to short-term workshops, a variety of other methods of accomplishing online faculty professional development have been researched, including ongoing programs, F2F programs, blended learning, and fully online programs (Coppola et al., 2002; J. A. Gaytan & McEwen, 2010; Hixon, Barczyk, Buckenmeyer, & Feldman, 2011; Reilly et al., 2012; Shea, Pickett, & Li, 2005; Terantino & Agbehonou, 2012; Wilson & Stacey, 2004).

Since online faculty professional development saves both time and money, adoption at many institutions is likely. One key study conducted by Reilly et al. (2012) was a year-long, multi-campus online learning community of practice with nursing students at the University of Wisconsin. Participants attended six monthly video conferences conducted by expert guest speakers who focused on integrating new technologies into online courses. Training included technologies such as Twitter, Skype, Adobe Connect, Polleverywhere.com, and Prezi. The program culminated with a two-day e-learning conference where best practices were showcased. The program included discussion boards, PowerPoint presentations, and online resources. Self-reflection was a primary tool for encouraging a paradigm shift in new faculty.

Using another approach, Terantino and Agbehonou (2012) studied a faculty professional development course at a large, southeastern university which blended both face to face (F2F) sessions with online sessions. They compared two iterations of a 12-week course, which included eight F2F sessions and four online sessions. The training course focused on increasing technology skills with topics such as creating a web page, wiki or blog, using streaming media and interactive course content, and designing banners and buttons. The courses trained faculty both to design and deliver online classes and select appropriate

software to increase student engagement. At the culmination of the training course, participants designed and presented online courses that were required to pass a quality review before they could be offered to students. Over a period of two years, a questionnaire was given to faculty completing the course with an impressive 96% return rate excluding faculty who did not complete the course. The research found that 94% of the participants reported that the course provided useful information, incorporated effective online components, and integrated the learning management system effectively.

Finding similar results, Fisher, et al. (2010) specifically studied differences between faculty professional development conducted online or F2F. Participants were randomly assigned to either a F2F or online workshop. No significant differences were found in posttest scores between the two groups. When evaluating the performance of teachers in their classrooms, the mean after-training score of the F2F group was 75.20% and the online was 88.51%. The researchers also tested students of the teachers who attended the development workshops. The students of teachers who attended the F2F workshop scored 62% correct answers while the students of the teachers who attended online workshops received 67.75%. Singer (2008) found similar results in a study of a five-week course conducted over three semesters. Based on 113 faculty surveys, they found that teachers who had previously taken F2F training stated a strong preference for the online format. Teachers surveyed further agreed that the online development courses increased levels of comfort using technology and allowed them to reinforce and apply their learning through online discussions with colleagues. They further stated they would continue to enroll in online development courses.

Researchers generally agree that an online format for faculty professional development allows participants to walk in the shoes of their online students (Reilly et al.,

2012; Terantino & Agbehonou, 2012). By establishing a learner-centered approach, the developers encourage instructors to use a similar approach in their own teaching. Terantino and Agbehonou (2012) state that the goal is to train faculty members to apply andragogy theory which focuses on engaging independent and self-directed learners.

Competencies for teaching online.

While some researchers study specific methods of conducting online faculty professional development, others focus on faculty competencies identified for teaching online (Bangert, 2004; Coppola et al., 2002; Graham et al., 2001; Leh, 2005; Shea et al., 2005; Terantino & Agbehonou, 2012). Unlike other researchers, Wilson and Stacey (2004) focused on instructor predisposition for online teaching. They framed instructor readiness using Rogers' theory of adoption of technology. Rogers' theory suggests that people are inherently predisposed to either adopt or reject new technology. While Roger states that 13.5% of the population are early adopters who see new technology as fun and challenging, the majority (68%) fall into a category who tend to only adopt proven technologies and methods. Wilson and Stacey state that most instructors are pragmatic, conservative and averse to risk.

The majority of the researchers, however, agree on specific competencies that can be taught for teaching online. Five competencies were most frequently addressed in the literature.

First, the most common theme in this research is constructivist learning (Bangert, 2004, 2006; Coppola et al., 2002; J. A. Gaytan & McEwen, 2010; Graham et al., 2001; Guasch et al., 2010; Leh, 2005; Shea et al., 2005; Terantino & Agbehonou, 2012). In fact, Bangert et al. (2006) note that constructivist learning is exclusively recommended as a method to design and deliver online courses. In their earlier 2004 study, Bangert et al.

reported that 97% of students indicated that the course was specifically designed so they could take responsibility for their own learning. Graham et al. (2001) similarly found that instructors were able to get students to relate learning to the real-world projects and gave effective and specific feedback on assignments. They noted that the instructors in the study underscored the importance of disciplined work, application of learning, self-pacing and scheduling. Leh (2005) echoed these findings and noted that constructivist learning theory was a good fit for online learning because students are increasingly able to access their own information sources and instructors are ceasing to be givers of information.

Second, related to constructivist learning, another competency found in the literature is creating collaborative environments (Bangert, 2006; Guasch et al., 2010; Roman, Kelsey, & Lin, 2010; Wilson & Stacey, 2004). Guasch et al. (2010) classify areas of competency including: design/planning; social function; instructive function; technological domain; and management. Based on a content analysis of 125 thematic units, they identify the competencies of structuring and consensus as the conceptual basis for collaborative learning; analysis of available technological resources; and design of collaborative activities. Bangert et al. (2006) report 83% of the students surveyed felt their instructor created activities that provided several ways for students to demonstrate competency in course concepts. They also discuss other competencies including cooperation among students, faculty interaction, active learning, and time on task.

Third, an additional competency for online teaching is utilizing technology effectively (J. A. Gaytan & McEwen, 2010; Graham et al., 2001; Guasch et al., 2010; Lawless & Pellegrino, 2007; Terantino & Agbehonou, 2012). Graham et al. (2001) specifically identify sufficient ability to assess technology as a key competency. They detail the ability to manage

content, design collaborative activities and identify and consolidate knowledge as important competencies. Gaytan and McEwen (2010) survey research on methods of training for technology use. They reviewed 20 studies which all detailed programs designed to increase faculty technology use. The faculty professional development included workshops, semester-long courses conducted both online and F2F. Lawless and Pellegrino (2007) discovered that 9 of the 21 studies they reviewed focused on evaluating change in technology skill levels. They reported that participants felt more confident and comfortable using technology.

Fourth, the literature addresses the competency of designing courses which provoke meaningful discourse through problem-solving, cooperative learning activities, simulations, case studies, and discussion prompts (Bangert, 2004, 2006; Coppola et al., 2002; Guasch et al., 2010; Shea et al., 2005). For example, Bangert et al. (2004) found 79% of students identified that threaded discussions helped provoke thoughtful discourse and 92% felt it increased their interest in the subject matter of the course. Coppola et al. (2002) also reported that faculty engaged in deeper mental processing when responding to questions in online courses. Bernard (2009) found through a meta-analysis that designing interactions into online courses whether it was increased interaction with content, instructor or peers, positively affected student learning outcomes. They attributed these improved outcomes to increased cognitive engagement and meaningfulness which resulted from different kinds of interactivity. In addition, students who are more satisfied with their online instructors report higher degrees of perceived learning, and students with high overall social presence scores are those who are satisfied with their instructors (J. C. Richardson & Swan, 2003).

Finally, the fifth competency discussed in the literature is facilitation (Bangert, 2004; Coppola et al., 2002; Graham et al., 2001). Instructors use a variety of tools to facilitate

learning including asynchronous conferencing, face-to-face meetings, and regular feedback (Bangert, 2004, 2006; Coppola et al., 2002). Bangert et al. (2004, p. 225) showed that 96% of the students felt instructor feedback was both timely and supportive. One student commented: "I was impressed with his prompt responses to my questions. I felt like he understood the difficulties I was having because I was new to WebCT and he was very patient and available for help" (Bangert, 2004, p. 225). Likewise, Graham et al. (2001) report that instructors were good about giving information and feedback, monitoring group bulletin boards, and publically calling attention to excellence.

In Coppola et al., (2002) faculty found that relationships with their online students were more intimate than those with students they teach face-to-face. They further noted that teaching online required more attention to detail and student monitoring. Graham et al. (2001) also reported that instructors found ways to strengthen student relationships and build trust.

Motivations for attending faculty professional development.

The perceptions instructors hold are directly related to how motivated they are to attend faculty professional development programs. Even if instructors perceive a need and perceive that faculty professional development can improve their teaching, there is still the question of whether or not they will be motivated to attend. Studying motivation is complex because there are many intrinsic and extrinsic influences to consider and individuals are clearly motivated by different things.

According to Akerlind (2005), most academics reported a greater affiliation to their field than their institution and were more committed to research than teaching as they perceived research being of primary importance in issues of promotion and tenure; therefore, instructors were motivated to engage in faculty professional development primarily as a form

of scholarship in their field. Motivations to participate in faculty professional development were mostly intrinsic. In fact, they stated the most important factor in job satisfaction was the opportunity to pursue their own academic interests.

Many of the stated obstacles to attending faculty professional development programs are practical in nature. Through focus groups, Steinert (2009, p. 46, 2010) found that the most frequently cited reason instructors did not attend faculty professional development was not having the time. Faculty also related that logistics, such as location and timing of the faculty professional development, was a factor. Another reason given was that faculty perceived that teaching was undervalued at their institution. One instructor asked, "If you're trying to be a better teacher and you're not remunerated or recognised, (*sic)* what's the point of going to these workshops to become a better teacher?"

Only a few researchers have examined the motivations instructors have to attend faculty professional development programs; however, the consensus view seems to be that intrinsic motivators include: a perception that teaching is valued and supported at the institution (Feldman & Paulsen, 1999; Gillespie, 2010; Hardré, 2012; Steinert et al., 2009, 2010; D. L. Wallin, 2007); a desire for professional growth (Steinert et al., 2010; Wlodkowski, 2003); an opportunity to get together with colleagues (Austin & Sorcinelli, 2013; Feldman & Paulsen, 1999; Sloan, 1989; Steinert et al., 2010; Wlodkowski, 2003); a perception of relevance or the fulfillment of utilitarian needs (Hardré, 2012; Serow, Brawner, & Demery, 1999; Steinert et al., 2010; Wlodkowski, 2003); and a sense of self-efficacy (Kenneth E. Eble & McKeachie, 1985; Gillespie, 2010; Sloan, 1989; D. C. Wallin, 2010; Wlodkowski, 2003).

The available evidence seems to suggest, with a few exceptions, that extrinsic motivators are not effective in motivating instructors to attend faculty professional development programs. In fact, extrinsic incentives can actually function as de-motivators because they can be seen as pressure and cause resentment (Hardré, 2012; Pink, 2012; Sloan, 1989; D. C. Wallin, 2010). At best, external motivators produce only short-term compliance. If instructors feel that faculty professional development is mandatory, they will actively resist the content presented (Hardré, 2012). Despite this lack of effectiveness, frequently extrinsic motivators are used in the form of grants, release time, merit pay, and consideration in promotion and tenure decisions. Even though most incentives are not generally motivational, in a study of a National Science Foundation funded program to improve teaching in engineering, Serow (1999) found that grant money was a motivator, but only for part-time faculty who relied on the funds to increase their annual income.

A key motivator is the perception that teaching is valued and professional development is supported at the highest levels of the institution (Hardré, 2012). While researching 55 community college faculty members, Hardré (2012) found that a lack of institutional investment in faculty professional development created a perception of lack of utility for professional development. If instructors saw that the organization did not invest in professional development, they believed that it was not useful in improving their teaching.

The next motivator discussed in the literature is that of relevance or utility (Hardré, 2012; Steinert et al., 2010; Wlodkowski, 2003). Not surprisingly, if instructors see the relevance of the topic of the faculty professional development program, they are more motivated to attend. Some instructors are motivated to seek out faculty professional development because they want or need to keep up-to-date with specific types of skills, such

as teaching with technology (Serow et al., 1999). Most instructors want faculty professional development that is directed to their own fields; however, they frequently feel that the programs are focused more on institutional goals than on their personal teaching goals (Hardré, 2012). This supports the idea of using PCK as a key component of a program to meet the needs of instructors.

Another key intrinsic motivator that comes up regularly in the research is the opportunity to network, collaborate or talk about teaching with colleagues (Feldman & Paulsen, 1999; Froh, Menges, & Walker, 1993). While interviewing 88 faculty members at research institutions, Froh, Menges and Walker (1993) concluded that an important characteristic of intrinsic motivation is the opportunity to talk about teaching, and Austin (1991) identified three major benefits for instructors resulting from faculty collaboration: increased intellectual stimulation, improvement in teaching skills, and reduced feelings of isolation associated with teaching. It is interesting to note that not only is collaboration considered good practice, as discussed in the previous section, but at the same time, it is a key motivator for attending faculty professional development.

Finally, some research suggests that the most important of the intrinsic motivators for attending faculty professional development is a sense of self-efficacy or ownership of the process (Eble & McKeachie, 1985; Gillespie, 2010; Sloan, 1989; D. C. Wallin, 2010; Wlodkowski, 2003). It is no secret that education takes place when the learner is motivated to acquire the knowledge. For any adult learning to be effective, it must be voluntary. Adler (1952, p. 65) explains, ‘‘You cannot compel adults to undergo a course of study or a process of learning because, if you have to compel them, that means they are not adults.’’ In a case study of ten liberal arts colleges, Seldin (1990) demonstrated that active involvement from

faculty in creating a faculty professional development program was a characteristic shared by exemplary colleges. Additionally, the more successful programs from the colleges participating in the Bush Foundation Faculty Development Project, which has given over $70 million to fund faculty professional development programs in higher education, were those that had a sense of faculty ownership (Kenneth E. Eble & McKeachie, 1985).

Use of Evaluation to Improve Teaching

Once a faculty professional development program has addressed the motivation issue, it must next look at what areas of teaching need to be improved either for an individual instructor or throughout the institution. In order for teaching to improve over the long term, some method of evaluation is needed. There is evidence to support the idea that institutions that value teaching also have rigorous and ongoing evaluation of teaching which includes readily available feedback, peer evaluation, student evaluation and self-evaluation (Feldman & Paulsen, 1999). Interviews with 350 instructors on 15 campuses showed that organizations that value teaching also value rigorous peer and student evaluation of teaching and that they connect evaluation with decisions on promotion (Massy & Wilger, 1994). For evaluation instruments to be useful for improving teaching, however, there needs to be more than a collection of data. There also needs to be a system in place for the interpretation of and response to that data.

Often, formative evaluation intended to improve teaching is coupled with summative evaluation used for personnel decisions. The most common method by far of assessing teaching is the use of student evaluations of teaching (SETs). In a study of 155 administrators tasked with evaluating part-time instructors, 87% of the respondents relied on SETs for evaluating the adjunct faculty (Langen, 2011). Interestingly, when asked to rate the accuracy

of evaluation methods, SETs were rated below class observations but were still the most frequently used method for both formative and summative evaluations. SETs generally serve three purposes: 1) formative feedback to improve teaching; 2) summative information used in personnel decisions; and 3) collecting evidence for research or accreditation purposes (Nasser & Fresko, 2002; Spooren, Brockx, & Mortelmans, 2013).

Unfortunately, the literature shows no consensus on the validity of SETs. Teaching involves a range of behaviors that are often invisible to the student and since student course evaluations only focus on the narrow range of teaching that is observable, it has been argued that SETs are incapable of capturing a true evaluation of teaching (Saroyan & Amundsen, 2004). One issue that has been raised is the difference in the ways students and teachers perceive effective teaching (Spooren et al., 2013). This difference in perception can be profound in an online course where students have never met the instructor face-to-face.

Interpretation of SETs is a complicated matter, and there is a chance of inappropriate use by both administrators and instructors. The inherent risk is shifting the focus to improving SET scores rather than improving teaching or student learning (Spooren et al., 2013). Additionally, instructors who do not trust the validity of SETs may simply ignore the results and continue to persist with ineffective teaching practices (Spooren et al., 2013).

SETs as formative evaluation are only as useful as the instructor's willingness to use and respond to them (Ballantyne, Borthwick, & Packer, 2000; Spooren et al., 2013). Some researchers have found that SETs can actually be de-motivators as instructors may focus on minor concerns (like redesigning a PowerPoint slide) or experience withdrawal from any commitment to improving teaching practice (Spooren et al., 2013). In a survey of 101 instructors at a teacher's college, Nasser and Fresko (2002) determined that instructors saw

little value in SETs for the improvement of teaching. Likewise, in a study of four years of SETs, Kember (2002) found no evidence that the use of the SET made any contribution to improving teaching, at least from the students' perspectives.

Although some researchers argue that even though the primary method of evaluating teaching in higher education is through student evaluations, the link between evaluation and teaching improvement is not strong (Saroyan & Amundsen, 2004). SETs are more effective when used in tandem with consultation from a teaching specialist (Penny & Coe, 2004; Spooren et al., 2013). In a meta-analysis of the effectiveness of consultation, Penny and Coe (2004) identified strategies for providing feedback which included use of high quality feedback, active involvement from the instructor, use of multiple sources of information and setting of improvement goals.

Evaluation of online pedagogy.

Questions have been raised about the quality of online learning for many years, but the research on the evaluation of online courses is fairly sparse. Most of the research on evaluation of online courses is in the area of student evaluations using such tools as The Student Evaluation of Online Teaching Effectiveness (SEOTE).

While there has been some research on creating rubrics for course evaluation, many of these focus on content and curriculum design with only minimal attention paid to pedagogy. For example, Hathorn (2010) created an evaluation instrument and surveyed 176 students and 109 faculty members at a large undergraduate college with a robust online program; however, the survey included no questions related to online pedagogy. Oliver (2003) detailed a rubric used in the UK with one section on improvement in teaching processes which includes only three quality indicators: 1) teachers will demonstrate reflexivity in their approach to teaching;

2) teachers will share their successes with peers and associates through appropriate communication channels; and 3) teachers sharing their knowledge, experience and expertise of teaching and learning with their colleagues through such activities as seminars, forums, faculty professional development and publications etc. Specific strategies in pedagogy are not included. Anderson et al. (2001) presented a tool for assessing teacher presence in online courses that use computer conferencing; however, only two online teachers were evaluated in the study.

Additionally, some evaluation instruments have come from outside sources. For example, Blackboard, a leading learning management system provider, has its Exemplary Course Program Rubric, and the Online Learning Consortium has a quality scorecard product. These tools focus primarily on course and curriculum design and provide only minimal attention to pedagogy.

There is also a small body of research on the evaluation of online faculty professional development programs themselves. While researchers uncover increased satisfaction with online teaching following faculty professional development programs, the primary purpose of development lies elsewhere. What forms of evidence indicate success in online faculty professional development? Common methods of evaluation include pretest/posttest, self-assessment, student evaluation surveys, and performance ratings (Bangert, 2006; J. A. Gaytan & McEwen, 2010; Reilly et al., 2012). Gaytan and McEwen (2010) report that 65% of those researched used questionnaires, 20% used pre/post testing, and 15% used case studies. Reilly et al. (2012) report that indicators include enrollment, student satisfaction, and faculty willingness to continue teaching online. According to Reilly et al., 93% of faculty reported enhanced understanding of e-learning while 95% said they enhanced their ability to evaluate

design and delivery methods, and others described enhancements they had made to their own online courses as well as expressing intentions to redesign future courses to reflect the best practices they had learned.

By the same token, Bangert (2006) evaluated faculty professional development using the metric of student satisfaction. He surveyed 817 students using the Student Evaluation of Online Effectiveness (SEOTE), a tool specifically designed for evaluating online teaching. Bangert surveyed students enrolled in WebCT courses at a mid-sized university, including 807 enrolled in fully online courses. A 68% majority of the students were undergraduates, 32% were graduate students, and 96% were enrolled in education programs. Researchers elicited responses using a six-point Likert scale and open-ended questions administered through the WebCT system. A large majority of students surveyed (88%) indicated that the instructor was accessible, communicated effectively in the online environment (92%) and used personalized interactions to enhance learning (96%). Students reported that instructor feedback was timely and supportive (96%), that the instructor motivated them to do their best (88%), and that the course was well organized and facilitated effectively (92%).

In contrast, few researchers use improved student learning outcomes as an evaluation method. However, Fisher et al. (2010) used an ANCOVA analysis to determine both instructor and student outcomes following an online faculty professional development program. They found that knowledge scores earned by participants in the online program grew from 0%-11% before the training to 47%-92% after the training. In addition to increased learning outcomes, like Bangert (2006), they also found significant increases in student satisfaction scores.

Even though the research on evaluation of the faculty professional development programs themselves is interesting, there remains a need for more study on the evaluation of the teaching in online courses beyond a small footnote to an evaluation method that focuses on the course and curriculum design.

Summary

Researchers agree on one key issue: more research is needed in the field of faculty professional development for online educators (Amundsen & Wilson, 2012; Lawless & Pellegrino, 2007; Steinert et al., 2012; Stes et al., 2010). Researchers have called for more data on the effects of faculty professional development on student learning (J. A. Gaytan & McEwen, 2010), for more resources allocated for faculty professional development and the same kind of technical support for faculty that is given to students (Shea et al., 2005), and for better instruments for evaluation (Bangert, 2004; Dede, Ketelhut, Whitehouse, Breit, & McCloskey, 2009). Dede et al. (2009) determined that evidence on outcomes from development is often lacking or anecdotal. They further raise the issue that most surveys used for analysis are given immediately after the participants complete the development which leads to limited data on the long-range implications of such programs.

The methods for evaluating online faculty professional development vary. Researchers recommend planning for evaluation in the design process and point out that a review of the literature on faculty professional development assessment demonstrates that few met best practices standards (J. A. Gaytan & McEwen, 2010; Reilly et al., 2012; Shea, Fredericksen, Pickett, & Pelz, 2004). Wilson and Stacey (2004) endorse a staged approach to online faculty professional development wherein the instructor's level of readiness would be matched to the necessary development. For example, a beginning or novice instructor would benefit from

"show and tell" and exemplary models. Instructors more comfortable teaching online, however, could receive training in more complicated online skills such as dealing with more advanced technology problems, poor discussion board etiquette or lack of student participation. Wilson and Stacey (2004) recommend the use of case studies at this stage of development. Further, instructors who have achieved proficiency in teaching online can be used as role models and can be encouraged to engage in research and participate in the development program as trainers.

Researchers recommend that before hiring instructors to teach online, hiring committees should consider whether or not an individual possesses the predisposition for teaching online or adopting new technologies (Reilly et al., 2012, 2012; Shea et al., 2005; Wilson & Stacey, 2004). A small number of people claim such a predisposition for embracing new technologies. For example, Wilson and Stacey (2004) reference Rogers' theory of diffusion of innovations and note that early adopters of technology represent only 13.5% of the population.

Several researchers recommend structuring faculty professional development around the various roles of the online educator (Coppola et al., 2002; Shea et al., 2004). For example, Wilson and Stacey (2004) recommend using the competency frameworks that can be found in the literature such as facilitator, course designer, and technological expert as a basis for online development. Likewise, Gaytan and McEwen (2010) propose a similar five-step process and further recommend focusing on student learning, rather than participants' satisfaction with development programs.

Other researchers address processes and recommend more opportunities for faculty members to reflect, communicate, and share ideas. They call for faculty professional

development that applies new learning to traditional courses (Amundsen & Wilson, 2012; Guasch et al., 2010; Shea et al., 2005; Wilson & Stacey, 2004). One way they suggest accomplishing this goal is through a combination of online and F2F training. Researchers recommend that coursework in teaching online be required for beginning teachers and/or for performance review. In addition, Amundsen and Wilson (2012) emphasize the value of discipline-specific faculty professional development. They report that informal learning experiences resulting from interaction with colleagues have a longer-lasting and more profound influence on teaching practice. They further stress the importance of taking into consideration the social nature of teaching when designing development initiatives.

Even though the field of faculty professional development has a history of over 100 years, there continues to be limited research on faculty professional development at the higher education level and specifically on faculty professional development for online educators. If we can understand how faculty professional development is perceived, there is a potential for changing faculty perceptions that will improve their motivation to attend faculty professional development programs. If we can create programs that meet the needs of faculty and directly relate to their discipline, we stand a better chance of improving teaching practice. If we can connect evaluation methods to ways to improve teaching, we can begin to see with more clarity what kinds of development have the greatest impact. While a great deal of faculty professional development research has been done in the K-12 environment, fewer studies have looked specifically at the needs of higher education faculty and far fewer on the needs of online faculty.

It is clear from a careful review of the literature that faculty professional development can have a positive impact on teaching and learning for an individual instructor and the

institution. We can also see what constitutes “best practice” in faculty professional development. What is not as clear is how faculty professional development is perceived by instructors, nor the best ways to motivate instructors to attend. Nor have we been able to form a distinctive link between development needs and evaluation of teaching.

With this descriptive qualitative study, we learned more about: 1) how faculty professional development was perceived by online instructors in higher education; 2) what motivated instructors to attend available faculty professional development; 3) the stated needs of online instructors for faculty professional development; and 4) what faculty members and administrators said should be included in an instrument evaluating online teaching.

Chapter Three: Methodology

If faculty professional development is to improve online teaching within an institution, instructors need to first see the value of the development and then participate in it. Will instructors be more likely to attend professional development programs that are designed to specifically meet their needs? This study addressed the following research questions:

1. What are the perceptions that online instructors have about faculty professional development?
    a. What motivates online instructors to participate in faculty professional development programs?
2. What do online instructors say are their needs for faculty professional development?
    a. What elements of faculty professional development do online instructors consider to be effective?
    b. What content do online instructors consider to be most important to include in faculty professional development?
3. According to online instructors and program administrators, what should be included in an evaluation instrument for teaching in online courses?
    a. How do online instructors say an evaluation instrument will affect their teaching of online courses?

To answer these questions, I will give a brief summary of how the research was done: the research design, data collection and analysis methods, and site and sample selection.

The Research Design

Merriam (2009a) posits that the overall purpose of qualitative research is to understand how people interpret their experiences and construct meaning. According to Creswell, (2014) qualitative research involves learning about the issue directly from participants which can provide deep and meaningful understanding of real world processes. A suitable approach for this study was a qualitative research design. Because the process through which online instructors assess the quality of their teaching and their needs and motives for seeking out faculty professional development is a complex system that cannot be reduced to simple variables, a descriptive qualitative research design allowed a more holistic perspective than a quantitative design would have provided. Since qualitative research is interested in how people construct meaning, this method was the most efficacious to describe and understand the phenomenon of online faculty perceptions, motivates and needs. Qualitative research best revealed how online instructors determine what their needs are for faculty professional development and what would make an effective evaluation instrument.

Using a qualitative method allowed me to gather evidence from knowledgeable informants and to identify the kind of faculty professional development that online instructors deemed most likely to benefit their own teaching and to interpret the meaning of what they have experienced during faculty professional development in the past. In this study, the participants also were asked to identify elements for an evaluation tool for online pedagogy. Since I asked in-depth questions regarding faculty motivations, perception and needs, a qualitative method was needed.

Only by triangulating data from a number of sources was it possible to fully understand the perceptions and motivations of online instructors regarding faculty

professional development. First, I surveyed faculty teaching online to discover what the faculty said about the efficacy of faculty professional development. After analyzing data from the survey, I conducted focus groups to discover how online educators would like to design an evaluation tool for online pedagogy. Finally, I interviewed both faculty and program administrators to explore their perceptions of faculty professional development and evaluation procedures for online teaching.

A quantitative survey method alone would not have provided the opportunity to understand how instructors interpreted their experiences with faculty professional development. However, the survey data provided an overview of how instructors perceived the value of faculty professional development and some insights into their motivation to attend. I also was able to use survey data to identify and recruit participants for the focus groups and interviews.

Study Sites

The study was conducted on two campuses of a large state university in the Western United States. The University system encompasses multiple campuses, medical centers, and academic disciplines as well as more than 200,000 students and more than 100,000 faculty and staff. In addition to thousands of degree-based courses, the University offers over 20,000 extension courses, both face-to-face and online. This study was conducted in the extension programs where there were over 600 online instructors available to participate. Western University is located in an urban center of a major city while Northern University is located in a suburban business district.

This large university system provided an ideal opportunity for a study focused on online faculty professional development because of its large number of online courses and

certificate programs. The diversity of the students participating in online education allowed a level of generalizability to the study not available at smaller institutions.

The outward appearance of the two sites differed dramatically. Western University, located in a busy, urban neighborhood has a collegial atmosphere. The administrative offices are in an old building with no air conditioning and sirens interrupt discussion regularly. The door to the offices is unlocked and visitors enter an empty lobby. Posters and decorations from science fiction classics dot the walls. The separate offices of administrators have personal flair. The front lobby has one large wall covered with a whiteboard that the staff uses to brainstorm, strategize and collaborate. The staff talk and joke freely and dress in casual attire. The entire atmosphere seems friendly and upbeat.

On the other hand, Northern University, located in a wealthy urban suburb, has a pleasant, professional atmosphere. The door to the offices is locked requiring visitors to wait to be let in. A large square office area is split into neat rows with cubicles, and uncluttered offices line the exterior walls. The offices are air-conditioned and quiet. The staff talks in low voices, whisper in the halls and common areas and dress in business attire. The overall atmosphere seems serious and professional.

Both sites are also similar in many ways. Both are located in wealthy communities; one in a large urban area, and the other in a suburban area. Both programs are self-sufficient entities that receive no public funding but are entirely financially dependent upon tuition. Western University has over 50 certificate granting programs, and Northern University has over 37 certificate granting programs. Western University offers over 4,000 courses annually while Northern University offers over 2,400 extension courses. Both programs serve students who are working adults and offer classes during evenings, weekends, and online.

The site description has been kept intentionally brief to protect the identities of the institutions.

Development staff description.

The development team at Western University is made up of three working groups. The asset development team includes the trainers who work directly with instructors to ensure a level of quality control. Mary Jennings, an administrator at Western University, explained that they do more than simple training. They work to develop the assets into quality programs. The asset development team designs, schedules and offers quarterly workshops to instructors including the new faculty orientation.

The implementation team includes the course managers who provide front line technology support and troubleshoot problems. Course managers on the implementation team help instructors prepare courses and ensure that each class component meets the expectations set forth in training. The implementation team also includes the instructional designers.

The strategic and technical design group are the production team. They work closely with instructors to develop the instructional content and course architecture within the learning management system (LMS). This role includes integrating other software systems such as Equella, which is a content management system that collects and archives all course assets such as documents, videos, audio files so they can be tracked, modified and reused. The strategic and technical design team works closely with the asset development team to ensure that training is planned into the launch of any new software integration so instructors know how to use it when it goes live.

Northern University has a similar structure. The development team focuses on course quality and training instructors in areas of pedagogy. The development team created the

quality assurance instrument and uses the instrument to evaluate every online course once per year. After the evaluation, the team provides feedback to instructors and makes recommendations for additional training when necessary. The development team also includes trainers who conduct orientations, workshops, and webinars.

The technology team deals with all the technological aspects of the course and provides technology support to instructors. The course designers work with instructors on creating course content and working with course architecture.

Professional Development Programs

Professional development at both institutions falls into two categories: 1) mandatory orientation for all new instructors, and 2) ongoing, optional professional development programs. In this section, I will outline the differences and similarities between the programs at the two institutions.

Western University has a four-week mandatory orientation program for all new instructors teaching online. The entire orientation course is conducted online and is broken into two distinct sections. The first two weeks focus on how to use the learning management system (LMS) and its various tools, while the second two weeks focus on course construction and online pedagogy. When new instructors take this orientation course, they assume the role of a student within the system; thereby, they are able to experience the system from a student's point of view. During the four week course, the new instructors construct the elements of their online course including the syllabus, lesson content, assessments, and so on. At the end of the four weeks, the new instructor has populated the course shell with key content. Mary Jennings, an administrator at Western University, described their efforts to ensure the content of the orientation course meets the needs of new online instructors, "We

work iteratively to make improvement to those trainings quarter to quarter so part of my job is to work very closely with the trainers, and hear them out when specific challenges emerge."

The mandatory orientation program at Northern University also focuses on both online pedagogy and using the various tools within the LMS. Northern University's orientation program is also done completely online. The program is self-paced, and instructors reported that it took them approximately two days to complete the course. At Northern University instructors do not build their course shell until after the orientation course has been completed. While administrators at Northern University stated that this course was mandatory before being able to teach at their institution, at least one instructor admitted that he never completed the training and said, "If I don't look at it, it doesn't matter. It's not their fault or maybe it's not my fault either, but I wasn't really able to engage in it."

In addition to the mandatory orientation, both institutions hold optional professional development opportunities throughout the year. Western University holds face-to-face all day weekend workshops where 15-25 instructors receive hands-on training on a focused topic, such as creating media for their online courses. Sessions provide opportunities for instructors to learn in small groups. Mary Jennings described one of these six-hour long workshops:

> They learn how to create image files, audio files, video files. In this particular class, we had 17 participants. It was actually a 100% attendance for that day. One person flew down from the state capitol. A couple drove down from a resort. We had four or five people that traveled great distances to be there that morning.

On the other hand, Northern University employs a virtual approach with a series of one-hour long webinars on focused topics. If instructors complete the entire series of nine workshops, they receive a certificate of completion. Both institutions provide only minimal incentives for attending optional professional development. Despite these limited extrinsic

rewards, both institutions report that they are surprised and pleased by the number of instructors who elect to attend. Kellie McCarthy, an administrator at Northern University, described the optional webinars:

> To be completely honest with you, when I first started, I didn't think we were going to have a ton of people register because it had been such a painstaking process to just get them to do the formal training with me. Everyone complained about how they don't have any time and how long it takes and blah, blah, blah.
>
> The first session we had over 50 people showed up. I was like, "Holy crap. Okay. People actually are interested. I don't know if they care, but they're interested enough to come and show up to this first session." The only incentive we did provide was, I said, "If you finish the online sessions before a certain date, I'll give you a certificate."

Data Collection Strategies

As noted above, the data collection methods that helped answer the research questions were: surveys, focus groups, and interviews. Figure 2 describes each of the research questions aligned to the data collection methods and the participants.

Research question	Data collection method	Participants
1. **What are the perceptions that online instructors have about faculty professional development?**	Survey Focus Groups	Online faculty at participating sites
1a. What motivates online instructors to participate in faculty professional development programs?	Survey Focus Groups Interviews	Online faculty at participating sites
2. **What do online instructors say are their needs for professional development?**	Survey Focus Groups Interviews	Online faculty at participating sites
2a. What elements of faculty professional development do online instructors consider to be effective?	Survey Focus Groups Interviews	Online faculty at participating sites
2b. What content do online instructors consider to be most important to include in faculty professional development?	Survey Focus Groups	Online faculty at participating sites
3. According to online instructors and administrators, what should be included in an evaluation instrument for teaching in online courses?	Interviews	Online faculty at participating sites Administrators working with online programs at participating sites
3a. How do online instructors say an evaluation instrument will affect their teaching of online courses?	Interviews	Online faculty at participating sites Administrators working with online programs at participating sites

Figure 2. Summary of Data Collection Methods.

Survey.

I surveyed online instructors at both research sites to determine their level of interest in faculty professional development, their needs for faculty professional development, the

types of content and programs they said they would be more likely to attend, and their motivations to attend faculty professional development programs. The survey was a fixed response online survey with a small number of comment boxes included (Appendix A). The survey was directed at over 300 online instructors teaching on the two campuses. A notice was sent by email to instructors teaching fully online extension courses at both institutions. The survey was administered using Qualtrics. All respondents were anonymous unless they volunteered their contact information so they could be contacted to participate in an interview or a focus group.

Interviews.

Two types of interviews were used to inform the study. Both used semi-structured interview techniques, revolving around central questions related to online teaching, training, and evaluation. Instructors teaching online were interviewed using an interview protocol (Appendix B) to provide an in-depth understanding of their experiences with online teaching and faculty professional development. One interview was conducted with each of 11 online instructors at Western University and 6 online instructors at Northern University. Interviews lasted approximately 60 minutes. Interviews were conducted either face-to-face or virtually, depending upon the availability of the instructor. Face-to-face interviews were conducted in a campus meeting room in a building distant from the extension office. Virtual interviews were conducted using either Skype or Google Hangouts, depending on the method the interviewee was most comfortable with.

To provide an overview of how instructors respond to opportunities for faculty professional development to help identify online instructors' perceptions of faculty professional development, I interviewed administrators working with online instructors using

a second interview protocol (Appendix C). Administrators were also asked to provide insights into the ways in which online teaching is evaluated. These interviews were conducted with 6 administrators at Western University and 4 administrators at Northern University. The interviews lasted approximately 60 minutes. Interviews were conducted either face-to-face or virtually, depending upon the availability of the administrator. Two administrators were interviewed a second time because more time was needed. Face-to-face interviews were conducted in either a meeting room or in the administrator's own office at the extension offices. All virtual administrator interviews were conducted via Skype. One interview was conducted entirely by phone when the Skype connection was lost.

All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. Faculty interview protocols were piloted with instructors teaching fully online at another institution of higher education, and administrative interview protocols were piloted at the same institution. Changes were made to the protocols based on the pilot, and the second version of the protocols were piloted with a group of researchers.

Focus groups.

According to Merriam (2009a), a focus group allows meaning to be socially constructed. Participants in a focus group can hear and respond to the comments of other participants. Focus groups allow the group to engage in a dialog that permits new ideas to form. I originally planned two focus groups, one for each site. A third focus group was added during the study. The focus groups were used to obtain additional insights into how faculty perceived the benefits and drawbacks of faculty professional development. Further, the focus groups explored motivations for attending faculty professional development and the content instructors said they most needed and wanted in faculty professional development programs.

Three small focus groups were conducted using the focus group protocol (Appendix D) One was conducted on the campus of Western University in a building distant from the extension office and was attended by three instructors. A second focus group was conducted at a meeting room in the extension offices of Northern University and attended by two instructors. The third focus group was conducted virtually via Google Hangouts with two instructors in attendance.

The third focus group was added when the technology failed at the Northern University office. Two members who tried to join that focus group virtually had to be rescheduled to a third focus group which was held the following day using Google Hangouts. The focus group sessions lasted approximately 90 minutes. Participants answered prompt questions and brainstormed lists of qualities and skills for online educators and topics for professional development. The virtual focus group gave their responses to the brainstorm questions verbally.

The focus groups proved to be a challenging method of data collection. Recruiting instructors to participate proved to be more difficult than recruiting interviewees. Having a fixed time and place for the focus group was a barrier for many online instructors. Ultimately, seven individuals agreed to participate in the Western University focus group and eight in the Northern University focus group. Unfortunately, several participants canceled at the last minute and several simply did not show up, so I was left with three participants in the Western University focus group and four at Northern University. At Western University, the entire focus group was only present for part of the time. Two participants arrived late, and one had to leave early.

There were also technology challenges with the focus group held at Northern University, which resulted in having only two participants in the face-to-face session and two in a separate virtual session.

Even given the small number of participants and other challenges, the data collected from these meetings was useful to the study. All focus groups were audio recorded and transcribed. Focus group protocols were piloted with graduate students who teach in higher education.

Data Analysis Methods

The data from this study was analyzed from survey data, interviews, and focus groups. Broad coding categories were generated from the research questions, and additional categories were added as new topics were discovered. Steps in the qualitative analysis included: (1) exploration of the data by reading through transcripts and writing memos; (2) coding data by categorizing and labeling transcripts; (3) verification using inter-coder agreement check; (4) coding to develop themes by aggregating like codes; and (5) connecting and interrelating themes. Credibility was increased by triangulating different sources of information, member checking, inter-coder agreement, rich and thick descriptions of the cases, reviewing and resolving disconfirming evidence, and academic advisor's auditing (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Creswell, 2012; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Survey.

Survey (Appendix A) data were analyzed from 297 respondents from Western University and 77 respondents from Northern University using two methods. First, frequencies of answers were calculated to determine a percentage for each response category for every question (Appendix E). Next, independent sample t-tests compared responses using

three criteria: 1) institution (Western University vs. Northern University); 2) online teaching experience that compared new instructors with 0-3 years of online teaching experiences and veteran instructors with four or more years of online teaching experience; and 3) teaching load that compared instructors who taught one class with instructors who taught multiple classes.

The first category of institution was selected because it offered the ability to provide insights for each site on how their instructors responded to the questions. The other two categories were selected because they offered the ability to look at factors that, based on interview data, seemed to have the greatest effect on the differences in needs instructors have for professional development. For example, one interviewee raised an issue that was incorporated into future interviews regarding how well faculty professional development served the needs of veteran instructors. Since that seemed to be an important question, the differences in survey responses between new and veteran instructors were analyzed.

Only descriptive statistical measurements such as the means, standard deviations and range of scores were deemed necessary for this study (Creswell, 2014). Results were graphed using Microsoft Excel to provide a visual description of the data and the charts are incorporated into Chapter 4. There were also a small number of comment boxes, which were coded based on categories related to perceptions, needs, motivations, and preferred elements of faculty professional development (J. A. Maxwell, 2012). Because the responses in the comment boxes were few and varied, there were no significant data.

Interviews.

Interviews were audio recorded, transcribed and coded using a three cycle coding method (J. A. Maxwell, 2012; Saldaña, 2012). Maxwell (2012) states that the primary goal of

coding in qualitative research is to "fracture" the data and arrange it into categories that facilitate meaning and comparisons. Interview data was analyzed using open coding wherein categories were developed as the data was collected and analyzed.

First the data were collected and color coded into broad organizational categories based upon the research questions, themes identified in existing research, and themes that emerged from the data. Four categories were used: 1) perceptions of faculty professional development; 2) motivations for attending faculty professional development; 3) faculty professional development needs; and 3) evaluation of online teaching methods (J. A. Maxwell, 2012; Merriam, 2009b).

In the second stage of coding, the data were further broken down into subcategories within the four main categories. Each subcategory was associated with a particular research question. The categories are identified in detail in Table 1.

Table 1

First and Second Cycle Coding Categories

Perceptions	Motivators	Needs	Evaluation
Negative Perceptions RQ1	Desire for community RQ1a	Needs analysis RQ2	Alignment of evaluation and PD RQ3
Positive perceptions RQ1	Responsibility for motivating RQ1a	Need for community RQ2 & RQ2a	Quality of evaluation RQ3
Unmet needs RQ2	Incentives RQ1a	Soft skills RQ2b	Uses of evaluation RQ3a
PD for beginning instructors RQ1	Obstacles RQ1a	Technological skills RQ2b	Elements to be assessed RQ3
Misaligned expectations		More PD RQ2	
		Effective elements RQ2a	
		Content needs RQ2b	

In the third cycle of coding, each subcategory was collected, counted and categorized to determine which areas had a majority of responses. Quotes were then collected from these categories to incorporate into findings in Chapter 4.

Sample

I selected online instructors for two reasons. One, because many online instructors have been pressed into online teaching with minimal training and preparation. Two, online instructors are frequently excluded from faculty professional development opportunities due to scheduling or other issues; therefore, the instructors who may have the most to gain from faculty professional development are the very ones whose needs are most often neglected. The sample included only instructors who teach courses which are delivered completely online through university extension programs.

The participating sample were instructors teaching a fully online course at either Western University or Northern University and administrators working with online instructors at both sites. (See Table 2

below.) Online instructors at both sites completed surveys, participated in face-to-face or virtual interviews and small focus groups. Administrators at both sites participated in either face-to-face or virtual interviews. Western University had a 59% survey response rate and Northern University had a 23% response rate.

Table 2

Sample of Participants

Participants	Western University	% Western	Northern University	% Northern	Total
Instructor Interviews	11	4%	6	7%	17
Instructor Focus Group	3	1%	4	5%	7
Instructor Survey Responses	297	59%	77	23%	374

Administrator Interviews	6	4	10

Table 3

Western University Participants Description

Pseudonym	Role	Years in online education	Online student experience
Christopher Casey	Instructor	<1	No
Shannon Morton	Instructor	<1	Yes
Patricia Adams	Instructor	<1	Yes
Melissa Perez	Instructor	2	No
Randy Moore	Instructor	2	No
Laverne Diaz	Instructor	3	Yes
Marshall Holt	Instructor	5	No
Jacqueline Sullivan	Instructor	6	No
Kyle Ingram	Instructor	6	No
Jerome Frank	Instructor	7	No
Laurie Perry	Instructor	10+	Yes
Dale Tyler	Instructor	10+	No
Bruce Swanson	Instructor	10+	No
Erica Hodges	Instructor	16	No
Bruce Owens	Administrator	3	Yes
Pete Mathis	Administrator	4	Yes
Mary Jennings	Administrator	5	Yes
Billy Peterson	Administrator	7	No
Sheri Chambers	Administrator	10	No
Eugene Patton	Administrator	19	No

Of the 14 instructors participating from Western University, only four have themselves been online students. Of the six administrators, half had been students in an online course before working in the field of online education.

Table 4

Northern University Participants Description

Name	Role	Years in online education	Online student experience
Alyssa Porter	Instructor	>1	No
Ruben Morrison	Instructor	2	Yes
Steve Cook	Instructor	2	Yes
Kristin Fuller	Instructor	3	No
Arlene Tucker	Instructor	3	No
Gary Wright	Instructor	4	Yes
Curtis Thompson	Instructor	4	No
Simon Jenkins	Instructor	6	No
Christina Reese	Instructor	6	No
Alfred Ellis	Instructor	7	No
Don Burke	Administrator	5	No
Jessie Moreno	Administrator	5	No
Samantha Watkins	Administrator	5	Yes
Kellie McCarthy	Administrator	6	No

Of the 10 instructors participating from Northern University, only three had been online students before teaching online, and of the four administrators, only one had been a student online prior to working in the field of online education.

One explanation for the difference in experience is that Western University's extension program was established a full 45 years before Northern University's extension program, although both have been in existence for over 50 years.

The survey sample included 297 instructors at Western University and 77 at Northern University. The participating sample were all instructors who taught fully online courses within extension departments both sites. Table 5

details the number of years the survey participants have taught online classes and the number of classes they teach in a typical quarter.

Table 5

Survey Participants Description

	Northern University n 87	Western University n 298
0-1 Years in online education	45	102
4+ Years in online education	42	196
Teach 1 course	63	201
Teach 2+ courses	24	97

Focus groups.

Focus group data was recorded, transcribed and coded using the same open coding methodology used for the interviews. Transcripts with the coded data were then analyzed using the same categories and methods used for the interviews. Additionally, documents on the benefits and drawbacks of faculty professional development and the preferred content for faculty professional development which were generated during the focus groups were coded using the same methodology.

Ethical Considerations

There were no major ethical concerns raised during the study. A memorandum of understanding was used at both sites to ensure all parties were given full disclosure about the research and the procedures. All participation by faculty was voluntary and individuals were free to withdraw from the study at any time. Individuals participating in both the focus groups and the interviews were asked to give oral consent and provided with a study information sheet which outlined the purpose and procedures of the study. Individuals participating in virtual interviews or focus groups were also asked to give oral consent and provided with the same study information sheet. A study information sheet was also embedded in the survey.

I used pseudonyms for all individuals throughout the study and asked that focus group participants respect the privacy of everyone involved in the study. Files that contained any sensitive data were password protected. All documents provided by participants were stripped of any identifying information. All transcripts and audio recordings were kept in a file cabinet in a locked office.

As an independent outside researcher, I was not the supervisor of any of the instructors and their jobs were not directly affected by participation in the study. Finally, no incentives were used for participating in the study.

Reliability and Validity

To ensure internal validity, I employed a variety of strategies in the study. Using triangulation of data reduced the risk of chance associations and provided a better means of ensuring reliability. Data was collected using a variety of methods including survey, instructor interviews, administrator interviews and focus groups.

The survey instrument was field tested at two separate sites. The interviews and focus groups were recorded and transcripts were checked against the recording for any errors. (J. A. Maxwell, 2012). Participants were given an opportunity to review and clarify interview transcripts through member checking. Thematic coding of focus groups and interviews was reviewed by another researcher to check for inter-rater reliability.

Since I work closely with online faculty professional development and the findings from this study may impact my own work, I openly addressed in writing any potential biases that may be reflected in my interpretation of the data.

Finally, the co-chairs of my dissertation committee served as auditors for the study.

Summary

After collecting and analyzing data from surveys, interviews, and focus groups, I have a better understanding: 1) how faculty professional development is perceived by online instructors in higher education; 2) what motivates instructors to attend available faculty professional development; 3) the stated needs of online instructors for faculty professional development; and 4) what faculty members and administrators said should be included in an instrument evaluating online teaching. A stronger understanding of how online faculty relate to faculty professional development opportunities will help inform the creation of effective faculty professional development for online instructors. Improved faculty professional development has the potential of improving the quality of teaching in online courses.

As the number of courses in university extension courses offered online continue to grow, it is incumbent upon the field to find ways to ensure that these online courses meet the needs of learners in achieving their objectives. Online pedagogy is still a relatively new field of research and much more research is needed to determine how to best achieve quality teaching in online courses.

Chapter Four

Introduction

The purpose of this research was to examine the perceptions and needs of online instructors for faculty professional development. Additionally, this study examined what online instructors and administrators who work with online instructors felt should be included in an evaluation instrument for online teaching.

During in-depth interviews and focus groups, participants talked about their experiences with faculty professional development throughout their career and their experiences at their current institution. They also shared their opinions regarding the quality and efficacy of the current methods of evaluating their online courses and discussed how evaluation and professional development are aligned within their institutions. In a 32-question survey, respondents communicated their perceptions of faculty professional development. They also identified motivations, obstacles, and the strength of their interest in attending professional development on various topics.

The research findings reported in this chapter are based on analysis of the following data sources at each of the two colleges: 1) survey data; 2) interviews with online instructors; 3) interviews with administrators who work with online instructors; and 4) focus groups with online instructors. Data were triangulated between these four methods of data collection and relevant literature.

In this chapter, I will first report on the data from the survey. Next, I will discuss findings from the interviews and focus groups in the following areas: 1) perceptions of online instructors regarding professional development; 2) motivations for online instructors to attend faculty professional development; 3) needs of online instructors for professional development;

and 4) evaluation of online teaching. These section headings align directly with the following research questions.

1. What are the perceptions that online university instructors have about faculty professional development?
    a. What motivates online instructors to participate in faculty professional development programs?
2. What do online instructors say are their needs for faculty professional development?
    a. What elements of faculty professional development do online instructors consider to be effective?
    b. What content do online instructors consider to be most important to include in faculty professional development?
3. According to online instructors and program administrators, what should be included in an evaluation instrument for teaching in online courses?
    a. How do online instructors say an evaluation instrument will affect their teaching of online courses?

Findings

In this section, I will detail the findings from the research study. First, I will give an overview of the survey responses. Then, I will identify the key findings which are supported by survey responses, interviews and focus groups. These key findings are organized into the following categories: 1) perceptions of online instructors regarding professional development, 2) motivations for online instructors to attend professional development, 3) needs of online instructors for professional development, and 4) evaluation of online teaching and the

alignment of evaluation to professional development. Even though the findings have been organized through this grouping, there are findings that inform more than one research question. For example, perceptions of professional development and motivations to attend professional development are deeply intertwined.

For the purpose of reporting these findings, the data has been clustered into two groups. Comments from participants, whether they are from interviews or focus groups form one set of data, while results from the survey form the second data set. This organizational method was selected to avoid unnecessary repetition of findings.

Survey Responses

Data were analyzed from 297 respondents from Western University and 77 respondents from Northern University in two ways. First, frequencies of answers were calculated. Next independent samples t-tests were conducted to compare responses based on three criteria: 1) institution (Northern University vs. Western University); 2) teaching load (one course vs. multiple courses), and 3) online teaching experience (new instructors with 0-3 years of online teaching experience vs. veteran instructors with 4+ years of online teaching experience). Survey responses are organized by: 1) motivation; 2) needs; and 3) evaluation.

Results of Questions Regarding Motivation for Attending Professional Development

To help determine what motivates instructors to attend professional development, respondents were asked to indicate the strength of a list of potential motivators. It is apparent from the data in Figure 4 that the top motivator was “to benefit my teaching” with 98% stating is was very important or moderately important. What is interesting in these data is the motivator deemed least important was “getting together with colleagues” with only 43% claiming it was very important or moderately important.

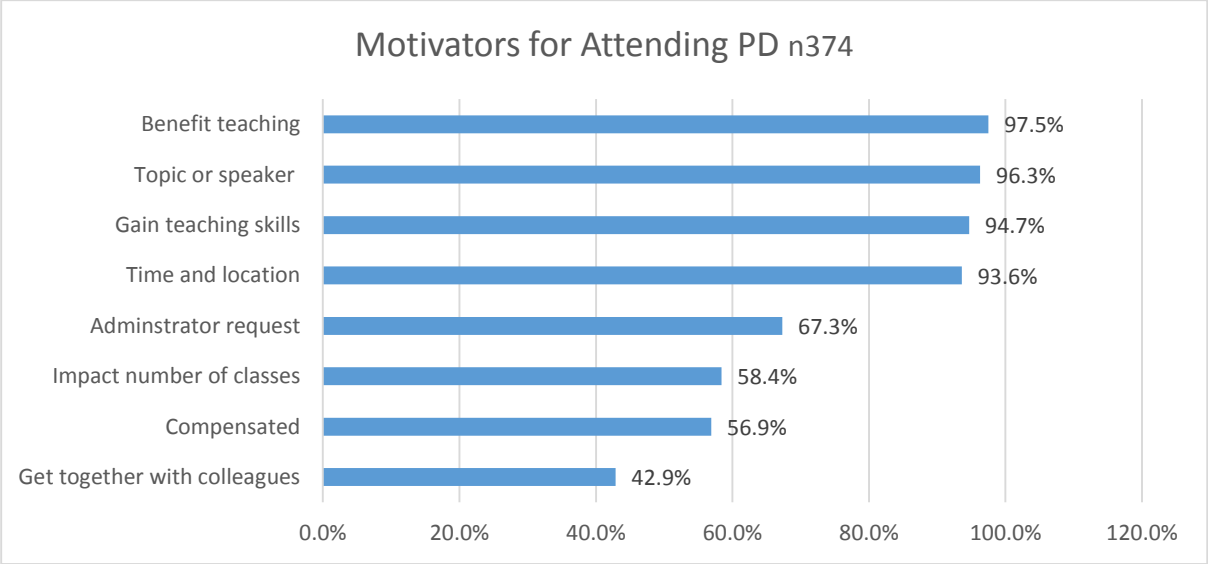


Figure 3. Motivators for attending professional development.

Figure 3 shows that four motivators were selected by over 90% of the respondents, and all motivators except one were selected by over 50% of the respondents. These data suggest that online instructors are motivated by a range of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards.

To look at the same issue from the other side, instructors were also asked what the greatest obstacles were that prevented them from attending available professional development. From the chart in Figure 4 it can be seen that the most significant obstacle for attending professional development were the two items related to time: inconvenient time and not enough time. A majority of 374 respondents (73%) claimed these were either a strong or moderate obstacle to attending. The least important obstacle was identified as not receiving compensation with only 33% of respondents claiming it a strong or moderate obstacle to attending faculty professional development.

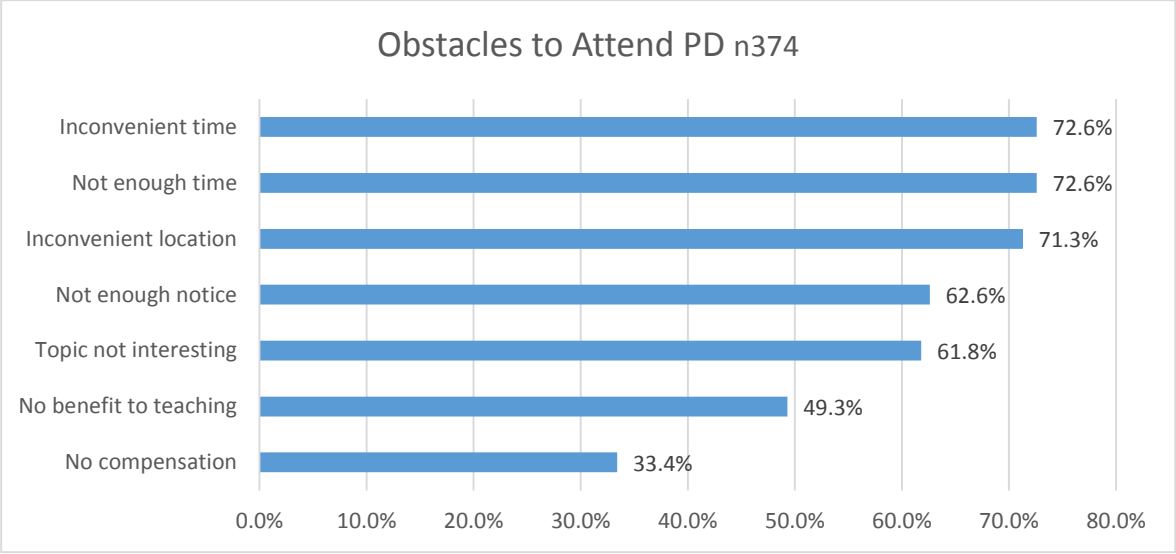


Figure 4. Obstacles to attending professional development.

Figure 4 shows that the top three obstacles to attending professional development were all extrinsic issues related to time and location. What is interesting in these data is that while 58% of 374 respondents said compensation was a motivator to attend, only 33% selected lack of compensation as an obstacle to attendance. These data seem to suggest that an extrinsic reward, like compensation, may be somewhat motivational; however, the lack of it may not present a significant obstacle. These data support the finding that extrinsic rewards, like compensation, are not as significant as intrinsic rewards in motivating instructors to attending professional development.

Next, I will discuss briefly the results of the independent samples t-tests based on institution, teaching load and years of teaching experience to determine if there were any correlations between these three factors and how instructors responded to questions. There were significant differences noted in all three categories.

First, when comparing institutions there were significant differences in both motivations and obstacles. Using independent samples t-tests, statistically significant

differences in motivators were found in the three areas: 1) getting together with colleagues; 2) administrator urging; and 3) being compensated as detailed in Table 6 in Appendix F. In all three categories data suggest that instructors at Western University are less motivated than instructors at Northern University by the opportunity to get together with colleagues, an administrator's urging, or being compensated. Another possible reason for this difference may be because Western University is located in an urban area with greater traffic and parking challenges.

There were no significant differences between the two institutions in any other area except how much of an obstacle location was with Western University (M=1.82, SD=1.094) and Northern University (M=2.29, SD=1.134) t(326)=-3.138, p=.002. This result suggests that location is a greater obstacle to attending professional development for the instructors at Western University than those at Northern University. In this case, a higher mean equals lesser obstacle. This difference may be because Northern University uses webinars for optional professional development.

Next, comparisons were done based on teaching experience. There were significant correlations in only one motivational category and one obstacle category. Results as shown in Table 7 in Appendix F suggest that new instructors may be more motivated than veteran instructors to attend professional development because they perceive it will improve their teaching skills. Additionally, new instructors see limited advance notice of pending professional development as a greater obstacle to attendance than veteran instructors. One possible explanation for these differences might be that new instructors may feel less secure in their new roles and perceive a greater need for improving their teachings skills and planning activities, such as professional development, in advance; whereas, veteran

instructors may feel more secure in both their teaching skills and their ability to adapt quickly to professional development opportunities.

Next, comparisons of responses were done by teaching load. Significant differences were seen in the way instructors responded to four questions as detailed in Table 8 in Appendix F. Results from the independent samples t-test indicate that the number of classes an instructor teaches has an effect on what motivates them to attend professional development. From the data in Figure 6, it is apparent that instructors teaching two or more classes are more motivated to attend than instructors teaching only one course if: 1) there is a benefit to their teaching; 2) the topic is of interest; 3) an administrator urged them to attend; or 4) it will impact the number of classes they are offered. In this case, the higher mean equals lesser motivation. These differences may be because instructors teaching more than one course may be more committed to teaching as a career; whereas, instructors teaching only one course may perceive teaching as a secondary activity to their main career.

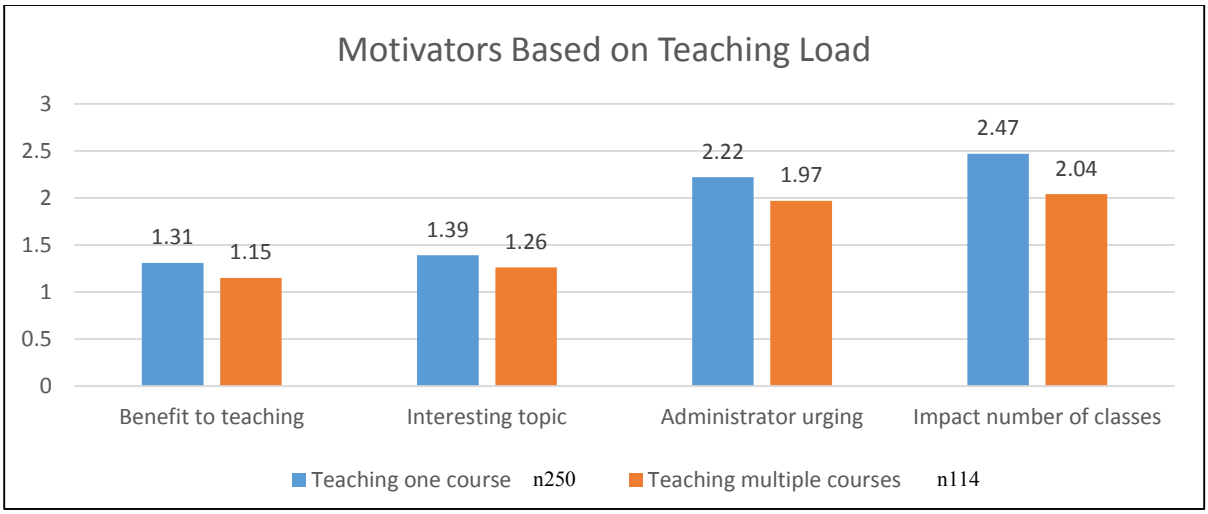


Figure 5. Comparisons on motivation based on teaching load.

Finally, a comparison of obstacles to attending professional development was done. There were no significant differences based on institution or experience, but there were differences based on teaching load. An independent samples t-test was conducted and significant differences emerged with three obstacles as detailed in Table 9 in Appendix F. Results shown in Figure 6 identify how much of an obstacle something is to preventing an instructor from attending professional development is correlated to how many courses an instructor is teaching. These data suggest that instructors teaching one course do not consider: 1) compensation; 2) advanced notice; 3) location; or 3) time as great an obstacle to attending professional development as the instructors who teach two or more classes. In this case, the higher means equals less of an obstacle.

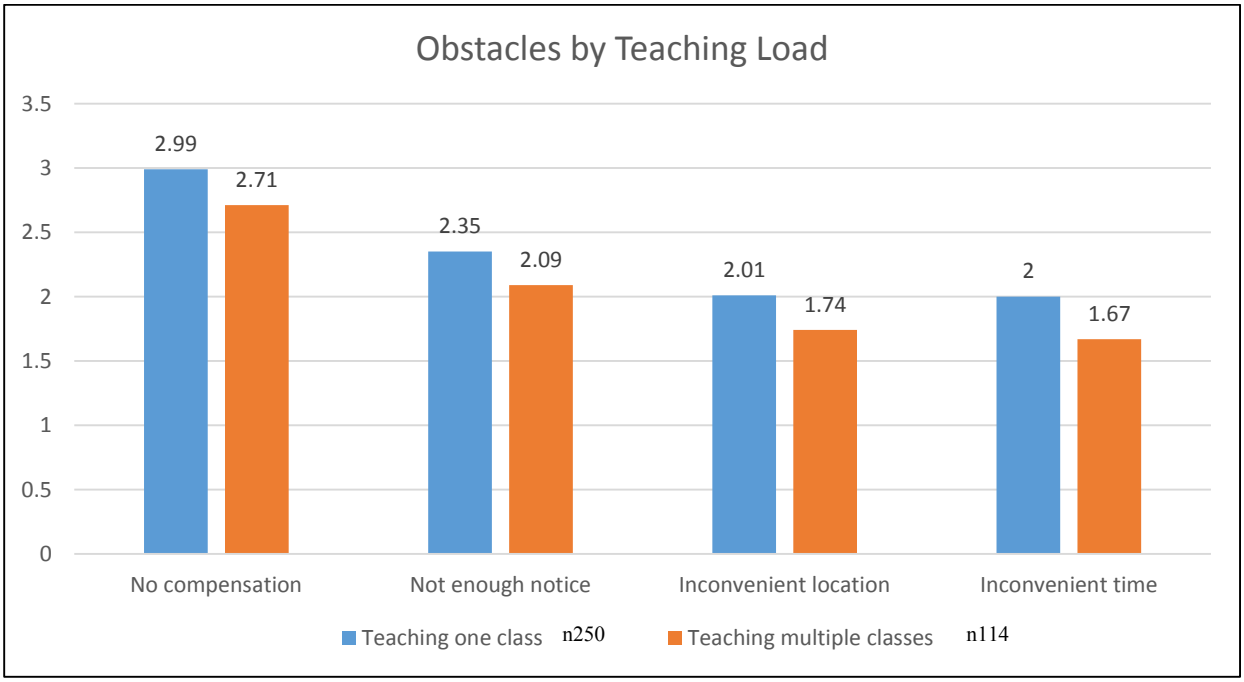


Figure 6. Comparison of obstacles by teaching load.

Results of Questions Regarding Needs for Professional Development

When looking at the needs online instructors expressed for content, the data were examined in a number of ways. First, the data were separated into two categories: 1) soft skills, such as student engagement, creating community and creating interesting discussion forums, and 2) technical skills, such as using the learning management system (LMS) tools, using tools to create synchronous teaching opportunities, and creating video and other multimedia. Next, comparisons were done based on institution, teaching load and online teaching experience using independent samples t-tests as detailed in Tables 9 and 10 in Appendix F. There were no differences associated with institution.

To help determine needs for professional development, respondents were first asked questions regarding the kinds of orientation they received before teaching online for the first time. Only 50% of the 374 survey respondents claimed to have received orientation specific to teaching online. Results from an independent samples t-test showed no significant differences in the way instructors answered these questions based on institution, teaching load or teaching experience.

Instructors were asked a series of question about the kind of content included in their orientation. From the chart in Figure 7, it can be seen that respondents identified technology training most often with 64% reporting it had been covered in their orientation. The least common content covered in orientation, according to respondents, was course management with only 30% reporting it had been covered.

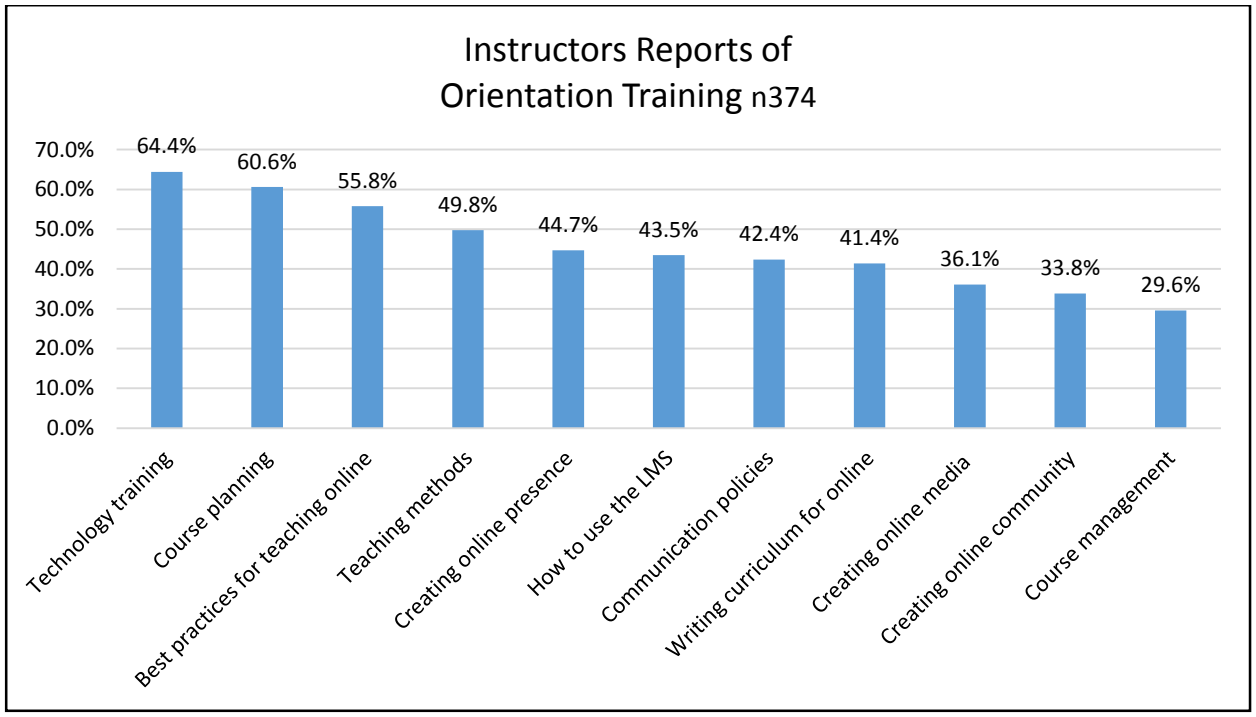


Figure 7. Instructor report of orientation content.

Respondents were asked questions about what kinds of topics they would be most interested in learning about. Participants identified engaging students as an important soft skill most often in both interviews and surveys. The data represented in Figure 8 shows a majority of instructors (87%) identified engaging students and best practices as their highest learning needs in the area of soft skills. The survey responses are supported by the discussions where instructors (16 of 24) also identified engaging students most often as a learning need.

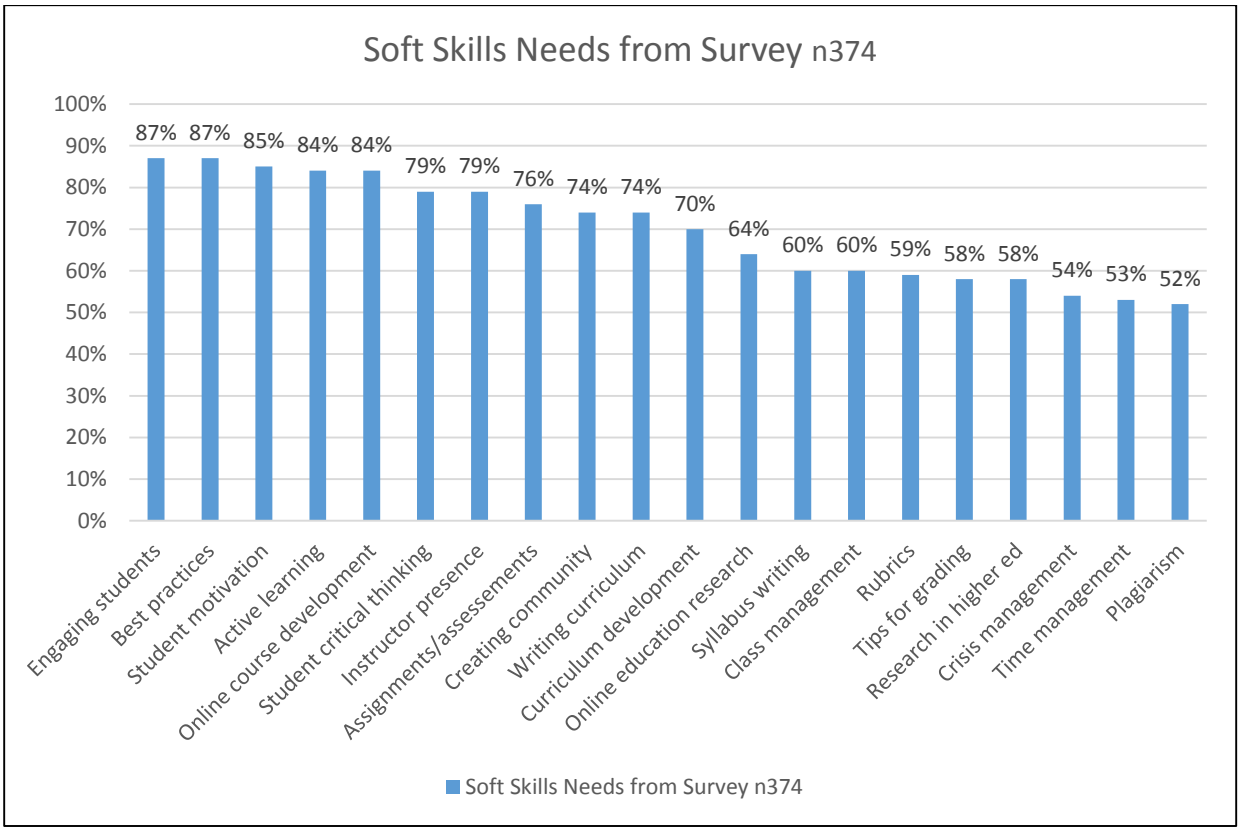


Figure 8. Soft skills content needs from survey.

When looking at technology skills in Figure 9, survey respondents identified having a strong interest or moderate interest in using technology generally (84%); creating interactive content (83%); and creating media (82%) most often. This is supported by the discussions where instructors (11 of 24) mentioned using the LMS tools as a learning need more frequently than any other technology needs. At the same time, discussions contradict this finding with only 3 of 24 instructors mentioning using technology generally as a learning need.

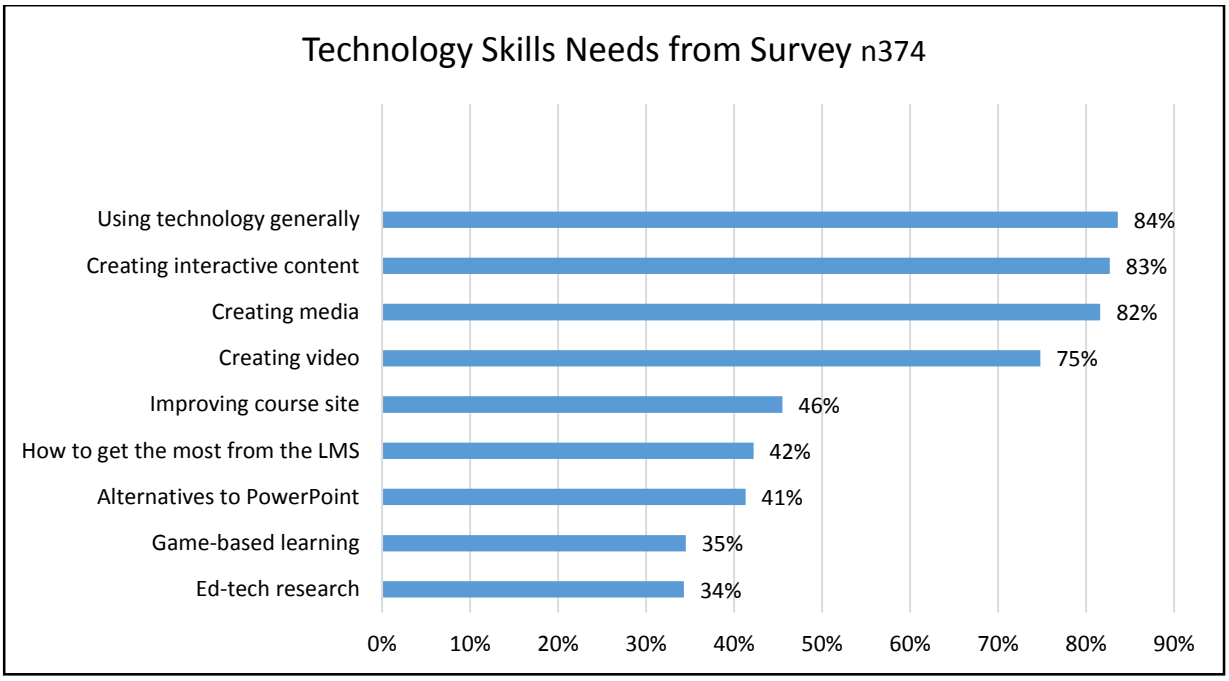


Figure 9. Technical skills content needs from survey.

Next, comparisons were done regarding the way instructors expressed their needs for professional development content in three areas: 1) institution; 2) teaching load; and 3) online teaching experience. Independent samples t-tests were run and there were no significant differences in the way instructors at the two different institutions responded to questions regarding content; however, there were significant differences related to teaching load and years of teaching experience.

Differences related to teaching load as detailed in Table 10 in Appendix F were found in three specific areas: 1) creating interactive content, 2) creating video tutorials, and 3) incorporating active learning. Instructors teaching only one class had a higher mean average in all three categories. This suggests that instructors teaching only one course have less interest in these three topics than instructors teaching two or more courses. In this case, a higher mean equal less interest. The data suggest that there is a relationship between teaching

load and the desire for professional development in these three distinctive areas. One reason for these differences might be that instructors teaching more than one course perceive more of a need for variety in teaching methods than instructors teaching only one course.

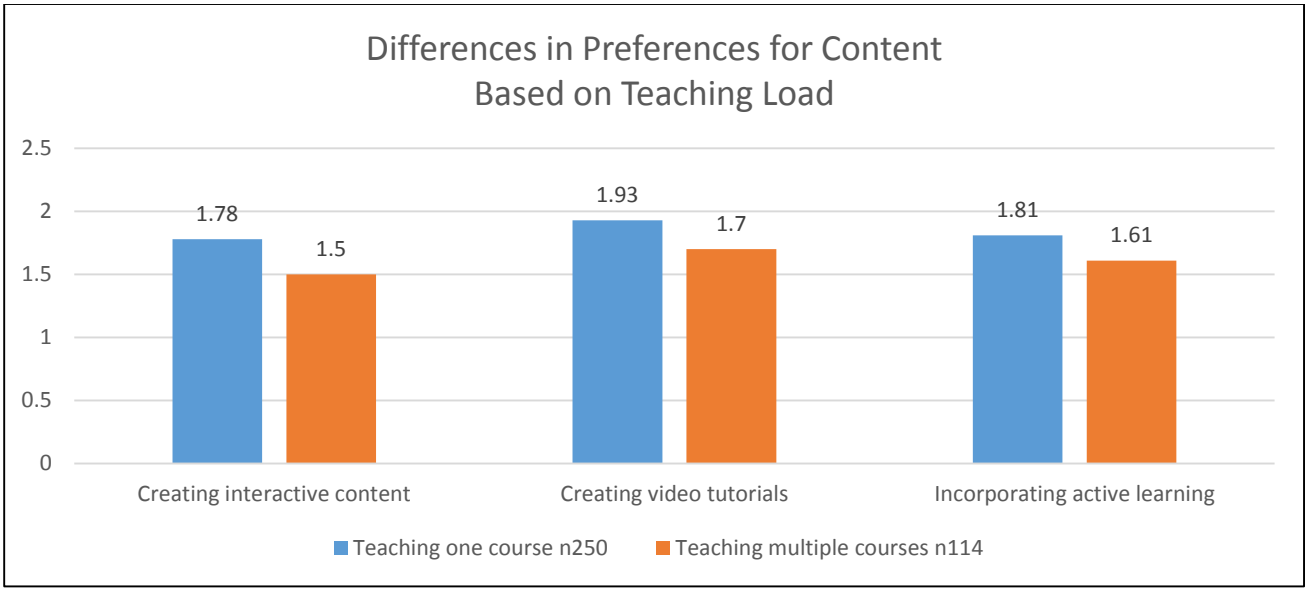


Figure 10. Comparison of content preferences based on teaching load.

Most significant differences were seen when comparing new and veteran instructors as detailed in Table 10 in Appendix F. In each of the categories shown in Figure 11, the veteran instructors had higher mean scores. These data indicate that instructors with more teaching experience have less interest in attending professional development in these topic areas. In this case higher means equals lower interest. These results seem to indicate that a preference for content is related to how long an instructor has been teaching online. One explanation for these differences may be because veteran instructors may have already been exposed to opportunities for professional development in these topic areas. This explanation is supported by findings from interviews which suggest that professional development meets the needs of new instructors more than veteran instructors.

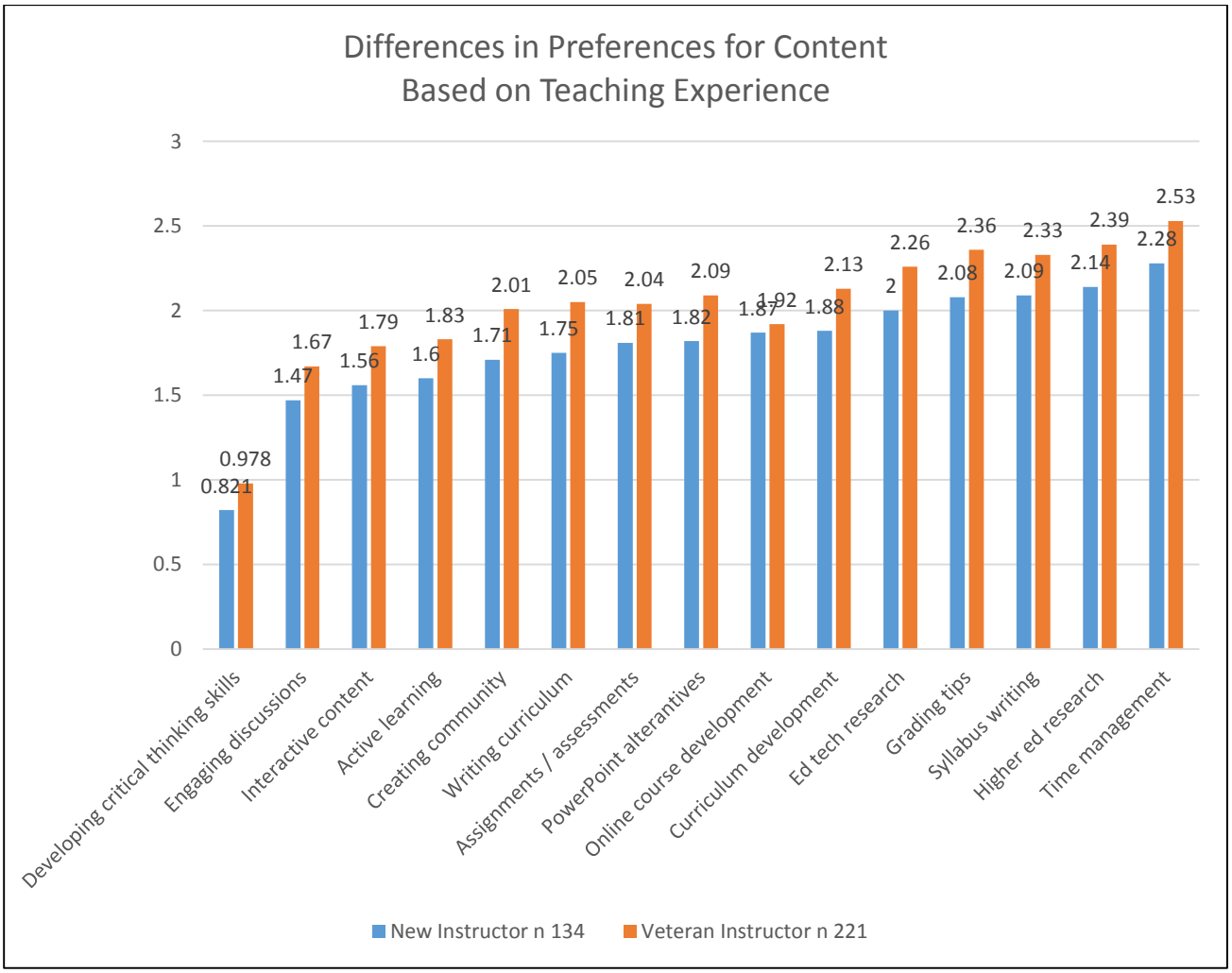


Figure 11. Comparison of content preferences based on teaching experience.

Finally, respondents were asked questions regarding what kind of elements they preferred for professional development. These elements included issues such as delivery mode (face-to-face or online), learning in a group or individually, ongoing development or one-time workshops, and so on. As Figure 12 shows, a very small majority of instructors (51% of 374) expressed a preference for online development over face-to-face (14%) with 35% expressing a preference for blended learning (some face-to-face and some online); however, in response to a question later in the survey, 88% of 374 respondents agreed or

strongly agreed that they would be more likely to attend a workshop if they could attend virtually.

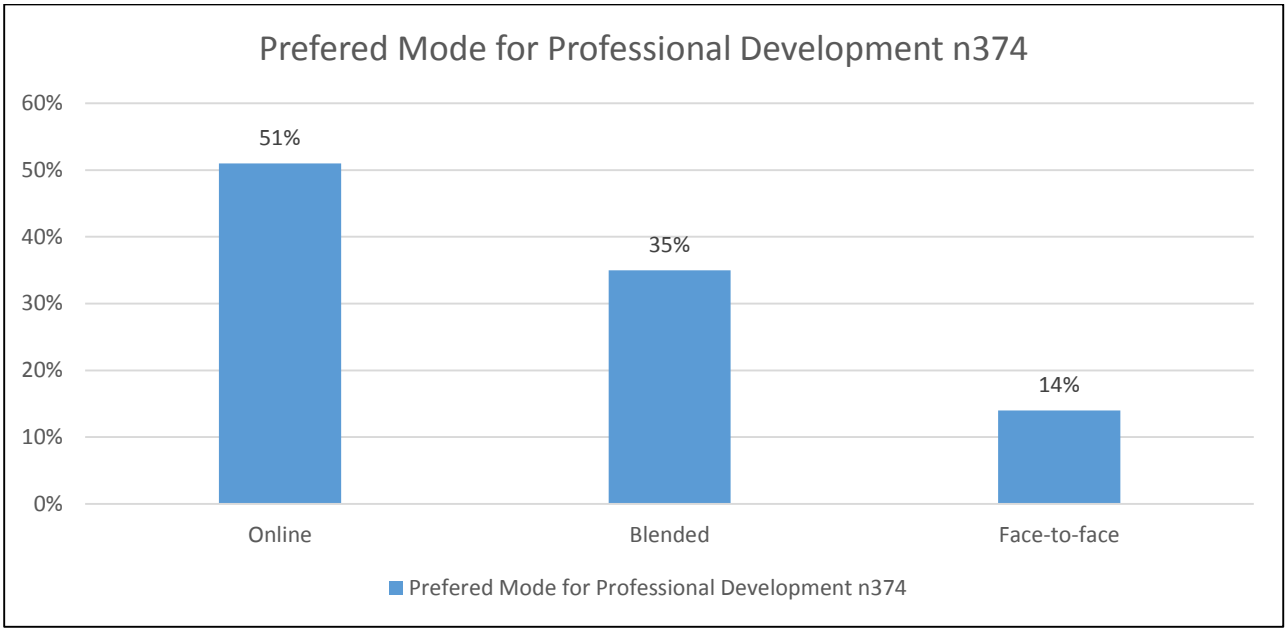


Figure 12. Preferred mode for professional development.

When asked about who they would like to learn with, Figure 13 shows that respondents identified learning with faculty teaching in the same department most often (65%). Respondents also preferred learning in a small group (51%) to learning alone (42%) or in a large group (7%).

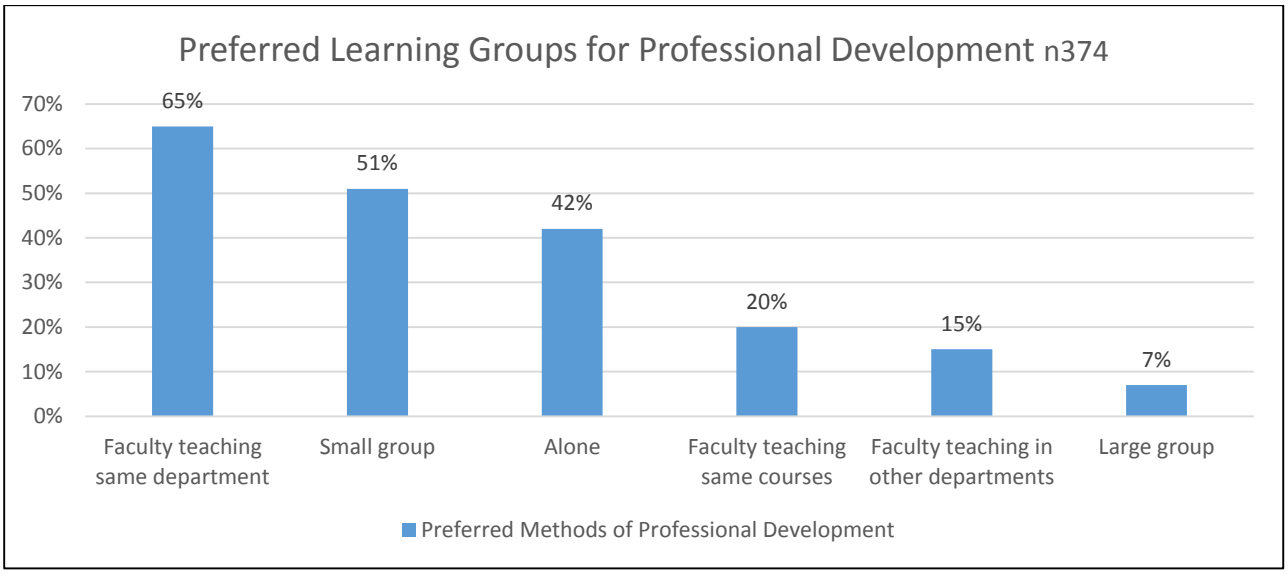


Figure 13. Preferred learning groups for professional development.

Respondents identified their interest in different methods used for professional development. As Figure 14 shows, hands-on learning (82%); online learning (80%) and peer to peer exchanges (78%) were the most popular elements with instructors claiming either strong interest or moderate interest in these method.

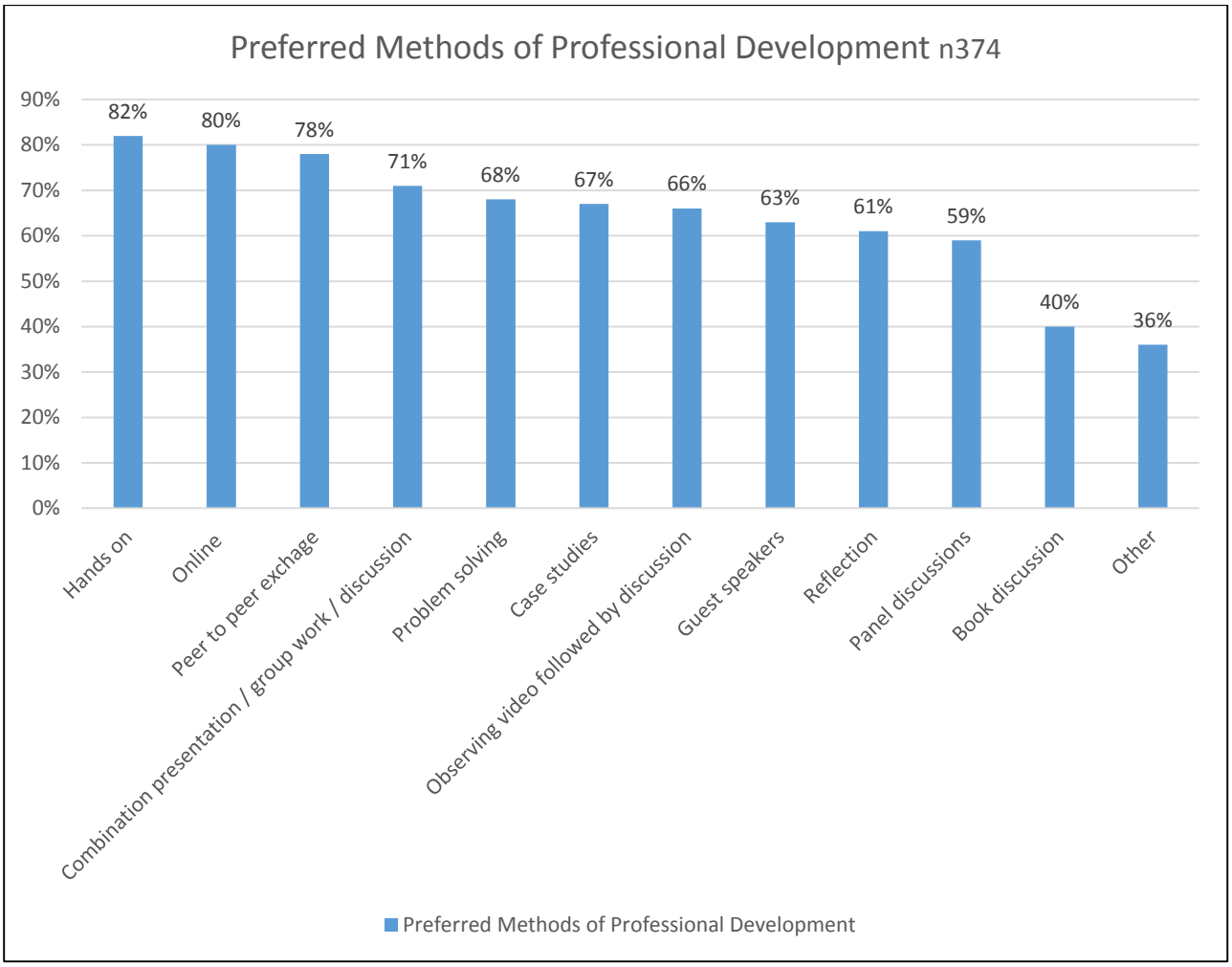


Figure 14. Preferred methods for professional development.

When attempting to answer research question #2 regarding what online instructors say their needs are for professional development, it is useful to compare what instructors said they had received in their orientation with what they said they had an interest in learning. Figure 15 indicates that there was a gap between what instructors expressed an interest in and what they said was covered in their orientation for online teaching. For example, in the category of best practices, 87% of 374 instructors expressed a very strong or strong interest in the topic, while only 56% said it had been covered in orientation. This gap may suggest instructors perceive that needs for professional development in these areas are not being fully met.

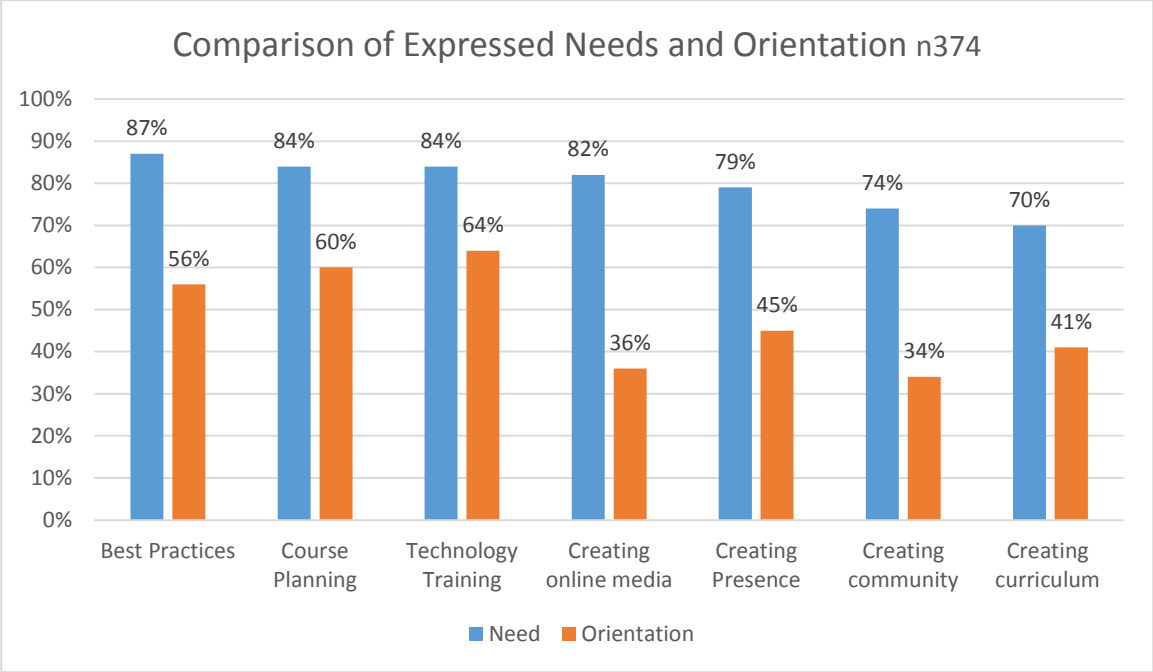


Figure 15. Comparisons between expressed needs and orientation.

Research question #2a asked what elements of professional development instructors consider to be effective. The survey responses would support the idea that instructors prefer learning online with a group of instructors who are teaching in their own department where they can engage in hands-on activities and receive peer-to-peer support and feedback.

The survey data suggest that instructors are motivated to attend professional development programs if they feel they will improve their teaching. The largest obstacle to attendance is related to time. Instructors are less motivated to attend if they do not have enough time or if the training program is held at an inconvenient time.

The survey responses provide an overall context to examine the results of the interviews and focus groups. In the survey, instructors expressed a need for more training on best practices for teaching online and on how to better engage students in an online classroom. They also expressed a need for more training on how to use technology generally

and on how to create dynamic course content such as interactive content, online media, and video. When attending professional development programs instructors expressed a preference for learning with other instructors teaching in their own department. They also expressed a preference for online training where they can learn hands-on.

Perceptions of Online Instructors Regarding Professional Development

This study attempted to answer the question, what are the perceptions that online instructors have about faculty professional development. Based on the analysis of the available data, I have identified three key findings. The first finding discussed is that online instructors perceive faculty professional development as not fully meeting all of their needs for training and development. This finding also serves to inform the second research question regarding needs of online instructors for professional development. The second finding discussed is that online instructors perceive faculty professional development as not modeling best practices for online teaching. The third and final finding discussed is that the perceptions online instructors hold of professional development can be helped or hindered by the department, chair or whomever is responsible for hiring the instructor.

Finding #1: Professional development is perceived as not fully meeting the needs of online instructors for training and development.

During interviews and focus groups, each of the 24 instructors shared their overall experiences with faculty professional development throughout their teaching career. They were asked to share both their best and worst experiences with professional development. Instructors were also asked to share specific examples of their experiences with professional development related to online teaching. I explained that for the purpose of the study, professional development was defined as any orientation, training, class, workshop, or so on

that was provided by the institution where an instructor was teaching at the time. In the survey, perception of professional development was determined by the way instructors agreed or disagreed to prompts such as, "faculty development programs can greatly benefit my teaching" or "I learn new teaching methods and techniques when I attend workshops or training programs."

The responses to these questions revealed that all 24 instructors expressed negative perceptions of professional development when asked about their overall experiences with it during their career. Simon Jenkins, an instructor at Northern University, said: "I have never been offered any kind of developmental experience that would enhance my skill in the classroom or online and maybe I've just given up." While not all instructors expressed their negative perceptions as strongly, they all shared a similar feeling that professional development did not fully meet their needs for training and development.

For example, when asked to describe their worst professional development, participants expressed their negative perceptions using strong language. Randy Moore talked about his frustration with the professional development provided by Western University to help him create his first online course at that institution. He said, "My experience creating this online course with Western University has been horrendous and abysmal." Negative perceptions were also given when instructors discussed their overall impressions of faculty professional development. Negative descriptors included: weak, waste of time, poorly organized, frustrating, horrible, inconsistent, and tedious.

In what ways was the professional development not meeting these online instructors' needs? The findings show three areas. First, a clear perception was revealed that online instructors did not feel they were receiving the support they needed to improve their skills as

online educators. Second, instructors doubted the relevance and usefulness of the content of the professional development. Finally, a perception was seen that faculty development serves the needs of beginning instructors far better than it does more experienced instructors. I will detail each of these ways in which faculty professional development is perceived as not meeting online instructors' needs.

During interviews and focus groups, 12 of the 24 instructors expressed a perception that they were not receiving the support they needed to improve their online teaching skills. Specifically, instructors perceived that they were teaching themselves. In response to questions about how well faculty professional development helped prepare them to teach their online courses, Erica Hodges (focus group) stated simply, "I was self-taught. I used the guide and I just taught myself. That shouldn't be how it is." Dale Tyler (FG) concurred with, "If everybody is self-taught, there is no reason for the training." Christopher Casey said, "I felt like I was teaching Western University, they weren't teaching me." These comments represent a common frustration of being on their own that was voiced by 12 of 24 instructors. Such comments may indicate a need for more support and a stronger sense of instructor presence within the training course.

Administrators shared the perception that instructors were not always getting what they needed from the training; however, administrators tended to see this problem as lack of instructor motivation to learn. Of the 10 administrators interviewed, seven said that they felt instructors were not always fully open to the training. For example, Eugene Patton of Western University observed, "Some (*instructors)*, unfortunately, don't always have the right motivation to learn to be an online instructor. They may come in and say, just give me the basics. I'll go from here." This frustration was shared by an administrator at Northern

University who related an incident with an experienced instructor who had been asked to go back through training because of poor course evaluations:

> I said, "You need to think about re-recording your lecture content and dividing it into segments that are shorter into fifteen-minute topical segments." This particular instructor lectured me and said, "Well, I'm talking to engineers and if they can't pay attention for longer than fifteen minutes, they shouldn't be in the field." I get where he was coming from. He was just thinking, "Oh, well, I do this all the time. I'm the subject matter expert, and I'm going to continue to teach this way."

Instructors and administrators see this issue from a different point of view; however, both are in agreement that the professional development is not fully preparing online instructors with the skills they need to be effective teaching online. This finding is supported by the survey responses where a gap was seen between what instructors said they received in orientation and what they expressed an interest in learning.

The second way instructors perceived that professional development was not fully meeting their needs was in the content. In response to questions about how they perceived faculty professional development, 16 of the 24 instructors discussed a weakness in the content of the programs. When asked specifically whether or not the content was a cause of dissatisfaction with professional development overall, Jacqueline Sullivan, an online instructor at Western University, said, “It’s all been about content. It hasn’t met my needs.” Melissa Perez, another instructor at Western University, summed up the general feeling which had been expressed with, “I really didn’t feel that I got that much out of it.” While these were comments aimed at professional development generally, one instructor complained specifically about the content in the training program for teaching online when she said, “Frankly, it was weak. They didn’t teach us anything about online education.” This indicates

that instructors may have a need for content that is more rigorous, useful and applicable to online teaching.

Administrators shared the instructors' desire for more rigorous programs. During interviews, six of ten administrators felt more robust programs were needed. One administrator at Western University, Bruce Owens, expressed a common theme when he said: "I think we can be 100 times better than we are." The comments by administrators did not constitute a lack of faith in the programming they were offering; rather, the comments were expressing a desire to provide more and better training and development to online instructors.

In addition to perceiving the content of professional development as weak, it was also perceived by instructors as lacking relevance. During interviews and focus groups, questions were raised regarding the importance of learning pedagogy. When asked to indicate whether or not the pedagogy training was useful, Randy Moore asserted that the, "people giving instruction have done it at a Ph.D. or Ed.D. level, rather than a level that is more useful to the actual nuts and bolts of teaching." Pedagogy was seen as irrelevant by instructors who see themselves as professionals first, and instructors second. Bruce Swanson of Western University expressed this when he said he was sure that "for real teachers it is important." Finally, pedagogy was seen as irrelevant unless an instructor was getting "bad reviews." These comments suggest that instructors do not perceive a need for training in the area of pedagogy. One possible explanation for this perception may be a belief that expertise in a subject matter is more important than teaching skill. One instructor defined teaching as simply the "sharing of knowledge" and another instructor claimed that good teaching is entirely exemplified by subject matter expertise. Even though instructors questioned the value of pedagogical training, every administrator (10 of 10) stated that online pedagogical skills, such

as engaging students, providing a sense of instructor presence, and motivating students, as necessary elements of quality online teaching. Taken together, these comments seems to suggest a divergent view between instructors and administrators relative to the value of pedagogical training.

Instructors and administrators were asked if they felt professional development served the needs of online instructors at every stage of their career. During discussions, 16 of the 24 instructors said that professional development serves the inexperienced instructor more than it does the experienced instructor. Additionally, a desire to have more advanced training was expressed. One instructor wanted to know how to take her teaching to the next level and another wanted information that would help advance his online teaching skills beyond the basics. Alyssa Porter of Northern University expressed this desire for more advanced training when she said: "You get the basic 101 training and let's say you've taught for a year. Now let's do 201. I would like that to be at the next level. After you have mastered the initial functionality, let's go deeper." These comments reveal a perception that professional development focuses primarily on the needs of instructors who are new to teaching online. Here again, instructors have stated a need for content that is more rigorous.

Administrators agreed that most professional development was aimed at the beginning instructor. During interviews, administrators were specifically asked whether or not they felt programs served online instructors at every stage of their career, and 8 of 10 administrators admitted their offerings served the needs of instructors new to online teaching more than the needs of experienced online instructors. Bruce Owens described the training at Western University as, "We get you to baseline zero. Once you're at baseline zero, every upper movement is on your own." Kellie McCarthy expressed the same issue using this analogy:

> We definitely front-load. We give a lot, a lot, a lot, a lot of information at the very beginning. We basically spray these people with a fire hose. We hope they don't drown and then we hand out cups of water throughout the rest of their career.

Taking instructor and administrator comments together, a clear perception that faculty development does not fully meet the needs of experienced online instructors is shared. These comments not only inform the first research question on perceptions of online instructors of faculty professional development, but it also addresses the second research question regarding what online instructors say their needs are for professional development.

Negative and Positive Perceptions about Professional Development

It is important to note that feelings which were expressed were complex, nuanced and often conflicted. During discussions, 15 of the 24 instructors who had expressed deeply negative perceptions also expressed strongly positive perceptions. Simon Jenkins, who had previously said, "I have never been offered any kind of developmental experience that would enhance my skill in the classroom or online and maybe I've just given up," said later in the interview that he had attended all sessions of an optional webinar series provided by Northern University and that they were, "Without exception, well worth the hour it took." Similarly, Randy Moore, who proclaimed that his experience with Western University had been "horrendous and abysmal," then went on to explain that only half the experience was bad and the second half was actually the best professional development experience he had ever had. Likewise, Patricia Adams of Western University, who at one point in the interview described professional development as: "Just listening to someone and what they've done and blah, blah, blah," also asserted that, "I always think professional development is a good thing." These seemingly contradictory statements demonstrate the divergent perceptions an individual instructor can hold on the subject of professional development.

Specifically speaking to the issue of content relevance, Jacqueline Sullivan asserted that the Western University training was helpful because it forced her to load the first few weeks of content into the LMS. She stated, "That was helpful because they just get you started on this thing and it can feel overwhelming. And you think . . . I've got to get together 12 weeks and make sure it's perfect." These comments seem to suggest that while many instructors hold negative perceptions of faculty professional development overall, they can also point to specific examples of faculty development that they found useful.

When considering the often contradictory expressions of both negative and positive perceptions of how well faculty development was fully meeting their needs, it is important to note that the positive comments were generally expressed when participants were asked to share a good experience and were fewer overall; whereas, the negative comments were most often unsolicited, more frequent and made throughout the conversation.

The negative perception of faculty professional development was somewhat contradicted by the survey responses. When responding to the prompt: "Faculty development programs can greatly benefit my teaching" a full 94% of 374 respondents agreed or strongly agreed. The survey questions focused primarily on the needs of online instructors, so the data on perceptions from this source are limited; however, this result does seem to indicate that there may be a perception that faculty professional development can benefit teaching, an idea which did not come out as clearly in the interviews and focus groups.

While the survey results show a strong belief in the idea of professional development, at the same time they support the finding that professional development is not fully meeting the needs of online instructors. Only 50% of 374 respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their needs for faculty development were being completely met, and 59% affirmed or strongly

affirmed that they changed teaching methods or techniques as a result of professional development. These data suggest that while respondents had a positive impression of professional development, at least half did not feel their needs were met, and 40% did not attribute the professional development to improved teaching practice.

Finding #2: Professional development is perceived by online instructors as not modeling best practices for online teaching.

Professional development for online instructors, particularly orientation programs which are conducted online, provide an opportunity to model best practices for online teaching. Examples of best practices in online teaching would include issues such as responsiveness to student inquiries and effective feedback on student work, both of which provide a sense of human presence in the online course.

During interviews and focus groups, instructors claimed that the orientation programs they had received did not model best online teaching practices. Instructors (14 of 24) particularly expressed frustration with responsiveness. Responding to questions about his most recent training experiences, Randy Moore expressed frustration, “The trainer didn’t answer my questions, and it didn’t just happen once. It happened time after time after time.” This lack of response led to a perception that the professional development staff was not interested in his success as an online instructor. He expressed this perception, “It wasn’t that he was so busy. It was that he couldn’t give a damn. He just couldn’t give a damn.” Moore perceived an aloofness from the instructor of the online orientation course. He summed up this sense of aloofness by concluding, “The trainer I had was very knowledgeable, but so is God, and it’s very difficult to talk to God.”

This complaint regarding responsiveness was also expressed at Northern University. Kristin Fuller raised the concern that response times were inconsistent. This lack of consistency led to a perception that the staff lacked knowledge. She articulated this perception when she claimed, “It feels like if they know the answer they will answer right away. If they don’t, it could be a while.”

Erica Hodges (FG) summed up what all 14 instructors said, “We’re hearing from our chair to respond to students within 24-48 hours, but when I was communicating with the trainers, it would be a week or more before I would hear back.” Erica claimed that the delay in responses negatively affected her ability to learn the course content. She expressed this perception when she explained, “By then, I had actually forgotten what I was asking about. They weren’t communicating to me in a fashion that was helpful for me to learn.”

Not only did instructors express concerns over the timeliness of responses, they also commented on the quality of the feedback. This was discussed in a focus group at Western University where all the participants felt the feedback to their work was insufficient. This led to a perception that the staff was not carefully evaluating the work. Marshall Holt (FG) spoke to this concern when he maintained, “It’s not that I didn’t get responses, but it didn’t feel like somebody was really looking at what I was submitting and saying, ‘oh yeah you’re on the right track.’” Holt also felt the feedback he received was not specific enough to meet his needs for reassurance. He expressed this when he said, “There was this one blanket thing that said, how everything looks fine. I didn’t feel it looked fine. I wasn’t assured by that.” This finding helps inform research question 2a, which asks what elements of professional development instructors consider effective. The comments taken together represent an idea that the professional development is more effective if it models the best practices of online

instruction, such as instructor responsiveness and meaningful feedback. This finding is supported by administrator interviews as 9 of 10 administrators identified these practices as essential elements of quality online instruction.

Finding #3: The perceptions that online instructors hold of professional development and of online teaching can be helped or hindered by the individual who hired the online instructor.

One unexpected finding related to forming perceptions of professional development. While the first finding references past experiences, and the second finding references current experiences, this finding indicates that perceptions can be aided or hindered by individuals responsible for supervising the online instructor. This perception was held not by instructors, but was held by 8 of 10 administrators. Administrators expressed a concern that a misalignment of expectations often existed between instructors and the professional development staff. Administrators placed some of the blame for the negative perception of professional development on this misalignment.

During interviews, 8 of the 10 administrators specifically talked about the way the individual who hired the instructor framed the importance of the orientation training. Jessie Moreno of Northern University summed up the general feeling when she said, "Sometimes if the people hiring instructors aren't telling them (*the instructors)* what the expectations are, they come in thinking they are going to get a lot of hand-holding and a lot of the work is going to be done for them." Kellie McCarthy expressed this same concern that the training may be framed as unimportant when she asserted:

> In some departments, that expectation (*that the training is important)* isn't set, and so I think those instructors come at it like, 'I'll do whatever I want. If I have time for it, I'll do it. If I don't have time for it, someone over there should probably just do it for me.'

Administrators explained that when expectations were clearly set, instructors took the training seriously and were less resistant to the process. These comments suggest that administrators feel that the perceived value of the training is based in part on the way the training is explained to the instructor by the individual who hired them.

Not only did administrators feel the person hiring the instructor influenced an instructor's perception regarding the value of the training, five administrators also felt that the hiring authorities occasionally misrepresented the commitment of teaching online which, in turn, affected how instructors viewed professional development. Administrators felt both the time and effort needed to complete the orientation and to teach online were underestimated. The administrators felt that when instructors were told either training or online teaching would not require much effort, this misalignment of expectations helped create a negative perception of faculty development because instructors felt the training was taking longer and was requiring more effort than they had been led to believe. One administrator claimed an effort to recruit "celebrities" in their respective fields, who would draw students to their courses, compelled the person hiring to frame online teaching as an "easy gig." He said instructors were often told, "You don't have to do a whole lot. Just get through the training." An example of how this framing affected instructor perceptions of professional development was when Jacqueline Sullivan said the training, "was a mandatory thing to do and that's how it felt." Administrators believed that this framing caused some instructors to approach the training with a "let's get this over with" attitude and led to a perception that faculty development was not important.

Administrators asserted when instructors discovered that the training was rigorous and online teaching requires substantial time and effort, instructors would often balk at the training and blame the professional development staff for the amount of time and effort needed to prepare for teaching online.

In response to a question specifically about instructor expectations for teaching online, Mary Jennings gave a compelling account of one instructor who was not given any context or narrative for the training. Mary described the results of this misalignment of expectations:

> He came to us angry from the beginning. Basically, every exchange he had with our trainers felt like an echo of that resistance. It was just like pulling teeth every step of the way. We had to do a little bit of an intervention with the help of our colleagues in the department that hired him. That took a village because not preparing him ahead of time squarely put our trainers in a position of enemy, a position of obstacle, a position of bureaucratic BS, for which I'm not getting paid to engage with, and it just doesn't start things off on the right path.

This story clearly illustrates not only an example of the kind of misalignment of expectations referred to by administrators, but it is also related to the way instructors perceive the training. Jennings asserts that having to backtrack and establish clear guidelines painted the professional development staff as the "enemy."

Administrators recognized the importance of their role in setting clear expectations for both training and online teaching. Samantha Watkins of Northern University, an administrator tasked with hiring for her department, said motivating instructors to attend: "would ultimately fall back on us at the department level to communicate those expectations." She specifically talked about setting up expectations during the interview and hiring stage in order to stress that, "That's important to us because we take quality very seriously at Northern University."

While talking about the challenges of bringing what he referred to as "legacy instructors," meaning instructors who had been teaching a long time, on board with new

expectations for training and development, Don Burke, also at Northern University discussed the important role of administrators when he said, “It’s incumbent upon me to set that expectation. You’re going to have to go through some training and if you don’t have the time or the interest in that, that’s okay, but then this won’t be a fit for us.

These comments indicate that both professional development staff and administrators tasked with hiring online instructors recognize the importance of setting clear expectations and sending a consistent message regarding the importance of professional development. Professional development staff, however, expressed frustration that not all administrators who hire online instructors frame professional development as an important, ongoing part of being an effective online educator.

This perception of misaligned expectations came entirely from administrators. No online instructors talked about how misaligned expectations informed their perceptions of professional development. While a few online instructors felt they hadn’t been adequately warned about how much work teaching online was going to be, they did not seem to perceive this as a problem created by the person who hired them, but rather saw it as a fault of the professional development program itself. This tendency to see the training as the problem supports the position of administrators and reaffirms what they said about a lack of clear expectations negatively influencing the online instructor’s perception of the training.

The survey data also support this finding with 67% of survey respondents claiming that it was very important or moderately important that their department chair or administrator asked them to attend professional development programs. These data support the claim that setting expectations at the department level is an important part of not only how instructors perceive professional development, but also on how motivated they will be to attend.

The available literature supports the findings discussed in this section (Major & Palmer, 2006; Reilly et al., 2012; Shea et al., 2004; Wilson & Stacey, 2004). For example, Wilson and Stacey (2004) argue for using a different approach for veteran instructors than for beginning instructors, and Steinert et al. (2010) showed a relationship between expectations set by department chairs and faculty perceptions of the value of professional development.

Motivations for Online Instructors to Attend Professional Development

Motivation is a complex and multi-layered issue. The question of how to motivate online instructors to participate voluntarily in professional development is a sub-question of the research question on perception because the issues of perception and motivation are inextricably linked. The findings in this section support the simple but key idea that if instructors perceive relevance and value in the professional development, they are motivated to attend. On the other hand, if they perceive the professional development as lacking relevance or value, they are not motivated to attend.

In this sub-section, I will discuss two key findings: 1) motivation of online instructors to attend professional development is directly related to their perceptions of that development; and 2) intrinsic rewards are more significant than extrinsic rewards in motivating instructors to attend voluntary professional development.

Finding #1: Motivation of online instructors to attend professional development programs is directly related to how those instructors perceive the value of the programs.

This finding illustrates that perception actually influences motivation. Most instructors (23 of 24) said that they were motivated to attend professional development if they thought the topic would be useful or improve their skills. While responding to a question about why

she attended voluntary professional development, Arlene Tucker of Northern University asserted, “I attend the sessions because I know I can take something from them and immediately apply them to what I’m doing. That’s important.” Melissa Perez echoed this sentiment when she claimed that most instructors are motivated to attend when, “They’re actually going to gain some new skill or some insight.”

The survey data support this finding as 98% of 374 respondents said it was very important or moderately important that they felt the topic of the professional development would benefit their teaching, with 77% scoring it as very important. These data suggest that perceiving a benefit to teaching is a key motivator for attendance.

Going beyond the perception that the professional development will improve their teaching skills, instructors were also motivated to attend professional development if they perceived that the development would provide skills beyond the online class. While discussing motivation during an interview, Laverne Diaz from Western University demonstrated this connection to perceived value when she asserted that one reason for attending was, “building ourselves professionally.” Kristin Fuller also said that she was more motivated to attend professional development that was transferable outside of the classroom or led to other professional opportunities when she shared a perception that professional development: “Expands your horizons. Certainly, the better you are at it and the more that you know, the more opportunities there are to teach in other online environments.”

The survey data support this finding as well with 97% of 374 respondents claiming that a perception that the professional development will benefit teaching and 95% claiming gaining teaching skills is either very important or moderately important.

Finding #2: Intrinsic rewards are more significant than extrinsic rewards in motivating instructors to attend professional development.

During discussions, instructors and administrators were asked what motivated instructors to attend faculty professional development. One finding showed that 18 of 24 instructors discussed the importance of intrinsic rewards while only 6 of the 24 talked about only extrinsic rewards for attending professional development. Two instructors interviewed specifically said external rewards such as compensation or certificates were not important in motivating them to attend professional development. While talking about her motivation for attending professional development, an instructor from Western University talked about a life-long learning perspective when she said, "As instructors, I want to believe we want to continue growing and learning." One of the Northern University instructors shared a similar feeling when she asserted, "Whether it's paid or unpaid, that really shouldn't matter. They *(instructors)* should want to come because it's so interesting that they can't afford not to be there." These comments suggest that intrinsic rewards such as learning and developing skills as an online educator are stronger motivators than extrinsic rewards such as awards or certificates.

Administrator interviews supported this finding with 5 of 10 administrators acknowledging the importance of intrinsic rewards. While discussing their motivational strategies, Sheri Chambers of Western University admitted, "You always have to tap into your intrinsic motivation for being there because you're not getting paid very much." Mary Jennings echoed statements instructors made about a life-long learning mindset when she said, "A lot of instructors are really happy just to have the opportunity to learn."

Survey data support this finding with the top three motivators relating directly to intrinsic rewards such as benefitting teaching (98% of 374) and gaining new skills (96%), while near the bottom of the list are extrinsic rewards like compensation (57%) and impacting the number of classes I am offered (58%). These data support the finding that intrinsic rewards are more powerful motivators.

Even though the data suggest that intrinsic rewards are more motivational, that does not exclude extrinsic rewards as motivators. Compensation is one extrinsic reward which was mentioned by 7 of 24 instructors as a direct motivator to attending available programs; furthermore, nearly every instructor (22 of 24) discussed the issue of compensation as it related to their motivation to spend more time generally learning to be better online instructors. The survey responses support the idea that compensation is important to some instructors as 57% said it was very important or moderately important. Considered together, these data suggest that intrinsic rewards may be the most important factors in motivating online instructors to attend available professional development, however, external rewards, particularly compensation, may also play an important role in motivation.

Administrators discussed extrinsic rewards more than instructors with 6 of 10 administrators explaining extrinsic rewards they had in place or were considering. These rewards included certificates, tying compensation to attendance through a tiered compensation system, or gamification, which uses game theory to motivate participants to complete training modules.

Much of the seminal literature on motivation support the findings in this section (Adler, 1952; Hardré, 2012; Knowles, 2011; Pink, 2012; Steinert et al., 2010). This study builds upon the word of Steinert et al. (2010) who demonstrated that motivations are primarily

intrinsic and showed that perception was equal to motivation. Knowles (2011) also concludes that intrinsic motivation is superior to extrinsic motivation. While building upon this literature, the data from this study suggest that while intrinsic motivation is most important, extrinsic rewards cannot be completely dismissed. For example, not being compensated specifically for attending professional development programs was not seen as a major obstacle to attending; however, the perception of poor compensation overall was seen as an issue related to instructor motivation to spend time improving their online teaching skills.

Needs of Online Instructors for Professional Development

While motivation and perception are somewhat elusive concepts, reporting on what needs online instructors expressed is more straightforward. The second question this study attempts to answer is to identify the needs online instructors have for professional development. What emerges from the data is more professional development is needed. During interviews and focus group, 17 of 24 instructors expressed this need, as well as all ten administrators. When relating her experience with her training before teaching online, Laverne Diaz explained, "I wanted maybe to explore more. There is so much more to it that it's really hard to show in one class. I don't think it's a reflection on the instructor, it's just that there's so much more to it." Kristin Fuller agreed. During a discussion on the optional webinars provided by Northern University she complained that she had the same problem with these webinars as she did with most webinars and that was they provided too little content. She claimed, "I want more content. I can handle it. I'm an adult. I'm a professional. Tell me things."

Online instructors were asked questions in interviews, focus groups and in the survey about their needs for faculty professional development. I will discuss three key findings that

emerged from the data: 1) online instructors express a need for community; 2) online instructors need content which includes both soft skills and technological needs; and 3) online instructors need faculty professional development that is interactive and includes the voices of other online instructors.

Finding #1: Online instructors express a need for community.

> I was absolutely on an island and no one could tell me that I was not. Everything else in life I've got others around but for that particular thing, I was the island girl. I was just out here by myself. Do I want to be on this island by myself with no margaritas? (Patricia Adams).

Online teaching can leave online instructors feeling isolated and cut off from their colleagues. During interviews and focus groups, a majority (21 of 24) expressed a desire to connect with other instructors teaching online. Dale Tyler (FG) admitted that a need for community was his main motive for attending the focus group and his key reason for attending any professional development. He asserted, "If there was a serious, sincere effort to bring peers together, not to train, but just to talk about making things better together, I would be first in line for that." This was a common theme in every focus group whether the topic of discussion was perception, motivation or needs. Jacqueline Sullivan concurred:

> To be honest, I am craving it. I don't have contact with other instructors. Creating a community for online teachers throughout the institution would be really helpful. I'm craving some new ideas on how to approach discussions. I'm craving a chance to speak to other teachers at Western University.

Not only these do these comments support this finding, but the frequency with which online instructors continually returned to this theme and the passion they showed when describing their feelings of isolation suggest that a strong need for community exists among online instructors.

Discussions with administrators also support this finding with 5 of 10 administrators recognizing this need for community. During an interview in her office at Western University, Sheri Chambers discussed her desire to create community in the online orientation course. She asserted, "You have to do more intentional work about cultivating a community of practice. Most of our courses tried to tap into that, or just a community of learning and sharing with one another." Mary Jennings echoed this idea when she explained, "One of things that we look to strengthen here is a community of practice. A sense of community and camaraderie and belonging for our instructors." These comments suggest that administrators are aware of the instructors' feelings of isolation and are actively working to incorporate opportunities for building community into their programs. Administrators not only recognized this need, but they felt there was more to accomplish in this area.

Survey data, however, paint a different picture. Only 43% of the 374 survey respondents said connecting with colleagues was a very important or moderately important motivator for attending professional development. On the other hand, 58% said that they would prefer to attend faculty professional development in a group. These data suggest that while it may not be an important motivator for those surveyed to attend, it is still a preferred element of professional development. One possible explanation for this discrepancy in data could be that interviews and focus groups provided a forum for sharing feelings that did not exist in the online survey format. This opportunity for openness may have revealed a need that was not expressed as strongly in the survey.

Finding #2. Online instructors have needs for soft skills and technology skills related content.

Data on content needs were separated into two categories: 1) soft skills, such as student engagement, creating community and creating interesting discussion forums, and 2) technical skills, such as using the learning management system (LMS) tools, using tools to create synchronous teaching opportunities, and creating video and other multimedia.

In both discussions and surveys, participants identified engaging students as an important soft skill most often. A majority of instructors (16 of 24) and administrators (6 of 10) expressed a strong need for professional development in this area. Likewise, when looking at the survey data, 87% of the 374 respondents identified that they had a strong or moderate interest in the topic of engaging students. Taking both sets of data together points to engaging students as the strongest content need for professional development for online instructors.

Best practices, with 87% of the 374 respondents claiming a strong or moderate interest, was mentioned in discussions by only five instructors and four administrators. Assignments and assessments, the second highest topic category mentioned in interviews (11 of 24 instructors and 4 of 10 administrators) was also popular in the survey with 75% of 374 respondents saying they had strong or moderate interest in the topic. Data from interviews and focus groups along with data from surveys indicate that best practices, when suggested as a potential topic for professional development, is selected by a large majority of instructors; however, when asked about needs generally, it is not identified by instructors as a strong need. One possible explanation for this discrepancy may be that the phrase “best practices” is more commonly used by professional development staff than by instructors themselves. When

asked about training needs instructors identified engaging students (16 of 24); communicating (10 of 24); and creating community (9 of 24), all of which would be considered best practices.

While a broad range of topics were discussed in the area of soft skills, when reviewing the data in the area of technical skills content needs, far fewer specific skills were discussed. During interviews, the technology skill mentioned most often was learning to use all the tools in the learning management system (LMS) with 11 of 24 instructors and 3 of 10 administrators claiming a need for more professional development in this area. However, when looking at the survey data, this topic was in the middle of the list, with 76% of 374 respondents claiming a strong or moderate interest in the topic, although this still represents a clear majority. The combined data indicate that a content need exists for learning to use the tools of the LMS.

The second most frequently mentioned technological need identified in interviews was learning to use tools to create synchronous learning opportunities such as live lectures, virtual office hours, and synchronous group discussions with 11 of 24 instructors and 2 of 10 administrators saying more professional development was needed in this area. This topic was not one of options listed in the survey, but one respondent did mention it in the comment box.

While learning to use the technology generally was mentioned by only 3 of 24 instructors and 3 of 10 administrators, it was at the top of the list in the survey with 84% of 374 respondents claiming they had strong or moderate interest in this topic.

Finding #3. Online instructors need faculty professional development that is interactive and includes the voices of other online instructors.

Instructors were asked in interviews, focus groups, and surveys what elements of professional development they preferred. These elements included issues such as delivery

mode (face-to-face or online), learning in a group or individually, methods of learning, and so on. Data were examined by looking at both interviews and surveys.

The element mentioned most during discussions was working in a group with 21 of 24 instructors stating this as a preference. A small majority of survey respondents (58% of 374) also stated a preference for working in a group. This preference is supported by Fang (2007) who posits that a sense of community can help motivate instructors to attend professional development because it reassures instructors that they are not "isolated islands" when they are teaching online because they can interact with others who are experiencing similar challenges.

The second most often mentioned element in interviews was testimonials with 10 of 24 instructors expressing a desire that testimonials be included in professional development programs. One instructor suggested bringing in the "teacher of the year" while another referred to this as hearing "words of wisdom." Laverne Diaz summed up this preference when she suggested, "It would be great to hear different instructor testimonials. What are the challenges? What are the positives? What has worked for them? What hasn't? What to anticipate? What to be mindful of?"

Other elements that were mentioned by a small number of instructors included the opportunity to observe a class (4 of 24 instructors), creating instructor driven development (3 of 24 instructors), providing frequent or ongoing development (3 of 10 administrators), well organized (3 of 24 instructors), short sessions (3 of 24 instructors), and focused (3 of 24 instructors). For example, Jacqueline Sullivan expressed this desire by proposing, "I would love if PD was made available where one would focus on lectures. Just lectures that's it. One would focus on discussions and that's it. Another one would focus on creating rubrics, that's it." These data suggest that there may be a long list of preferences that instructors can imagine

when asked about what makes professional development effective, but there is strong agreement on key elements.

The survey data support this finding with a majority of respondents saying they would prefer to learn with faculty teaching in their own department (65%), in a hands-on manner (82%) and with an opportunity for peer-to-peer exchange (78%).

Research question #2a asked what elements of faculty development online instructors considered effective. What this data taken together seem to suggest is online instructors find professional development that allows them to interact with other instructors and learn in a hands-on manner to be most effective. The need expressed to learn from other online instructors also supports the earlier finding of need for community.

Available literature in the field support the findings in this section (Gustafson & Gibbs, 2000; Hardré, 2012; Knowles, 2011; J. L. Lee & Hirumi, 2004; Morris & Finnegan, 2009; M. Oliver, 2000). Knowles (2011) found that adult learners respond best to content that has immediate relevance and Morris and Finnegan (2009) argue for best practices that mirror those discussed in this study.

Evaluation of online teaching and the alignment of evaluation to professional development

The third research question explored the evaluation of online teaching, looking at how evaluation was used to inform faculty professional development. Administrators and instructors were asked to share their experiences with the processes used to evaluate their online courses. Participants discussed the quality of the evaluations, how the evaluations were aligned with professional development, and what should be assessed in such evaluations.

There were no questions related to evaluation included in the survey, so no survey data is included in this subsection.

I will discuss three key findings: 1) the need for improvement in current methods of evaluating online teaching; 2) evaluations of online teaching and professional development are not yet fully aligned; and 3) there is little agreement on what items should be included on an evaluation instrument for online teaching.

Finding #1. Current methods of evaluating online teaching need improvement.

Instructors and administrators agree that the quality of the current course evaluations for online instruction needs improvement. During discussions, 20 of 24 instructors and 7 of 10 administrators expressed that current evaluations were poor quality. Instructors particularly challenged the validity of student evaluations of teaching. For example, Jerome Frank, an instructor at Western University asserted, "I have a real problem with student feedback because I don't think they know what's going on." Erica Hodges (FG) agreed with and said that she felt students sometimes misinterpreted what she was trying to do in the class. She claimed that Western University based its evaluations on whether or not students liked the instructor. She said, "I don't think that that's necessarily a good way to evaluate whether you are a good online teacher or not."

Instructors further claimed that the response rate was too low to ensure validity. Alyssa Porter said, "Typically, I would have like 2 or 3 students of the 15 or 20 actually do the course eval." Administrators agreed that this was an area of concern. Bruce Owens claimed, "The eval is so generic and useless. Even if students did answer them all appropriately, I don't think it would necessarily help instructors at all. It doesn't seem like it's something that's built to really get value out of the evaluation." Samantha Watkins agreed:

> We don't always get the student response that we're looking for because the evaluations are optional and they are completely anonymous. The course is coming to the end and they get the automated e-mail from us asking them to complete a course evaluation. A lot of students just delete or they don't remember to complete it because they are just so anxious to finish up the course.

Not only did instructors raise a concern regarding response rate, but they also claimed that inconsistent messages were a problem. For example, Bruce Swanson characterized evaluations in this way, "They send you these wonderful glowing things and then there's always the one who thinks you're an idiot." This perception suggests that instructors find it challenging to interpret the feedback received from student evaluations of teaching.

Finally, instructors felt the anonymous nature of course evaluations was problematic. Jerome Frank said he felt that the anonymous nature of course evaluations was disrespectful and unprofessional. He said, "They make use of what I call the 'Yelp' mentality which is this idea that if someone doesn't know you, you can take all your frustrations out on the other person or blame the other person." Frank also expressed frustration with the fact that he could not respond to student evaluations; however, he expressed a desire for better evaluations and said, "I am perfectly interested in knowing what they liked or didn't like, what worked well what didn't work well."

Finally, both instructors (20 of 24) and administrators (8 of 10) shared a concern about how student evaluations may be counterproductive to encouraging quality teaching. Pete Mathis, an administrator at Western University, admitted, "We did have some instructors who went very easy on their students and gave them good grades and basically bought themselves good evaluations. We had instructors get nines and tens every time across the board and their classes were a nightmare." Mary Jennings claimed, "Our evaluation system is flawed. No one

here is a fan of what that evaluation looks like. It's basically 10 questions on a scale of 1 to 9 and they don't really answer substantive questions." Dale Tyler (FG) suggested:

> Let me finish with something really outrageous. Maybe there shouldn't be student evaluations. Because, basically we're playing a popularity game. You've got to be nice in order to get that good evaluation, so we don't teach straight. That doesn't mean that you get to be mean, but there's this whole thing about a popularity contest.

The comments on evaluations suggest that there is a shared concern among instructors and administrators regarding the quality of the student evaluations of teaching, the poor response rate of these instruments, the usefulness of the student comments, and the anonymous nature of the evaluation process itself.

Participants agree that evaluations need to be improved. Both institutions participating in this study hold similar goals for reducing reliance on student evaluations and incorporating a quality assurance mechanism for evaluating the quality of online course offerings; however, the two institutions are at different places in the process. Western University is actively creating a quality assurance indicator while Northern University has implemented one for approximately two years. Kellie McCarthy explained how the process began:

> We knew that we needed to step up our game if we were going to stay competitive in the market. That was one. Two, some of our programs were getting decreased enrollments. The students weren't coming. Some of the evaluations we were getting from the students were pretty lackluster.
>
> Then, all of the stakeholders came together and said, "Okay, this is an issue." No one wants to take responsibility for it. Right? Nobody wants to be the one to actually implement something. They got a sucker to be like, "Hey, I'll do it. Hey, I'll do it because I have energy and I'm really passionate about this thing."

Kellie also talked about the importance of getting the process moving forward when she said, "It's been really important to just act without getting everybody on board, to show that we can do it. Then, convince them to do more work themselves." She talked about the need to show

results before asking departments to participation, “We had to be committed to doing a lot of the work up front, because the departments weren't going to do it until we showed that it was going to be worth their investment of time and money and energy.”

The process at Western University has been more informal, but they are moving towards a more robust evaluation process. Pete Mathis described how he started going through the classes. “Sometimes I would take them, sometimes I would just sign up for them and then drop them. Basically, just figuring out what was going on. Getting a snapshot for myself.” He went on to describe how Western University has developed a comprehensive quality assurance program that they are attempting to use across the institution:

> We came up with a matrix and it combines internally developed ideas with stuff that we sort of derived from other sorts of packaged best practices and rubrics that are out there like Quality Matters and some of those other things. We looked at all those and took the parts that we thought were relevant and important and good and basically incorporated those into our own model. It’s homegrown, but it’s also homegrown with awareness of what sorts of standards are out in the world.

Kellie McCarthy also described Northern University’s process in detail. She explained that when they began, they would give feedback directly to the departments that the instructor never saw. “We were a little bit more brazen in our comments. We were like, "This class is just utter crap and you need to scrap it. I don't even know if you should hire the instructor anymore." She went on to explain that the departments would have to take the reports and rewrite them so that the feedback could be provided to instructors.

Kellie explained that now Northern University provides feedback on every online class and online instructor once a year. She said, “We've created this quality feedback loop. The ones that need additional training and support come back through our processes so that we can provide that for them.” With this new process, the professional development staff

writes the feedback in a way that is suitable for the instructor and then distributes that feedback to the department. If the department decides to share the feedback with the instructor, they can send it directly without having to rewrite it. At the end of the summer quarter of 2015, Kellie stated that they would have enough data from this process to begin to evaluate overall trends.

These comments suggest that both institutions recognize a need for a strong evaluation process and are working to improve their evaluation process and reduce their dependency on student evaluations of teaching alone to assess the quality of online instruction.

Finding #2. Evaluation of online teaching and professional development are not yet fully aligned.

Administrators and instructors were asked to discuss how well aligned they felt the evaluation process and professional development process were at their institution. Kellie McCarthy explained that at Northern University, "We've only used the data to evaluate individual instructors and courses. The reason for that has been, we have iterated over the last year, so many times, that we couldn't really compare apples to apples." Billy Peterson of Western University admitted that the evaluations are primarily used to identify problems with individual instructors saying, "They are largely like red flags." He went on to say that there is informal use of evaluations to inform programmatic decisions:

> If we notice there are certain patterns, we don't do this formally or with a whole lot of scrutiny, but if we notice that there is a kind of pattern with a particular type of instructor or a particular type of class, that will sort of prompt us to think about, well, can we address this during training? As far as long-term professional development, we haven't really established that link just yet.

These comments are representative of the overall impression of how data were used to inform professional development expressed by all 10 administrators. They suggest that the evaluation

data that is currently available is used to identify problems with individual instructors, rather than as a method to uncover trends that might inform program planning. While there is some attempt at both institutions to view trends on an informal basis, no formal method was used.

Mary Jennings talked about how she felt evaluations should be used to improve teaching, "There is a lot of reflection. What worked? What didn't work? What can I do to make this a better experience for my students next time around?" However, she stated that this type of reflection is not yet being accomplished: "These conversations very rarely, very rarely happen between the instructor and the program department that hires them much less between the instructor and distance learning or the instructor and our department." Mary Jennings, in describing a way to close the feedback loop of evaluations, also reinforced the idea that evaluation alignment is seen as primarily an issue of identifying the needs of a single instructor.

Administrators at both institutions admitted that they had no formal system in place to align professional development programmatic decisions with evaluation data, but they did assert that they attempted to do this in an informal manner. For example, Samantha Watkins described how she notices and communicates trends to the professional development staff. She related a specific incident when she recommended a webinar based on student comments:

> I had seen across multiple programs in a lot of my evaluation results students were saying, "I am not really clearly seeing what I need to be doing in some of my assignments. It would be really nice to have some sort of rubric." So because I kept seeing these repeated comments, I told the development staff it would be really helpful if when you're training our instructors, if you could advise them to create a rubric for their assignments. Then, a lot of other departments thought that would be a great idea, and then we thought before we make that a requirement, let's do a webinar.

In this comment, Samantha Watkins describes in detail the kind of informal alignment that takes place at both institutions between the evaluation process and the professional development planning process.

Finding #3. There is little agreement on what items should be included on an evaluation instrument for online teaching.

During interviews and focus groups, instructors and administrators were asked to identify the most important skills and qualities of an online instructor. They were also asked what they felt should be included on an evaluation instrument for online teaching. There was little agreement, particularly among instructors, about what should be assessed. Out of the 24 instructors participating in focus groups or interviews, only 16 had specific suggestions about what to assess when evaluating online pedagogy. Even when looking at these 16 instructors responses, there were no clear majority opinions.

Administrators had some clear differences. None mentioned student preferences or student learning when detailing how courses should be assessed; however, a majority (6 of 10) specifically pointed to instructor responsiveness and engagement with students. Pete Mathis described the ways he felt evaluation data should be used:

> One, which is, of course, to improve the experience, right? So the feedback about instruction. Feedback about the technical capacities, the plant capacities, the class and also just the product as a whole. Is it aesthetically pleasing? Do you think it's ugly every time you open it? These are the kind of questions you want answered, right? How sticky are various objects? How much time are people spending on this video as opposed to that? Is there a class where so many students are failing where before they were getting A's?

It would be difficult to draw any clear implications from these data, but they seem to suggest that there is minimal agreement on what should be assessed in evaluating online teaching.

There is a body of research on evaluation and a lesser amount on the evaluation of online courses which support the findings in this section (Bangert, 2004, 2006; Danielson, 2011; Graham et al., 2001; M. Oliver, 2000). Bangert (2004) developed a framework for evaluating online teaching.

Summary

In this chapter, I presented the findings of the qualitative research study on the perceptions and needs of online instructors for professional development. The findings presented here are based on an analysis of survey data, interview transcripts and focus group transcripts.

Findings were discussed in four major sections: 1) perceptions of online instructors regarding professional development; 2) motivations for online instructors to attend faculty professional development; 3) needs of online instructors for professional development; and 4) evaluation of online teaching.

The first section of this chapter focused on how online instructors perceived professional development. When online instructors are given unrealistic expectations of the professional development, the process begins in an ineffective manner. When instructors feel the content does not meet their needs, they question the value of the training. Finally, when they feel the training courses themselves do not model the best practices being taught in the courses, their frustration increases. These combined issues result in an overall negative perception of professional development.

The second section focused on the motivations for attending voluntary professional development and the third section focused on the needs online instructors said they had for professional development. Perception, motivation, and needs are inextricably linked. It seems

likely if instructors perceive the professional development as lacking value, they are less motivated to attend. If they believe the professional development will meet their needs, then they will perceive it as having greater value and be more likely to attend. The challenge is to then understand the needs of instructors and communicate that the professional development will meet those needs.

Without good evaluation data, we can only rely on instructor self-reports to identify needs. In this study, instructors reported needs for content in two distinct categories: soft skills, such as responsiveness and student engagement and technical skills, such as using the learning management tools effectively.

Online instructors and administrators discussed in interviews how evaluation and professional development were aligned, the quality of current course evaluations, and the things which should be included in an evaluation instrument for online pedagogy. It was generally believed by both faculty and administration that the current methods of evaluation needed improvement; therefore, the evaluation data was not formally linked to professional development program planning.

In Chapter 5, I will discuss the themes that emerge from these data and make recommendations for future research and practice.

Chapter Five

Introduction

In this chapter, I will discuss the findings from Chapter Four and identify the major themes. Next, I will point out the limitations of the study. Finally, I will propose recommendations for both practice and future research.

The overarching purpose of this descriptive research study was to determine how to better meet the needs of online instructors for faculty professional development. To accomplish this goal, it was necessary to discover how professional development is perceived by online instructors, what motivates or prevents them from attending available professional development and what they say their needs are for professional development. Additionally, the role of evaluation of online teaching and how it is connected to professional development was an important part of examining professional development needs.

In Chapter Four, I described the main findings from this study. The findings showed that professional development is perceived as not fully meeting the needs of online instructors; that instructors perceived professional development as not modeling best online teaching practices; and that perceptions are strongly influenced by the individual who hires and supervises the online instructor. It was also seen that motivation directly relates to perceptions online instructors held of professional development, and that intrinsic rewards were more important than extrinsic rewards in motivating online instructors to attend available professional development opportunities. Additional findings showed that instructors expressed a need for community; that online instructors' needs for professional development fall into the two categories of soft skills and technical skills; and that online instructors want professional development that is interactive and includes the voices of other online

instructors. Finally, findings also indicated that current methods of evaluating online teaching need improvement and that the evaluation of online teaching and professional development are not yet fully aligned.

Discussion of the Key Findings and Existing Research

The research questions asked about perceptions, motivations and needs of online instructors for faculty professional development. They asked specifically about the elements of professional development that instructors considered to be effective and the content instructors felt would be most important to include. The research questions also asked about what should be included in an evaluation instrument for online instruction and how such an evaluation instrument could be used to improve teaching quality.

The four broad themes that emerged from the findings are supported by interviews, focus groups, surveys, and relevant literature. I have identified four key themes: 1) conflation of subject expertise with teaching skill; 2) influence of inconsistent messages on perceptions of professional development; 3) lack of alignment of online course evaluation and professional development; and 4) need for more professional development.

Conflation of subject expertise with teaching skill.

An online educator needs a large array of skills (Gustafson & Gibbs, 2000; J. L. Lee & Hirumi, 2004; Morris & Finnegan, 2009). An instructor must have deep subject expertise. Often in higher education, the primary reason an individual is selected to teach is because they are an expert in their field (Baran, Correia, & Thompson, 2011). In online teaching, it is not uncommon for an instructor to have many years of experience in their field, but no teaching experience of any kind (Kreber, 2002; Kreber & Kanuka, 2013). Unfortunately, subject matter expertise alone does not necessarily lead to skilled teaching. An online

instructor must also possess skills in pedagogy, particularly in the area of online pedagogy (Bailey & Card, 2009; Z. Berge, 2008). These skill sets are entirely separate from subject matter expertise. They include understanding student learning and motivation, giving useful feedback, providing a sense of presence in an online course, and developing an effective learning community. Not only must an online instructor possess deep subject knowledge expertise and pedagogical skills, they also must understand ways to use the technology to best serve students' learning needs. These three separate skill sets are all critically necessary to produce quality online teaching (Kreber, 2002; Kreber & Kanuka, 2013; Marek, 2009; Mishra & Koehler, 2006).

In this study, a recurrent theme among participants was the conflation of these skill sets. Teaching skill was defined as primarily having greater subject knowledge than one's students. This definition, wherein students are seen as passive recipients of information, has been referred to in the literature as a teacher-centered approach and has been studied since the early 1990s (Kember & Kwan, 2000; Prosser & Trigwell, 1999; Trigwell, University of Technology, & Prosser, 1996). Instructors who expressed this opinion tended to see professional development as irrelevant. Since they defined quality teaching as subject matter expertise and knew they were already experts in their field, they did not see the value of professional development. This study builds on this work as was dramatically illustrated in a focus group where one instructor said a friend had asked him what he needed to learn to teach online. The participant answered, "You just show up. What you know is way more than they know." Instructors who expressed this opinion felt the professional development trainers had nothing to teach them because they held onto a belief that they already knew everything they needed to know to be a good teacher, which in their minds was subject matter expertise.

This study adds to the literature which posits that one key challenge for professional development is finding a way to communicate the importance of pedagogy to online instructors and send the message that teaching skills are separate from subject matter expertise (Baran et al., 2011; Gibbs & Coffey, 2004; McLoughlin & Samuels, 2002; Pelz, 2010; Postareff et al., 2008; Robinson & Hope, 2013). Akerlind (2005) posits that academics have a greater affiliation to their field than to teaching and Samuelowicz and Bain (2001) described teacher-centered beliefs as focusing on imparting subject knowledge. The importance of understanding both content and pedagogy is well established in the literature (Falk, 2006; Hutchings & Shulman, 1999; Robinson & Hope, 2013; Shulman & Shulman, 2004).

Instructors not only conflated subject matter expertise with teaching skill, but they also tended to equate online teaching skills with technological skills. When instructors talked about the skills needed to be a good online educator, they mentioned pedagogical skills. They would discuss the importance of student engagement, communicating effectively, and giving meaningful feedback. When asked what topics should be included in training for new online instructors, they also mentioned pedagogical skills. When they talked about skills they wanted to improve themselves, however, they focused primarily on technological skills. While they ranked pedagogy as important, they did not identify it as a key professional development need. They tended to identify their own skill needs as technology skills and talked about issues such as how to create videos, make podcasts and use the tools of the LMS more effectively.

When instructors tended to conflate teaching skill with subject matter expertise and online teaching skills with technology, they also tended to undervalue professional development that attempted to provide regular, ongoing improvement of pedagogical skills.

This tendency was expressed by one instructor who responded to a question about what he wanted to learn in the area of pedagogy when he replied, "I know it all." A small body of literature has emphasized the importance of shifting perceptions before attempting to improve teaching (Biggs, 2001; Ramsden, 2003; Trigwell et al., 1996). This study builds upon the research by Biggs (2001) who defined teacher-centered theory as assuming the teacher is the "guardian of knowledge" whose main purpose is to be an expert in the content. According to Biggs, when teachers hold this perception, they are less reflective of their teaching practice and less open to learning new techniques. This study supports that conclusion wherein instructors who saw their role as subject matter experts also expressed their lack of confidence in the value of professional development. Biggs (2001) also went on to lay some of the responsibility for this perception on department leaders, who he felt resisted the idea that teaching skills could be taught. This theme is supported by the next finding discussed, which examines the influences on instructor perceptions.

Influence of inconsistent messages on perceptions of professional development.

For faculty to perceive professional development as important, and thus be motivated to attend, a clear and consistent message needs to be sent regarding its value. What emerged from this study is that instructors often receive inconsistent messages regarding the value of professional development from organizational leadership, professional development staff, and other online instructors (Dede et al., 2009; Sorcinelli & Aitken, 1994; Sorcinelli et al., 2006; Steinert et al., 2009, 2010). This theme emerged from administrator statements that departments gave conflicting messages to instructors regarding the importance of professional development and from instructor comments regarding the way professional development was framed.

This study supports the findings of Steinert et al. (2009) who showed that faculty, in part, did not attend professional development programs when they were not given clear messages of their importance. According to Steinert, faculty were not motivated to attend when they perceived that quality teaching was undervalued by the institution or they perceived a lack of clear expectations on the part of chairs. This theme of setting clear expectations came up in this study and supports the available literature (Sorcinelli, 2000; Steinert et al., 2009, 2005).

The issue of inconsistent messaging may be something which needs to be addressed systemically. The organizational culture needs to support the idea that quality teaching is a core value (Austin & Sorcinelli, 2013; Sorcinelli & Aitken, 1994). A clear message needs to be sent during hiring that one of the ways a new instructor demonstrates a commitment to quality teaching is through regular, ongoing improvement of pedagogical skills. This message can advance the perceived value of professional development that addresses pedagogy. The message also needs to be sent by the development staff when they model best practices. Through this combined effort, instructors will see that the value of quality teaching is practiced throughout the organization.

Alignment of course evaluation and professional development.

When looking at online course evaluation, there are two separate and distinctive types of evaluation to examine. First, both institutions in this study used student evaluations of teaching, which are common throughout higher education. Much has been written on the validity and efficacy of these types of evaluations (Eiszler, 2002; Hativa, 1996; Kember et al., 2002; Herbert W. Marsh, 2007; H. W. Marsh, 1982; Wendorf & Alexander, 2005). While an in-depth discussion of the validity of these instruments is outside of the scope of this study, it

is clear from the literature that student evaluations alone may not be sufficient for evaluating effective pedagogy. While the student evaluation can show how an individual instructor's student feedback compares to others teaching at the same institution, it does not provide the data needed to identify trends and professional development needs (Ballantyne et al., 2000; Bangert, 2008; Fang, 2007; Herbert W. Marsh, 2007; M. Oliver, 2000; Song, 2006; Sonwalkar, 2002; Weschke & Canipe, 2010).

Both institutions also discussed the use of a quality assurance instrument. This evaluation tool was created and implemented by administrators. Student feedback was not included. The course is evaluated by development staff based on a variety of metrics which may include instructor engagement, course design and organization, functioning of support services, and so on. Both institutions in this study have built or are building their own metrics using existing models to inform their evaluation instrument (J. T. E. Richardson, 2005). These types of evaluations are intended not only to provide meaningful feedback to individual instructors, but also to identify trends, inform programming decisions, and evaluate the efficacy of the professional development itself.

Another key theme is the way in which online course evaluation is or is not fully integrated into the professional development processes. In interviews and focus groups, participants often responded to questions about this topic with surprise as if the question itself had caught them off guard. One administrator said she was a little embarrassed by the question because she felt this was something they should be talking about more.

The current evaluation systems are in place, but they do not yet fully fulfill the needs that exist for the data. The current system does identify problem areas for individual instructors; however, current processes of evaluation do not yet fully serve as a mechanism

for driving professional development at the departmental and organizational level. There has been limited research in this area, but Weschke and Canipe (2010) posit that evaluation is the "foundation on which communication with instructors is built." According to Fang (2007), one purpose of an evaluation is to improve teaching practice and form the basis of faculty professional development. This study builds upon this research in supporting the needs to better integrate professional development and course evaluation. To build professional development programs that are informed by effective needs analysis and evaluation data, an evaluation system is needed beyond student evaluations of teaching (Ballantyne et al., 2000; Bangert, 2004, 2006; Kember et al., 2002; Nasser & Fresko, 2002).

The theme that emerged from the data was course evaluations are not fully linked to professional development. Both administrators and instructors described student evaluations of teaching as having little value in assessing teaching quality for a variety of reasons. Participants felt the instrument itself was not useful and due to low response rates questioned data collection methods. Instructors reported that they often did not receive evaluation results, and when they did, they tended to dismiss the feedback as valueless because instructors believed results were not synthesized or reported back to them in a way that would benefit their teaching. Administrators stated student evaluation of teaching data were not often used to identify trends or problem areas or to inform professional development programming. The problem can be seen as a data usage issue. Because the data from evaluations is not intended to drive professional development programs, they are not used for this purpose.

Key administrators at both institutions were working to improve the existing methods of both evaluating online teaching and linking those evaluations to professional development

and were keenly aware of the importance of this feedback loop. Ensuring that the data are available and used to improve programming is a key goal at both participating institutions.

Evaluation of the professional development programs themselves was outside of the purpose of this study; however, it seems evident that this feedback loop can be more effective not only to intervene with individual instructors, but also as a tool for overall strategic planning and implementation of professional development programs and for evaluating the effectiveness of those programs.

Need for more professional development.

One surprising theme that emerged from this study is although instructors expressed some negative perceptions of professional development, they also expressed a desire for more of it. While the findings suggest nearly everyone can find fault with professional development, at the same time they want effective development that meets their needs.

One of the purposes of professional development for new online instructors is to help them build confidence in their new role. Teaching online can be frightening. Suddenly, experienced instructors are facing a completely new rulebook. One instructor who had an entire career of great student feedback suddenly found himself getting poor evaluations. It was personally devastating to him. Many instructors in extension are teaching for the first time. They have no training in pedagogy, which is not uncommon in higher education teaching generally (Dall'Alba, 2005; Reder, 2007; Samuelowicz & Bain, 1992; Schuck, Gordon, & Buchanan, 2008; Sorcinelli, 2000; Sorcinelli & Aitken, 1994; Trowler & Bamber, 2005; Wu, 2015). Putting instructors into online classes creates an entirely new set of challenges. Not only do they have to learn about teaching and learning generally, but at the same time they are faced with learning a raft of separate technology skills for online teaching

(Bailey & Card, 2009; Finch & Jacobs, 2012; J. Gaytan & McEwen, 2007; Goodyear et al., 2001; Lane, 2013; J. L. Lee & Hirumi, 2004).

A theme, which emerged from the findings, was that instructors wanted professional development that gave them a sense of confidence and resilience. When they came away from the training they received without that feeling of confidence, they tended to perceive professional development negatively. This tendency caused them to avoid additional professional development opportunities. For example, one instructor said when her first attempt to learn a new technology did not work, she gave up immediately.

An unexpected theme was that needs analysis was a recurrent theme throughout discussions. Instructors talked about how professional development is often pre-packaged programs without consideration of the needs of the online instructors. Another theme, which emerged from the data, was that instructors and administrators alike do not feel that professional development is effectively meeting the needs of instructors at every stage of their careers. There is a general perception that most professional development is geared at the beginning instructor. Instructors desired professional development which would take them to an advanced skill level.

Even though pedagogy is an obvious need for online instructors, it is equally important to have a comfort level with technology to effectively teach online (Lawless & Pellegrino, 2007; Signer, 2008; Surry & Land, 2000; Wilson & Stacey, 2004). It was surprising that there were instructors in this study who seemed to lack basic technology knowledge and skills. One instructor did not know how to upload a video to YouTube, create a link to a YouTube video, or use a webcam to create a video for an online course. Another could not narrate a PowerPoint slideshow, and another was unfamiliar with basic forms of

social media. Instructors were unfamiliar with the correct terminology for technology. For example, one instructor said, “I’d like to do that thing where you talk your lecture” instead of saying he wanted to learn how to podcast and another did not recognize the acronym LMS.

The four broad themes that emerged from the analysis of the data in this study suggest that one, a persistent belief exists that teaching is nothing more than subject matter expertise. This idea directly affects how instructors perceive the value of professional development, particularly when it comes to programs related to improving pedagogy. Second, that perceptions of professional development were influenced by inconsistent messages coming from a variety of sources. Third, that online course evaluation is not yet fully integrated with professional development processes. Finally, that more professional development is needed particularly if it provides an opportunity for community.

Limitations of the Study

This study was conducted at two major university extension programs. Both programs were located in wealthy communities; one in a large urban area, and the other in a suburban area. Both programs are self-sufficient entities that receive no public funding but are entirely financially dependent upon tuition. Both institutions strive to recruit well-known and recognizable experts in their field to teach in their online programs in order to provide prestige and make the programs more attractive to students. They are both located in an area where a culture of celebrity exists. These institutions may look different and have different needs than other extension programs. An extension program at a remote and rural community college, for instance, is less likely to be concerned with recruiting celebrity instructors.

Both institutions in this study have substantial resources and vast program offerings in a variety of subject matters. They are both part of a larger university system which

encompasses the state. They likely have more staff and resources than a smaller extension programs. This may make their professional development programs and evaluation systems quite different from a smaller extension program with fewer resources.

Since the programs are similar, it is not surprising that the needs of the online instructors teaching in these programs were also similar. The needs of instructors teaching at different types of extension programs may diverge significantly from those instructors participating in this study.

Another limitation of this study is social desirability bias. Fisher (1993) defines social desirability as the human tendency to present oneself in the best possible manner and give responses that the respondent believes are socially acceptable. This bias can distort information gained from self-reports. Since interviews and focus groups were a primary data collection method in this study, social desirability bias may be present. To help mitigate this tendency, some questions in both interviews and focus groups were presented in an indirect, projective manner. For example, one question was framed, "How do you believe most online instructors would react if they learned that ongoing professional development was now going to be a required part of teaching in this program?" Fisher (1993) demonstrated that indirect questioning did mitigate the social desirability bias and that respondents projected their own beliefs when responding to indirect questions.

Finally, consideration should be given to the differences in the survey response rates between the two sites. Northern University instructors responded at a rate of 23% while Western University instructors responded a rate over double that amount at 59%. The difference in response rates was due to disparate cultures at the two institutions. Both institutions came close to accurately predicting the response rate. In planning meetings,

Western University administrators said they expected a response rate of approximately 50%, and Northern University stated they expected a far lower response rate and did not anticipate anything greater than 20%. The lower response rate at Northern University may mean that the respondents are not fully representative of the online faculty at that institution.

Recommendations for Practice

The issue of how to improve perceptions of professional development and motivate instructors to attend is multifaceted and nuanced. To achieve the goal of quality online instruction, there is a need for a more consistent message from all quarters on the importance and value of quality online teaching and the role professional development plays in developing online instructors. To ensure the professional development is meeting the needs of online educators at every stage of their career, needs analysis must become a regular and ongoing part of professional development planning.

Consistent messages need to be sent regarding the value of professional development.

Institutional leadership that wants quality online teaching should send a consistent message that a commitment to learning and improving pedagogy is an important institutional value that needs to be practiced at every level of the organization. Leaders can reinforce this value by framing professional development as a key instrument for maintaining teaching quality. Educational leaders who are committed to quality online education should combat the tendency to conflate subject expertise and teaching skills. It has been argued that changing this concept of a teacher-centered approach is actually a prerequisite to changing pedagogy (Ho, Watkins, & Kelly, 2001; Oosterheert & Vermunt, 2003). This study builds upon the idea that to shift perceptions of professional development, leaders need to first address mistaken

perceptions of teaching itself. When department leaders select online instructors, some attention should be given to the individual's openness to the idea of pedagogy and their desire to develop teaching skills. Additional attention should be given to the comfort level with technology a new online instructor brings to the position. Department leaders should seek online instructors who demonstrate not only subject matter expertise, but a commitment to ongoing professional development in the areas of pedagogy and using technology.

Professional development staff needs the support of department leadership in communicating the value the institution places on quality online teaching and the important role that professional development plays in ensuring that quality. Organizational leadership should advocate for consistent, ongoing professional development that serves both new and veteran online instructors.

Evaluation of online teaching should be used to inform professional development.

It seems clear from the research that professional development and evaluation should be inextricably linked. When an instructor receives feedback on teaching, it is an opportunity to reinforce the role of professional development. Improving the perception of professional development can be aided by framing it as a solution to challenges an instructor faces.

Additionally, evaluation data are needed to inform professional development programs at the individual instructor, department and program level. Professional development should be included in the evaluation loop. First, a quality evaluation instrument is needed which provides good data. Next, the data need to be analyzed in a way that not only identifies issues at the individual instructor level, but also looks at department and even institutional concerns. Then, a feedback loop is needed to ensure that all stakeholders, including professional development staff, have access to important information. The evaluation feedback loops need

to identify "next steps" which can inform individual instructor interventions and strategic programming decision-making.

Needs analysis should be included in professional development planning.

A recurrent theme in this study was the request for greater needs analysis. Instructors felt their needs were not always taken into consideration by those creating professional development programs. When administrators use student complaints as an indicator of what kind of training is needed, it can create programs based on a perception of need, rather than addressing actual needs. Consideration must be given to what instructors feel their needs are, but additional analysis should be based on evaluation data to determine overall themes and areas of weakness.

Suggestions for Future Research

One area where there is a gap in the literature is the integration of online course evaluation and professional development. Nearly all the literature in this area focuses on how to evaluate the online course (Achtemeier et al., 2003; Anderson et al., 2001; Bangert, 2006; Z. Berge & Myers, 2000; M. Oliver, 2000). There are only a small number of studies that have looked at the ways in which the evaluations are used to improve online teaching practice (Shagrir, 2012; Smith, 2008; Weschke & Canipe, 2010). Ballantyne et al. (2000) suggest that the usefulness of evaluation rests upon the extent to which is it used to improve teaching, and Shagrir (2012) examines how evaluation affects professional development; however, neither study dealt with online education or the professional development planning process. Smith (2008) looked at how individual instructors used their evaluations to improve their practice but did not explore the role of professional development staff. Fang (2007) proposed a model for identifying categories of performance problems with some suggested interventions. A

closer examination of how evaluation is used to drive professional development would help shed light on this important method of ensuring that the needs of online faculty for training and development are being met.

It might help inform the needs analysis to examine models where the professional development staff is the driving force behind the evaluation of online pedagogy. More research can be done on how institutions of higher education provide professional development that meets the needs of both novice and veteran online instructors. Models, where these two areas of needs have been successfully addressed, would provide some essential insights to inform professional development practice.

Research at other types of extensions and at degree granting institutions may provide a better understanding of the needs of online instructors and how those needs differ at different institutions.

Conclusions

Discovering how online instructors perceive professional development is an important step towards motivating them to attend. Discovering their needs is a critical factor in ensuring the professional development serves to improve online teaching practice. Determining how evaluation is linked to professional development processes is an important element in making the entire system effective. All of these elements taken together are integral to improving the quality of online teaching.

Professional development is a key method used within some institutions of higher education for training instructors in specific teaching skills and pedagogical practices. Whether professional development takes the form of orientation, workshops, webinars or long-term training programs, if done effectively, it can meet the needs of online instructors for

skills development in several critical areas. Professional development alone, however, may not be the single answer nor the best tool for improving all aspects of online teaching. As this study suggests, the leadership of the organization has a key responsibility for communicating the value the organization places on quality teaching. In addition, mentorships, one-on-one coaching, and professional learning communities all can play a significant role in reinforcing a culture the values high quality teaching within an institution. Since professional development will continue to be a critical element in training online instructors, however, it is incumbent upon professionals in the field to ensure that that the needs of online instructors are being fully met at every stage of their career.

The role and background of the researcher.

My passion for education comes from a deeply personal understanding of the transformational nature of higher education. As a first generation college student who was marked from an early age as being not "smart enough" for college, I know that students like me faced painful challenges before finally making it to college. For many such students, effective teaching can mean the difference between success and failure.

Like many of my colleagues, I entered teaching at UCSD Extension and the San Diego Community College District without a single day of training nor any concept of effective pedagogy. In fact, my first exposure to the field was being tasked with providing professional development for the branch campus of my own institution ten years later.

Even though I had always received positive feedback on my student evaluations, like many teaching in higher education, I had no real concept of how to systematically evaluate and improve my own teaching practice. When I was thrust into the role of improving pedagogy on my branch campus, I began to see how pervasive this lack of understanding was.

Upon completion of a certificate in online teaching from the University of California at San Diego, I was given the position of e-Learning Instructional Specialist for my own institution. In this new position, my focus shifted to online teaching and learning.

I have been teaching in higher education for over 25 years. For 14 of those years, I have been a faculty development professional, and for four of those years I have worked with online instructors. I have a direct relationship to the subject of my study, and a profound interest in improving teaching in higher education generally and in online courses specifically.

As I move forward in my career, this study will help inform my own practice when considering the strategic planning of professional development programs. This study has strengthened my resolve to engage in regular, ongoing needs analysis and to continue to advocate for the importance of professional development with organizational leadership. Whenever possible, data from needs analysis can be used to show the areas of greatest need and to show the vital role professional development plays in ensuring quality online teaching. It will be important to encourage leadership to frame professional development as valuable, especially at the hiring level.

When working directly with online instructors, it is critically important to continue to model best practices, particularly when conducting orientation or training for new faculty. During orientation, a focus needs to be put on convincing instructors of the need for pedagogical training. In my own practice, I will seek new ways to create a sense of community for the online instructor and for using instructors own voices in new faculty orientation and training programs.

Finally, this study has spurred my interest in learning more about how to connect online course evaluation with professional development program planning. This seems to be a promising area of research that I would like to explore more fully in the future.

Appendix A

Survey Instrument

Thank you for participating in the research study for faculty development for online educators.

This survey will ask you a series of questions related to faculty professional development. For the purpose of this study, **faculty professional development** is defined as any formal workshop, in-service, faculty roundtable, new faculty orientation, or training program provided by your institution whether on campus or online. It does not include any workshop, education or training, whether formal or informal done outside of your institution, such as a conference, certificate program, etc.

The information collected in this survey will be used to help create faculty development programs that better meet the needs of online faculty. Your responses are completely confidential and will not impact your employment or relationship with your institution.

Thank you for your time.

	This section will ask questions some basic informational questions about your teaching background.
Q1	How many years have you been teaching in higher education? □ 0-3 □ 4-10 □ 11-20 □ 20+
Q2	How long have you been teaching online? □ 0-3 years □ 4-10 years □ 11-20 years □ 20+ years
Q3	At what institutions do you currently teach online? □ Western University □ Northern University □ Other
Q4	How many classes do you typically teach one in one quarter or semester? □ 1 □ 2 □ 3 □ 4

	☐ 5 ☐ 5+
Q5	What modes do you teach in? (Please select all that apply.) ☐ Face-to-face ☐ Online ☐ Blended (some face-to-face and some online sessions)
	This section will ask questions about how the kinds of faculty professional development you have received.
Q6	Which of the following best describes the new faculty orientation you received when you first started teaching at online? ☐ Received no orientation ☐ Received informal orientation (meetings with chair, other instructors, IT people, etc.) ☐ Received face-to-face formal orientation ☐ Received face-to-face formal orientation specific to teaching online ☐ Received online orientation ☐ Received online orientation specific to teaching online
Q7	What general content was covered in your orientation? (Please check all that apply.) ☐ Human resources policies ☐ Overview of staff roles ☐ Course planning ☐ Teaching methods ☐ Technology training ☐ Classroom management ☐ Other
Q8	What content specific to teaching online was covered in your orientation? (Please check all that apply.) ☐ How to use the LMS ☐ Best practices for teaching online ☐ Creating online presence ☐ Communication policies ☐ Writing curriculum for the online environment ☐ Methods for creating community online ☐ Creating media for your online course ☐ Other

		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Q9	Faculty development programs can greatly benefit my teaching.				
Q10	I learn new teaching methods and techniques when I attend workshops or training programs.				

Q11	I change specific teaching methods or techniques as a result of workshops or training programs I attend.				
Q12	My needs for faculty development are being completely met.				
Q13	My institution offers professional development opportunities for me to improve my teaching skills and methods.				
Q14	My institution offers professional development opportunities for me to learn new technologies related to teaching.				
Q15	My institution offers professional development specifically related to teaching online.				
Q16	In the past year, how many formal programs on teaching methods or skills were you aware of being offered at your institution? ☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4+				
	This section will ask about your motivations regarding attending faculty professional development.				
Q17	In the past year, how many times have you attended formal training programs on teaching methods or skills at your institution? ☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4+				

Q18	Please rank the following items on how much they motivate you to attend available faculty professional development.				
		Very important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Not important
	The time and location is convenient				
	The topic or speaker interests me.				
	I feel it would benefit my teaching.				
	I want to get together with colleagues.				

	My department chair or administrator asks me to attend.				
	I am compensated for attending.				
	It will impact the number of classes I am offered.				
	It will provide me with skills I need to improve my teaching.				

Q19	Please rank the following items on how much of an obstacle they are to you attending available faculty professional development.				
		Strong obstacle	Moderate obstacle	Slight obstacle	No obstacle
	I don't learn about it with enough advance notice to plan.				
	Not enough time to attend.				
	Inconvenient location.				
	Inconvenient time.				
	Topic or speaker is not interesting to me.				
	I don't feel it would benefit my teaching.				
	I won't receive sufficient compensation.				
	I don't believe I will learn anything that will improve my teaching.				

	This section will ask about the kinds of faculty professional development you would be interested in.				
Q20	Please rate your interest in the following topics as potential areas for faculty development opportunities.				
		Strong interest	Moderate interest	Slight interest	No interest
	Increasing student motivation				
	Engaging students in discussions				
	Tips for grading				
	Creative problem solving				
	Dealing with student crisis				

	Incorporating active learning into the class				
	Using organizational tools to enhance student learning				
	Detecting and addressing plagiarism				
	Creating effective lesson plans				
	Creating real world assignments or assessments				
	Developing students' critical thinking skills				
	Trends in higher education				
	Time management				
	Curriculum development for educators				
	Writing a student centered syllabus				
	Effective lecturing				
	Developing rubrics for assessing assignments and projects				
	Grading group work				
	Current research in higher education				
	Other:				
Q21	Please rate your interest in the following topics as potential areas for computer training opportunities.				
		Strong interest	Moderate interest	Slight interest	No interest
	Teaching with technology				
	Improving your class website				
	Creating video tutorials				
	Finding alternatives to PowerPoint				
	Using game based learning				
	Current research in educational technology				
	Other:				
Q22	Please rate your interest in the following topics as potential areas for faculty development opportunities related to online teaching.				
	How to get the most out of the LMS				

	Online course development				
	Best practices for teaching online				
	Creating social presence in an online course				
	Writing curriculum for the online environment				
	Creating media for your online course				
	Communicating policies and expectations in an online environment				
	Methods for creating community online				
	Effective use of media				
	Creating interactive online content				
	Current research on online education				
	Other:				
	This section will ask questions about the way you would prefer faculty professional development be designed.				
Q23	Please rate your interest in the following methods of faculty development.				
		Strong interest	Moderate interest	Slight interest	No interest
	Peer-to-peer exchanges of ideas				
	Hands on learning				
	An opportunity for reflection				
	Guest speakers				
	Lecture series				
	“Brown bag” lunch meetings				
	Online components				
	Opportunities to problem solve				
	Case studies				
	Combination of presentation, group/interactive work and discussion				
	Book discussions				
	Observing video teaching followed by a facilitated discussion				

	Other:				

Q24	I would prefer the following mode of training or development: ☐ Face-to-face ☐ Online ☐ Blended (some face-to-face and some online)
Q25	I would prefer to learn: ☐ By myself ☐ In a small group ☐ In a large group
Q26	In a faculty development program, I would prefer to learn with: ☐ Faculty teaching the same courses ☐ Faculty teaching in the same department ☐ Faculty from other departments

		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Q27	I would be more likely to attend a workshop if it was held on a day when I was already on campus.				
Q28	I would be more likely to attend a workshop if I could attend virtually.				
Q29	If I felt it would improve my teaching skills, I would attend a multi-day program.				
Q30	I would be more likely to join an ongoing group of other faculty than attend a one-time workshop.				
Q32	How would you prefer to receive information about upcoming programs, events, or materials? ☐ Email ☐ Flyer in my campus mailbox ☐ Posters ☐ Announcement within the LMS				

Thank you for taking your time to complete this survey. Your input is greatly valued and appreciated.

If you would like to be entered in the drawing for the $50 gift card, please include your email address here:

Appendix B

Faculty Interview Protocols

Name of interviewee:	**Date:**
Place of interview:	Time:
Conditions:	

Question Type	**Question**	**Follow up**	**Notes**	**RQ#**
Welcome and Consent	Thank you so much for taking your time to participate in this interview today. The information you provide in this interview will be used to inform the field of faculty professional development and, ultimately, improve online courses for students. We want to learn from your expertise and we are interested in anything you wish to share about your experience teaching online. There is an information sheet which explains your rights as a study participant. Take a moment to look it			

	over. Continuing indicates that you have given consent to be part of this study. Are there any questions on that information? Before we start, let me assure you that any comments you make will be collected and synthesized and reported in the aggregate. Individual identities will be kept confidential. The interview will be recorded so I can accurately represent everything that you say. You can ask to stop the recording or the interview at any time. Do you have any questions before we begin?			
Warm up	Tell me a little bit about how you decided to teach online courses?			
Key question	What was your background and experience with online learning before you started teaching online?	• What online courses had you taken? • What online courses had you planned or developed?		2

		• What technologies had you learned? • What kinds of online pedagogies did you have familiarity with?		
Key question	Think back to when you first started teaching online. What were some of the fears you had when you first began?	•		2
Key question	Can you share an experience where you felt you needed more training?	• What happened? • What went on? • What did students say or do? • What did you feel? • What did you wish you had had at that time? • When this was happening, what were you most afraid of? • Do you think your experience is typical of most online instructors?		2
Key question	Can you share what you remember as the most upsetting incident?	• What happened? • What went on? • What did students say or do? • How did you feel about what was happening? • How did you feel about the support you received at the time?		2

		• What was so upsetting about this incident? • What do you wish had happened that didn't? • How did you resolve the situation? • What skills did you bring to bear? • Do you think your experience is typical of most online instructors?		
Key question	Can you share an experience where you felt you were most successful?	• What happened? • What went on? • What did students say/do? • How did you feel about what was happening? • What enabled you to be most successful? • What skills did you bring to bear?		2
Key question	At a time when a barrier arose, what are some of the things you did to solve that problem?	• What of those things do you feel were most successful? • How did you feel about the support you received at the time? • What do you wish you had had that you didn't?		2
Key question	In your opinion, what are the most important skills for online educator?	• What do you see as the biggest problems in the field of online teaching?		2

Key question	What do you believe are the best ways to engage online students?	• How do you feel about the methods for student engagement that are available to you in the online format? • What methods have you used to keep your students focused and on task that you feel have been particularly successful? • What methods have you tried that you have found to be less successful? • Are there any methods you would like to try but haven't had an opportunity to yet? Why not? • Are there things you wish you could do but aren't able to? Perhaps something that works well in a face-to-face class that you haven't been able to duplicate online? Can you give me an example?		2
Transition	**Next, I'd like to hear about your experiences with faculty professional development. For the purpose of this study, faculty professional development is defined as any formal workshop, in-service, faculty roundtable, new faculty orientation, or training program provided by the**			

	institution where you were teaching at the time. It does not include any personal professional development, such as conferences, workshops, education or training, whether formal or informal done on your own initiative.			
Key question	Many people see PD as ineffective. How would you describe your experience with PD overall?	• What about it do you like? • What about it don't you like?		1
Key question	Could you describe any formal training you received before you taught online for the first time.	• How did you feel about the experience? • Were there enough sessions? • Did you like the method of delivery? • What parts of the content did you find most useful? • What parts of the training did you like the least? • How would you have liked it to be different? • What do you wish it had included that it didn't?		2a

		• Do you think your experience is typical of most online instructors?		
Key question	Can you describe the best PD experience you have ever had?	• How did you feel about the experience? • What about it was enjoyable? What about it was helpful? • Was there something about the content that you found particularly useful? Can you give me an example of how you used it? • Was there something about the way the PD was delivered that it made effective? • How was this experience different than other PD you have participated in? • Did you try a new technique? • Did you use a new technology? • Did you adapt something you were already doing in a new way?	*What do these things have in common?* *Probe for specifics.*	1
Key question	Can you describe the worst PD experience you have ever had?	• How did you feel about the experience? • What about it made it such a poor experience?	*What themes emerge here?* *Probe for specifics.*	1

		• Was there something about the content you didn't find useful? Can you give me an example? • What there something about the way it was delivered that you found unhelpful? What? • How would you have liked that experience to have been different? • What would have made you glad you had attended? • What do you wish had been provided that wasn't? • Do you think your experience is typical of most online instructors?		
Key question	Think about the most recent experience you have had with PD. Can you describe that?	• How did you feel about the experience? • Was there enough time to get what you needed? • Did you like the method of delivery? What was that method? • What parts of the content did you find most useful? • What parts of the training did you like the least? • How would you have liked it to have been different?		

		• What do you wish it had included that it didn't?		
Key question	Can you think of an experience where you learned something in PD that you applied immediately in your class?	• What was it used? • How did you implement it? • How did you feel about using this new idea? • How did it work out? • What might you have wanted to know that you learned later? • Did you feel there were any drawbacks to using this new idea? What were they?		

Key question	Why do you think most instructors attend PD?	• How would you feel most instructors would react if they learned that regular, ongoing PD was going to become a requirement for teaching?
		• What do you think most instructors gain from attending PD?
		• What topics do you think have the best chance of helping most instructors improve their online teaching?
		• What are you, personally, hoping to gain when you go?
		  • Are you looking for specific skills? In what areas?
		  • Are there certain topics that draw your interest more than others? What would those be?
				1
				1a

		Can you give me a couple of examples? • Are you looking for more broad information? Like what? • What topics do you think most instructors want that aren't covered now? • What topics do you think most instructors have little interest in hearing more about?		
Key question	Why do you think many people choose not to attend PD?	• As an instructor, what advice would you give to PD professionals on how to encourage more faculty to attend PD? • What would get more instructors to attend? • What wouldn't work?		1a
Key question	Can you talk about your experience with PD specifically for teaching online?	What about it was useful? What about it was frustrating?	*Only if there previous examples are unrelated to online teaching.*	1
Key question	What do you see as the greatest need for professional development in the field of online teaching?	• What do you think PD professionals could do to better meet the needs of online instructors? • How could PD better target these needs?		2

Key question	If PD professionals were designing a training program for new online instructors and asked for your advice, what kinds of things would you want taken into consideration?	• What advice would you give? • What topics would you want to see included? • What kinds of technologies would you want to make sure instructors knew? • How would you want new instructors prepared for the challenges they might face in their first online course? • What would want to see included on how to engage students? • What would you want new instructors to learn about how to best achieve student learning outcomes?		2b

Key question	If PD professionals were designing an ongoing program of PD for experienced online instructors and asked you for your advice, what would you want them to think about?	• What kinds of topics would you advise them to include?
		• What kinds of topics would you advise them to stay away from?
		• What kinds of formats would you encourage them to try? What kinds would you advise them to avoid?
		  ○ Where would it be held? Online? Face-to-face? A combination?
		  ○ How long would it be?
		  ○ Would there be speakers?
				2
				2a

		○ Would it be more hands-on? ○ Would you advise having instructors work alone or with others? • How would you advise them to make this the most useful for experienced instructors? • How would you advise them to make this meaningful to instructors who are already skilled online instructors?		
Key question	As an online instructor, what kinds of professional development do you believe have the best chance of improving the quality of online courses?		*Probe for specifics.*	2 a
Key question	As you move forward in your online teaching, what kinds training do you feel would best meet your personal needs?			2b
Key question	If someone were to create a PD program that met the specific needs you have identified here today, how likely would you be to attend?			2a
Transition	**Finally, I would like to hear your views on the ways in which your online teaching is assessed.**			

Key question	If pedagogy is going to be evaluated, how could that be done so that we could better target professional development?	• What kinds of evaluation has the best chance to improve the teaching in online courses? • What kinds of evaluation would best inform the field of professional development? • What kinds of feedback do you think best helps individual instructors improve their own teaching? • How does the feedback you have received compare to what you would like to have?		3 3a
Key question	How do you feel about the quality of the feedback you currently receive on your online teaching?	• How does the feedback you personally receive compare to what you would like to have? • What would you like to taken into consideration that isn't? • What would you like to see eliminated? Why?		3a
Key question	If you were to give advice to someone creating an evaluation instrument for the teaching *only* of an online class, what would you say?	• What would you advise them to include? • What would you encourage them to avoid? • Are there any criteria that you would argue are essential? • Are there any criteria that you think should be more malleable?		3

Key question	If you knew your online pedagogy was going to be evaluated, what would you want to know?	• What kinds of PD could be prepare you for such an evaluation?		3
Closing	Are there any other questions I should have asked?	Do you have anything else you would like to say about your experience with faculty development for online educators?		
	Thank you so much for sharing your insights today. **If you know anyone who would be willing to be interviewed on this topic, please let them know about the study and send them my contact information.**			

Appendix C

Administrator Interview Protocols

Name of interviewee:	**Date:**
Place of interview:	Time:
Conditions:	

Question Type	**Question**	**Follow up**	**Notes**	**RQ#**
Welcome and Consent	Thank you so much for taking your time to participate in this interview today. The information you provide in this interview will be used to inform the field of faculty professional development and, ultimately, improve online courses for students. We want to learn from your expertise and we are interested in anything you wish to share about your experience teaching online. There is an information sheet which explains your rights as a study participant. Take a moment to look it			

	over. Continuing indicates that you have given consent to be part of this study. Are there any questions on that information? Before we start, let me assure you that any comments you make will be collected and synthesized and reported in the aggregate. Individual identities will be kept confidential. The interview will be recorded so I can accurately represent everything that you say. You can ask to stop the recording or the interview at any time. Do you have any questions before we begin?			
Warm up	Tell me a little bit about how you became involved in online education?	• Can you walk me through what your role is in regards to online education? • How do you interact with faculty? • What is your role in training and developing online faculty?		
Key question	When an instructor is new to online teaching, what sort of expectations	•		2

	do you think they bring to the table about what it is going to be like?			
Transition	Next, I'd like to hear about your experiences with faculty professional development. For the purpose of this study, faculty professional development is defined as any formal workshop, in-service, faculty roundtable, new faculty orientation, or training program provided by the institution. It does not include any personal professional development an instructor does on their own initiative, such as conferences, workshops, education or training.			
Key question	How would you describe your experience with PD overall?	• What about it do you like? • What about it don't you like?		1
Key question	In your opinion, what are the most important skills for online educator?			2
Key question	I'd like you to think back through your time as an administrator who deals with online instructors. Can you describe one of your most challenging issues with an instructor you felt was not serving students well?	• What happened? • What went on? • What did the students say or do? • What did the instructor say or do? • What did you wish the instructor knew how to handle better than they did?		

		• When this was happening, what concerned you most? • Do you think this kind of experience is typical of most administrators?		
Key question	Can you share an experience where you felt an instructor you worked with needed more training?	• What were the skills they needed to improve most? • Why was this training needed? • How did you feel about the training that was available? • Did you feel the instructor was well served by the available training? • What would you have liked to see be available that wasn't? • Do you think this is a common problem?		
Key question	Can you share an experience where you felt an instructor handled a challenging situation skillfully?	• What happened? • How were they able to rise to the challenge? • What skills did they bring to bear to resolve the situation? • What did they do that you wished more instructors would do in a like circumstance?		
Key question	How do you want online instructors to engage their online students?	• What skills do you want them to bring to bear?		

		• What kinds of methods do you think are most effective? • How often do you feel instructors use those skills? • What training do you think would help instructors improve upon these type of engagement skills?		
Key question	Could you describe what your ideal professional development for your online instructors would be like?	• What content would you like to see covered? • What specific technical skills would you like instructors to receive? • How does the PD you are familiar with compare with your ideal?	*Probe for specifics.*	2 a
Key question	What has your experience been with faculty development for online educators?	• Can you describe your programs? • What has been your experience regarding the way faculty respond to such programs?		2
Key question	Why do you think most instructors attend PD?	• How do you think your instructors would react if they learned that regular, ongoing PD was going to become a requirement for teaching? • What do you think most instructors gain from attending PD? • What topics do you think have the best chance of helping instructors improve their online teaching? • What topics do you think most instructors want?		

		• What topics do you think instructors want that aren't being covered now? • What topics do you think most instructors have little interest in hearing more about?		
Key question	Why do you think that many people choose not to attend PD?	• As an administrator, what advice would you give to PD professionals on how to encourage more faculty to attend PD? • What would get more instructors to attend? • What wouldn't work?		
Key question	If PD professionals were designing a training program for new online educators and asked for your advice, what kinds of things would you want taken into consideration?	• What advice would you give? • What topics would you want to see included? • What kinds of technologies would you want to make sure instructors knew? • How would you want new instructors prepared for the challenges they might face in their first online course? • What would you want to see included on how to engage online students? • What would you want new instructors to learn about how to best achieve student learning outcomes?		2a
Key question	If PD professionals were designing an ongoing program of PD for experienced online instructors and	• What kinds of topics would you advise them to include?		2 2a

	asked you for your advice, what would you want them to think about?	• What kinds of topics would you advise them to stay away from?
		• What kinds of formats would you encourage them to try? What kinds would you advise them to avoid?
		  o Where would it be held? Online? Face-to-face? A combination?
		  o How long would it be?
		  o Would there be speakers?
		  o Would it be more hands-on?
		  o Would you advise having instructors work alone or with others?
		• How would you advise them to make this the most useful for experienced instructors?
		• How would you advise them to make this meaningful to instructors who are already skilled online instructors?		

Key question	As an administrator, what kinds of professional development do you believe have the best chance of improving the quality of online courses?		*Probe for specifics.*	2 a
Transition	Next, I'd like to hear about your experiences with evaluating the quality of online teaching.			

Key question	If pedagogy is going to be evaluated, how could that be done so that we could better target professional development?	• What kinds of evaluation has the best chance to improve the teaching in online courses? • What kinds of evaluation would best inform the field of professional development? • What kinds of feedback do you think best helps individual instructors improve their own teaching? • How does the feedback you have received compare to what you would like to have?		3 3a
Key question	How do you currently assess the quality of teaching in your online courses?	• What standards or criteria do you use to determine if the pedagogy is effective? • What evaluation instruments do you use?		3
Key question	Tell me what kinds of feedback on teaching do feel most improves teaching practice?	• What kinds of feedback do you typically see given to online instructors? • Student evaluations? • Peer reviews? • Formative assessments?		3a
Key question	Tell me about your experiences with the way that feedback is received or utilized.	• Do you see changes in teaching based on the feedback? • What kinds of changes? • What would you like to see that you aren't seeing now?	*Probe for specifics.*	3a
Key question	What kinds of feedback would you like to see provided to online instructors?	• What would you like instructors to learn from students? • What would you like instructors to learn from other online faculty?		3

Key question	If you were to give advice to someone creating an evaluation instrument for the teaching *only* of an online class, what would you say?	• What would you advise them to include? • What would you encourage them to avoid? • Are there any criteria that you would argue are essential? • Are there any criteria that you think should be more malleable?		3
Closing	Are there any other questions I should have asked?	Do you have anything else you would like to say about your experience with faculty development for online educators?		
	Thank you so much for sharing your insights today. **If you know anyone who would be willing to be interviewed on this topic, please let them know about the study and send them my contact information.**			

Appendix D

Focus Group Protocols

Place of focus group:	Date:
Number of Participants:	Time:
Conditions:	

Question Type	Question	Follow up	Notes	RQ#
Welcome and Norms	Thank you so much for taking your time to participate in this focus group today. There is an information sheet which explains your rights as a study participant. Take a moment to look it over. Continuing indicates that you have given consent to be part of this study. Are there any questions on that information? Before we start, let me suggest some guidelines that will help make this all work.			

	• We will be recording to ensure an accurate record. Please speak one at a time and state your name before commenting. • We will maintain your confidentiality. Nothing will identify you or your institution. • Please respect the confidentiality of everyone here. Let's all agree that anything said here, stays here. • I will ask questions and listen. I won't participate in the conversation. Feel free to respond directly to each other. Do you have any questions before we begin?			
Introductions	Please tell us your first name and what courses you teach online.			
Warm up	How did you get started teaching online?	What were some of your early experiences teaching online?		2
Key question	As you approached your first online course, what were some of your fears or concerns?			2

Key question	What training did you receive before you started teaching online?	What kind of training would have been helpful that you did not receive?		2
Transition	**Next, I'd like to CREATE A LIST of important skills and qualities for an online educator. Please share anything at all that you think is important.**	Are there certain technical competencies that are needed? Are there personality traits that might make a difference?		2
Key question	If someone were approaching online teaching for the first time, what kind of training would you advise them to get?	What kind of technology training? What kind of pedagogy training?		2
Transition	Next, I'd like to hear about your experiences with faculty professional development. For the purpose of this study, faculty professional development is defined as any formal workshop, in-service, faculty roundtable, new faculty orientation, or training program provided by the institution where you were teaching at the time. It does not include any personal professional development, such as conferences, workshops, education or training, whether formal			

	or informal done on your own initiative.			
Key question	How would you describe your experience with PD overall?	Are there any issues specifically related to PD for teaching online that you would like to share?		1
Key question	What motivates you to attend PD?	What are the biggest motivators? Are there certain topics that draw your interest more than others?		1a
Key question	Can you describe the best PD experience you have ever had?	How did this experience inform your teaching? Probe for specifics. • Did you try a new technique? • Did you use a new technology? • Did you adapt something you were already doing in a new way?	*What do these things have in common?*	1
Key question	Can you describe the worst PD experience you have ever had?	What made this experience so negative?	*What themes emerge here?*	1

		Probe for specifics. • Was it the content? • Was it something about the way it was provided? • Was it something about providers?		
Key question	Thinking back to your most recent experience with PD for online teaching, what are some specific techniques you learned from that PD that you have used in your online courses?	Have you added a new technology? Have you tried a new method of engaging students?		1a
Transition	Many people say that time is the biggest reason they don't attend PD, but some people don't attend even when they have the time.			
Key question	Can you share anything that has prevented you from attending faculty development programs in the past?	Beyond time and convenience, is there anything else?		1a
Key question	What advice would you give to PD professionals to encourage more attendance at available training opportunities?			1 a

Key question	Could you describe what your ideal professional development would be like?	Probe for specifics. • Where would it be held? • How long would it be? • What format would it take? • Would there be speakers? • Would it be more hands-on? • Would you be working alone or with others?		2 a
Key question	What do you see as advantages of face-to-face PD?	What are some of the drawbacks of face-to-face PD?		2 a
Key question	What do you see as advantages of online PD?	What are some of the drawbacks of online PD?		2 a
Transition	**Next, we'd like to dig a little deeper into the kinds of PD you would find most useful. I'd like to CREATE A LIST of the kind of content you might recommend for PD for online educators.**			
Key question	If PD professionals were designing a training program for new online instructors, what things would you advise them to include?	What kinds of technologies do you think are important to understand online teaching? What kinds of pedagogies do you think would be important to include?		2b

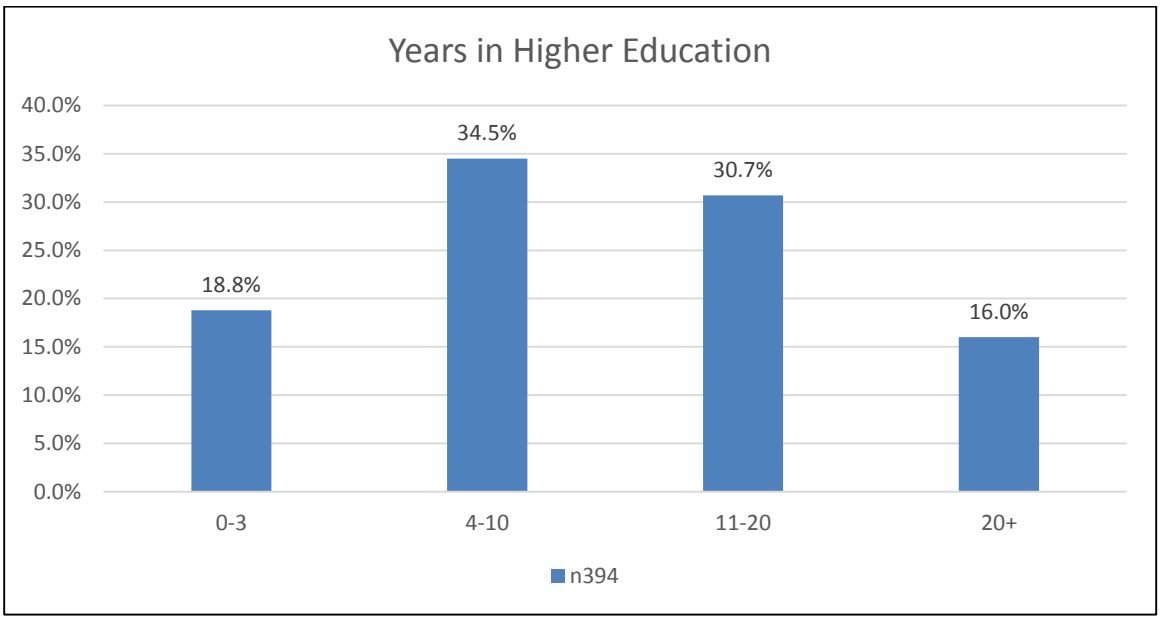
Key question	If PD professionals were designing a different training program for instructors who were more experienced teaching online, what things would you advise them to include?			2b
Key question	As you move forward in your online teaching, what kinds training do you need or want?			2b
Closing	Is there any more advice you would give on how to better meet the training and development needs of online instructors. Is there anything else you would like to share regarding online teaching or faculty development?			
	Thank you so much for sharing your insights today. **If you know anyone who would be willing to be interviewed on this topic, please let them know about the study and send them my contact information.**			

Evaluation Questions		If there is additional time, ask about evaluation.		
Key question	What kinds of feedback on your online teaching would you find most helpful?	How does this compare with the kind of feedback you currently receiving?		3
Key question	If you were creating an evaluation instrument for the teaching *only* of an online class, what would you want to include?	What would be the most important things to include? What criteria or standards would you see as useful and reasonable?		3
Key question	How would you use the results of such an evaluation instrument to inform your teaching in your online course?			3 a

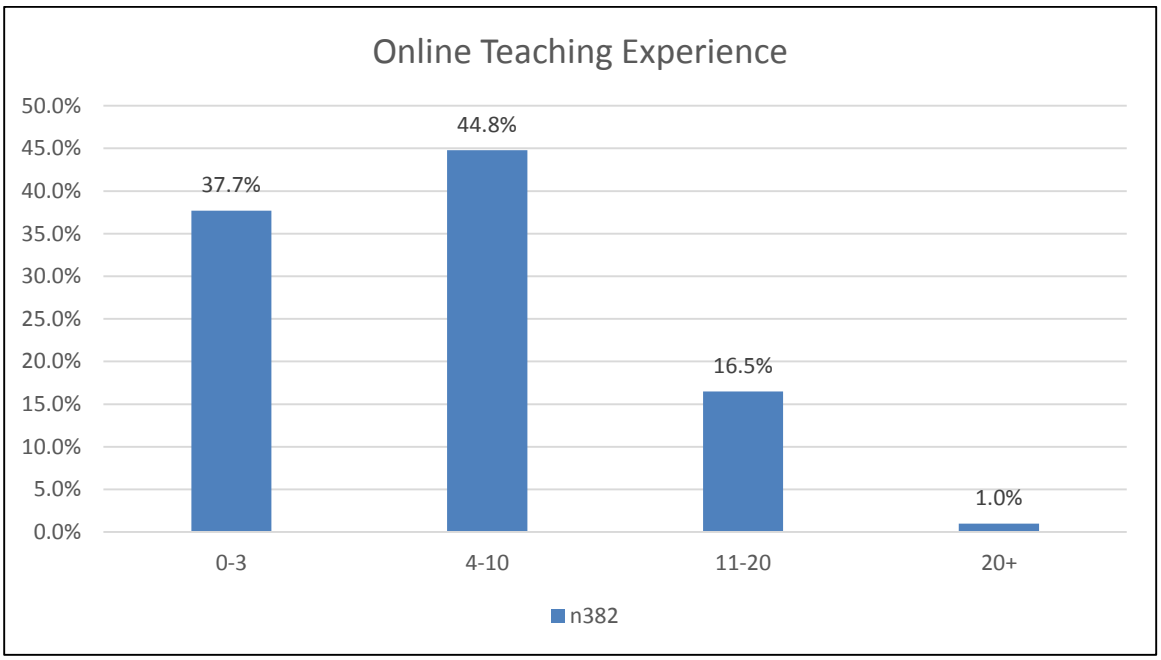
Appendix E

Survey Data

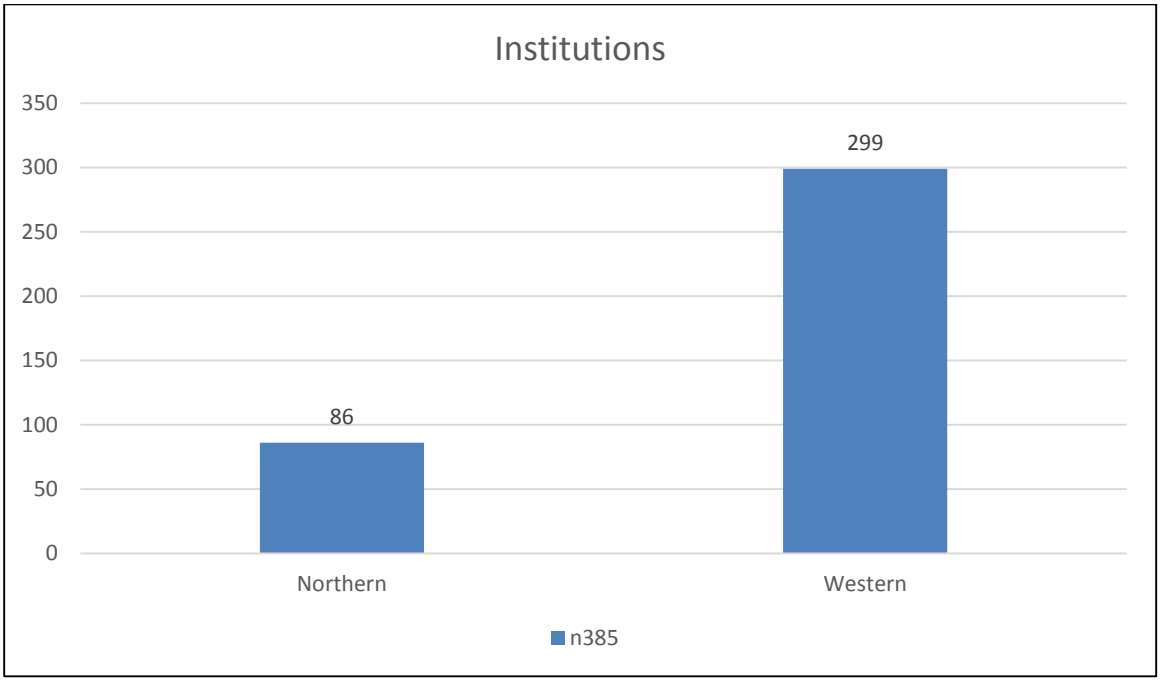
Question 1: How many years have you been teaching in higher education?



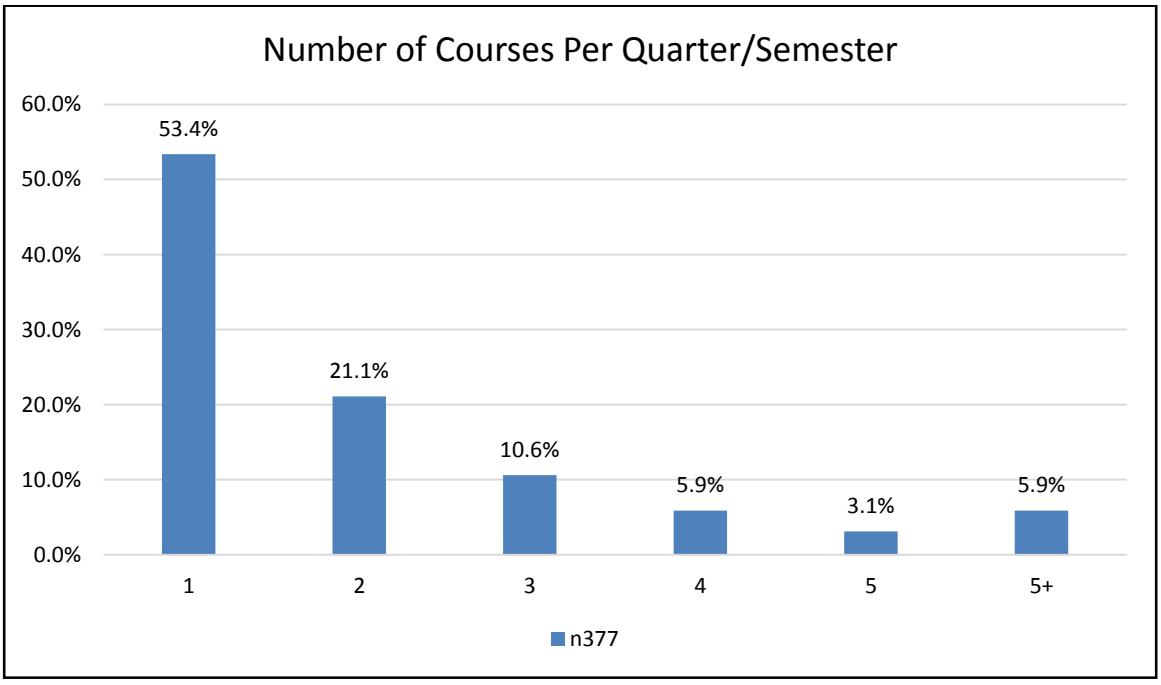
Question 2: How long have you been teaching online?



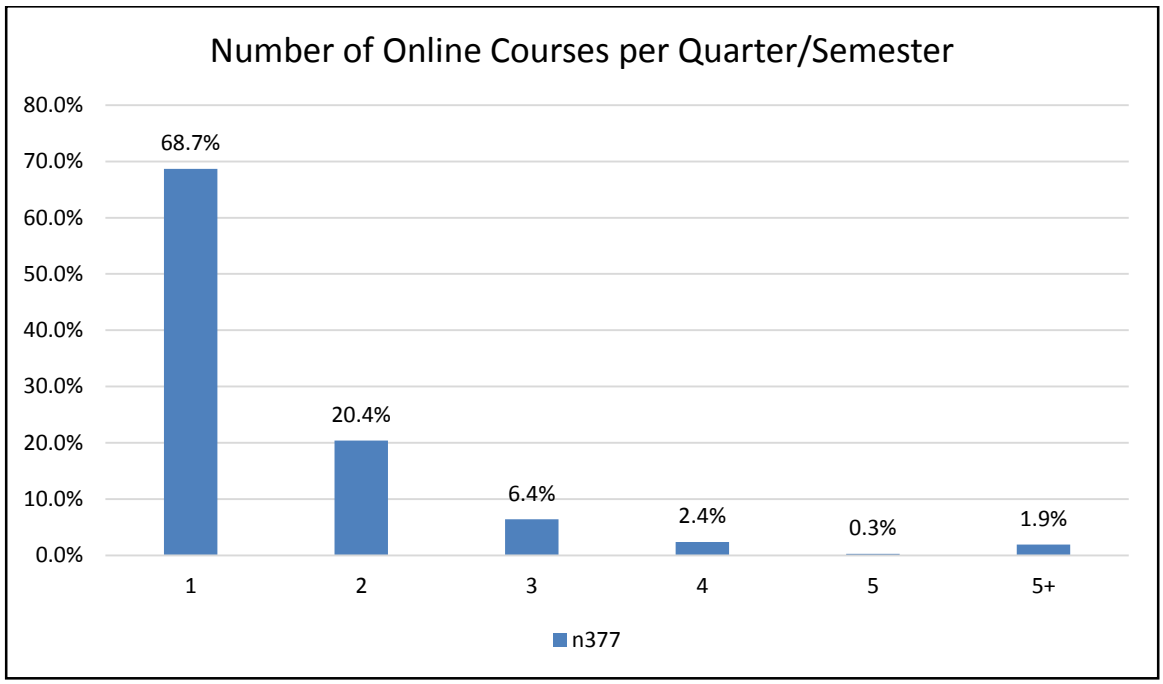
Question 3: At what institutions do you currently teach online?



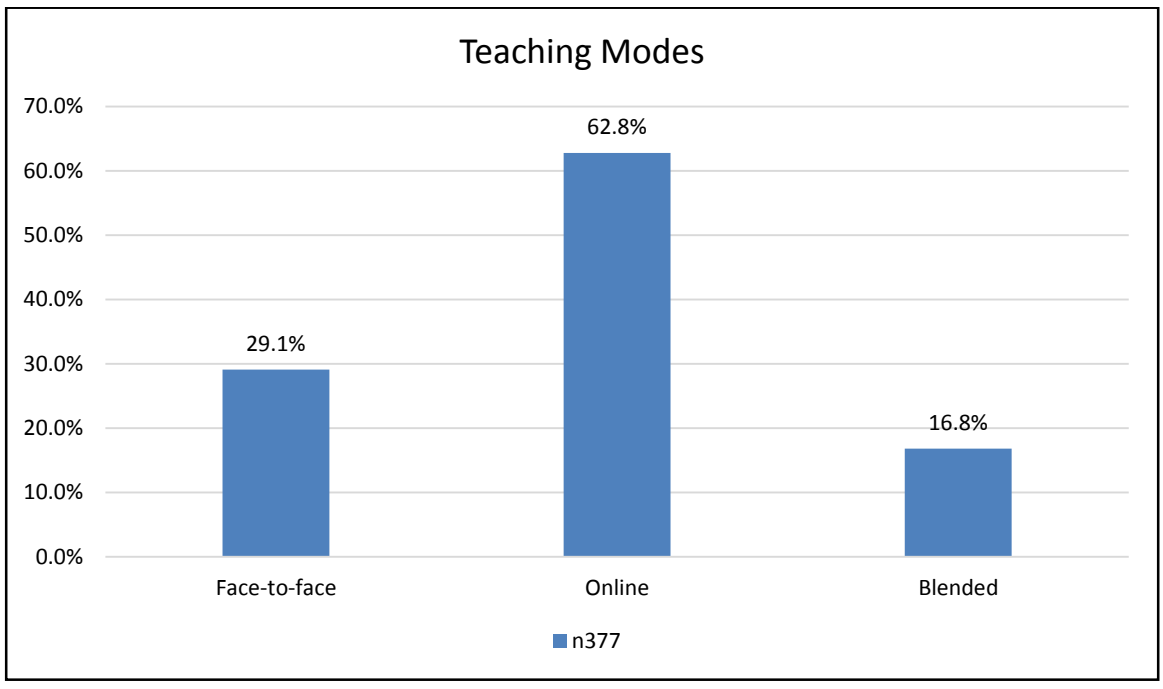
Question 4: How many total classes do you typically teach in one quarter or semester?



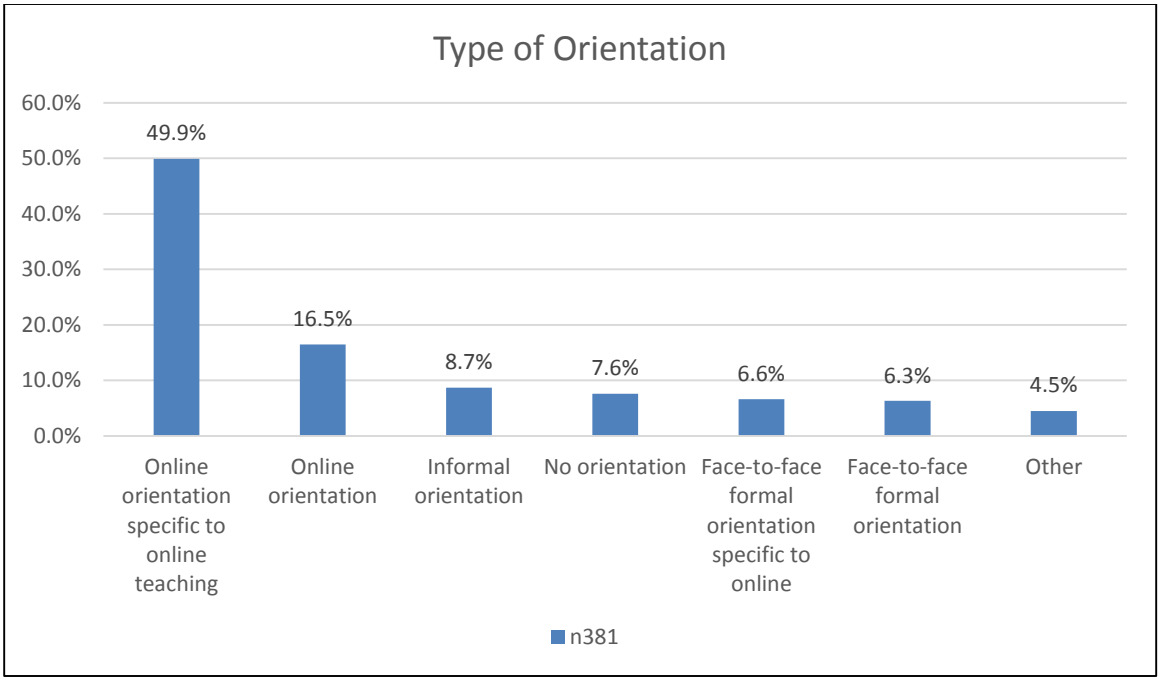
Question 5: How many online classes do you typically teach in one quarter or semester?



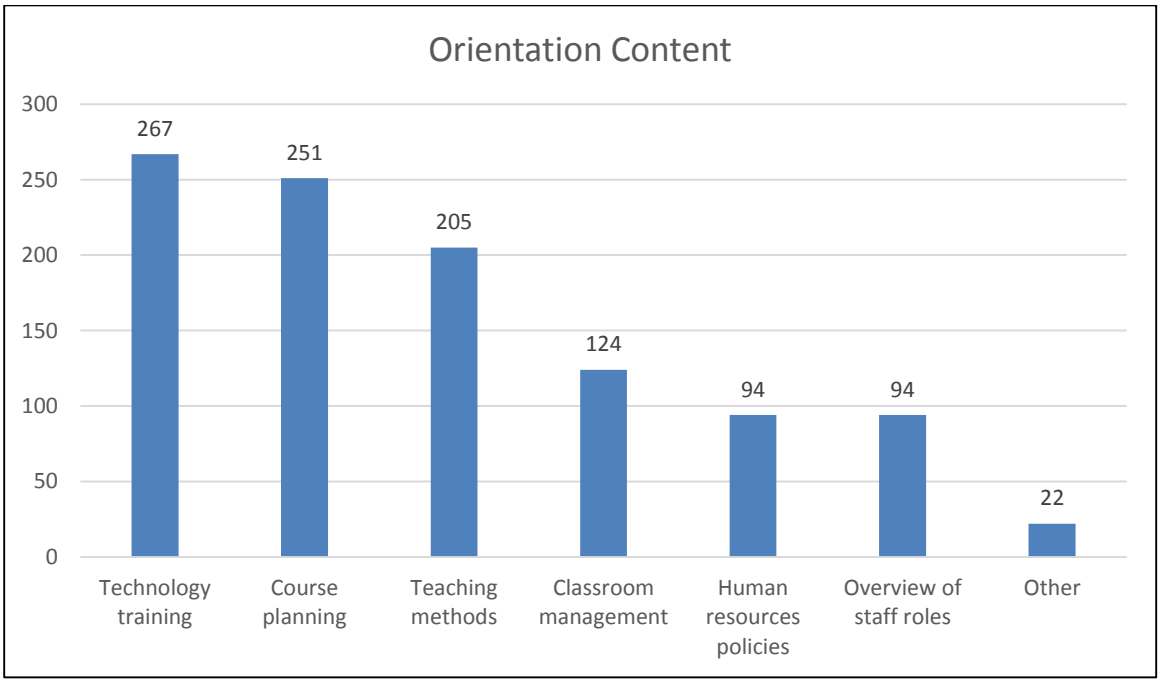
Question 6: What modes do you teach in?



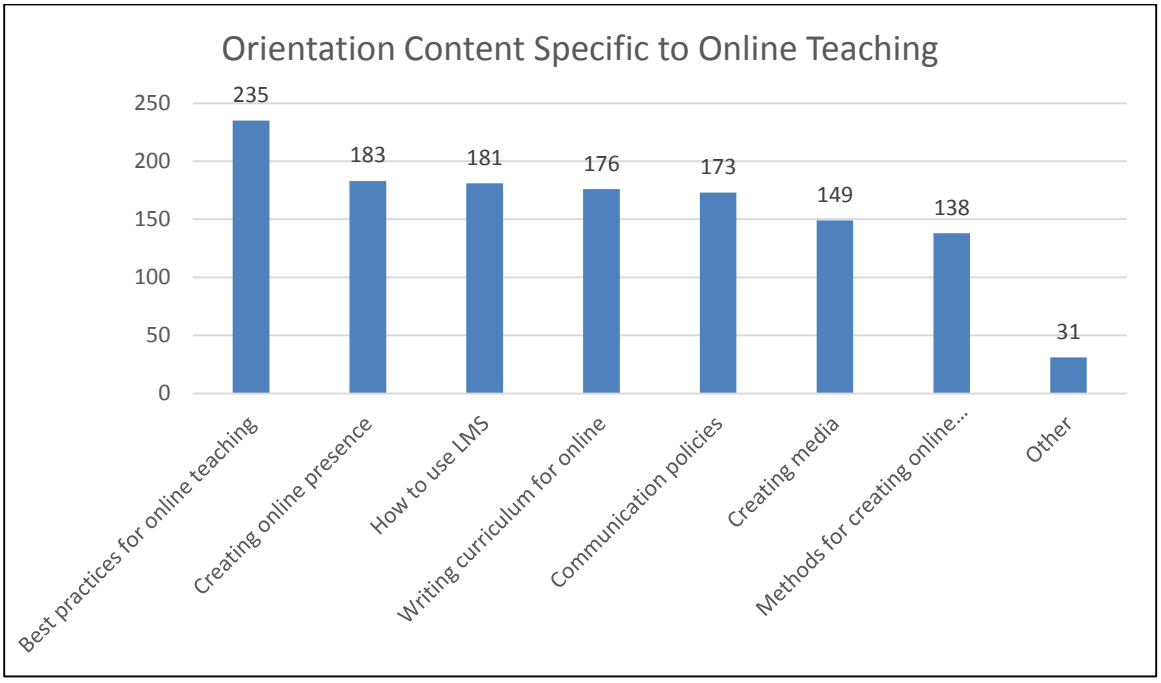
Question 7: Which of the following describes the new faculty orientation you received when you first started teaching online?



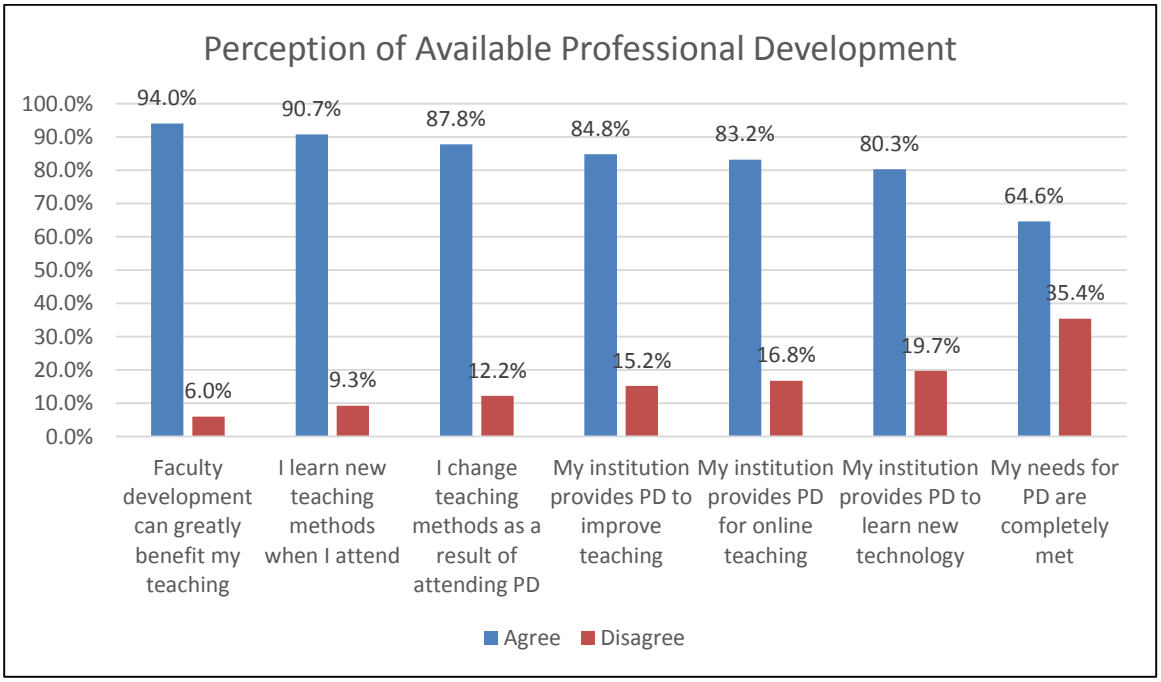
Question 8: What general content was covered in your orientation?



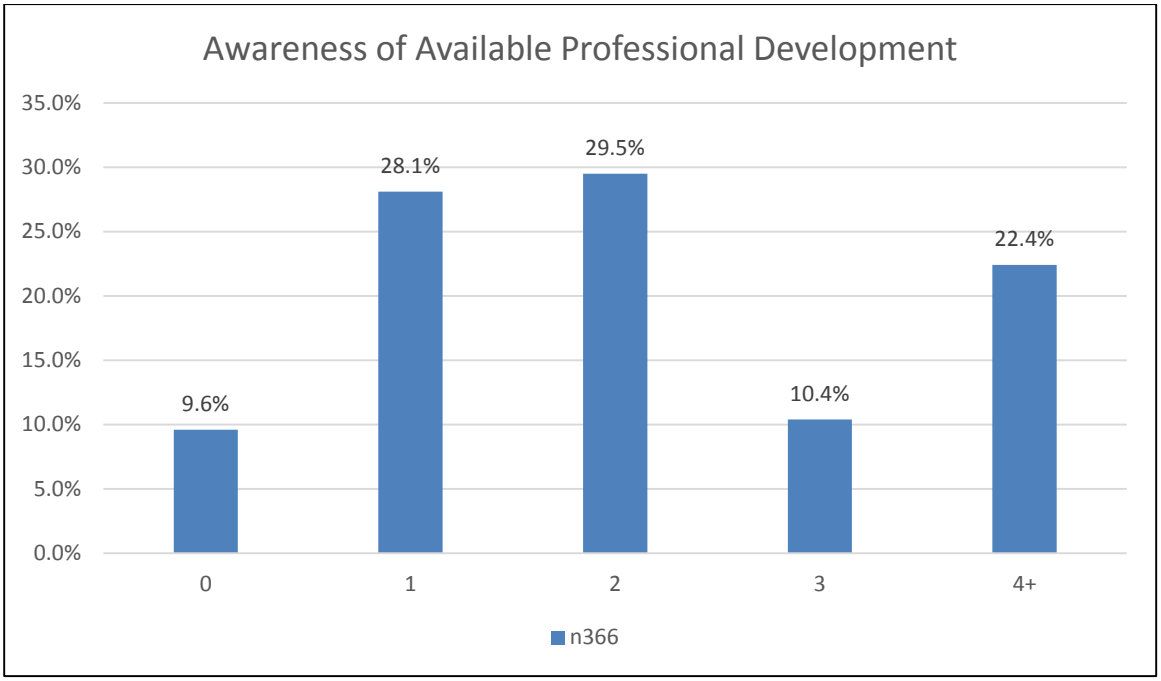
Question 9: What content specific to teaching online was covered in your orientation?



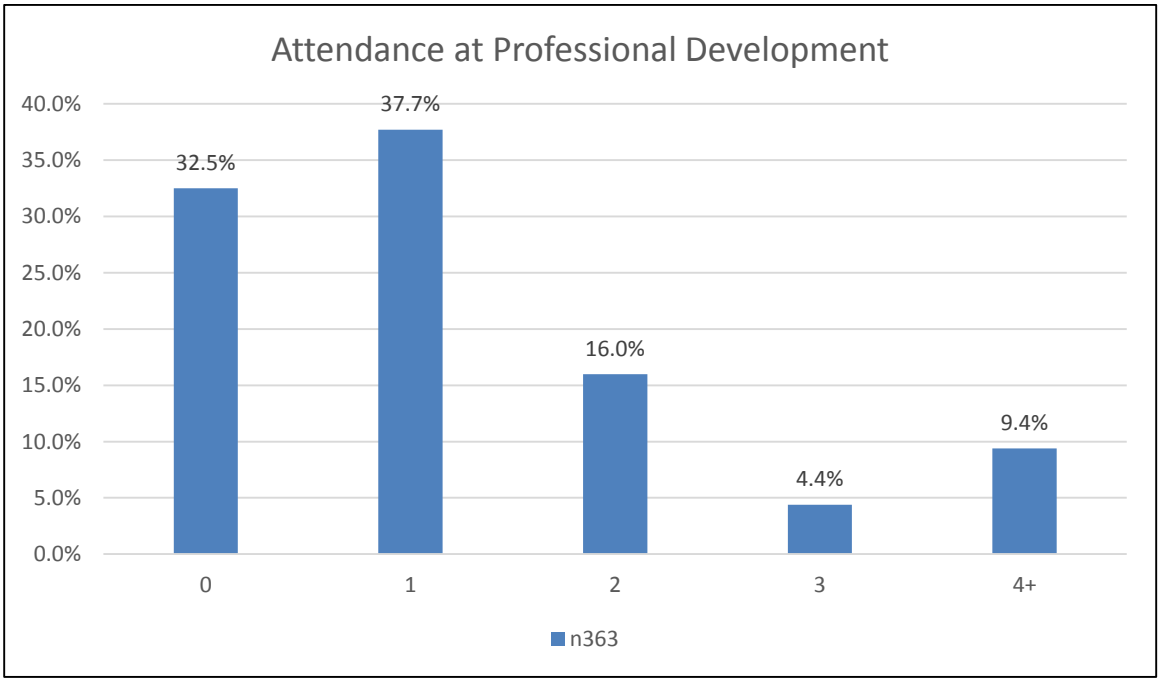
Question 10: How much do you agree with the following statements?



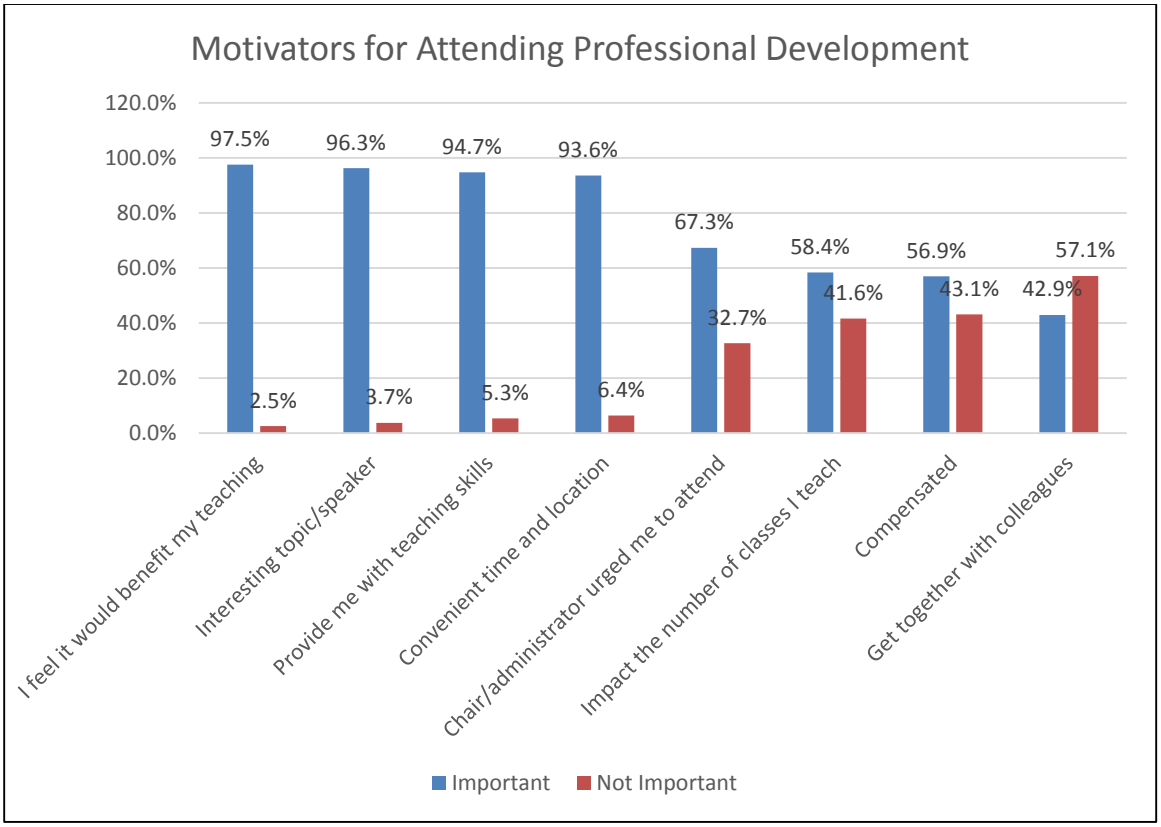
Question 11: In the past year, how many formal programs on teaching methods or skills were you aware of being offered at your institution?



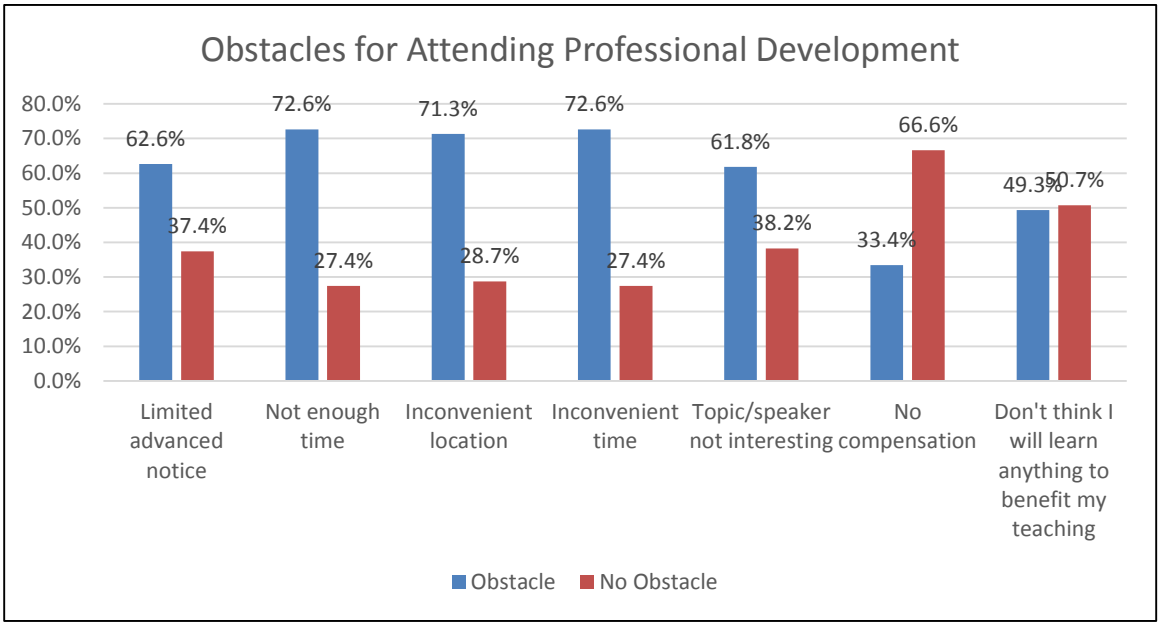
Question 12: In the past year, how many times have you attended formal training programs on teaching methods or skills at your institution?



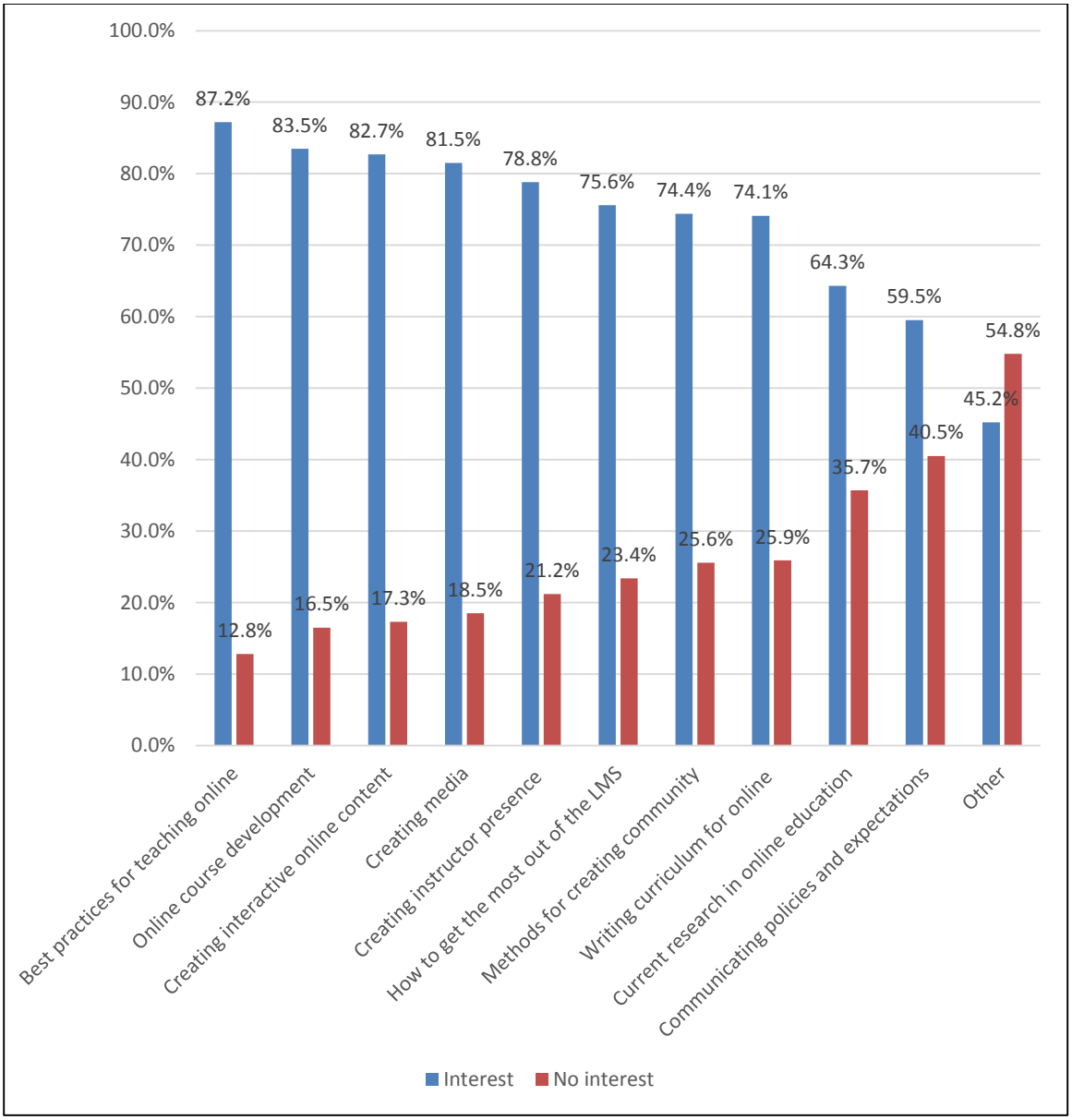
Question 13: Rank the following items on how much they motivate you to attend available faculty professional development?



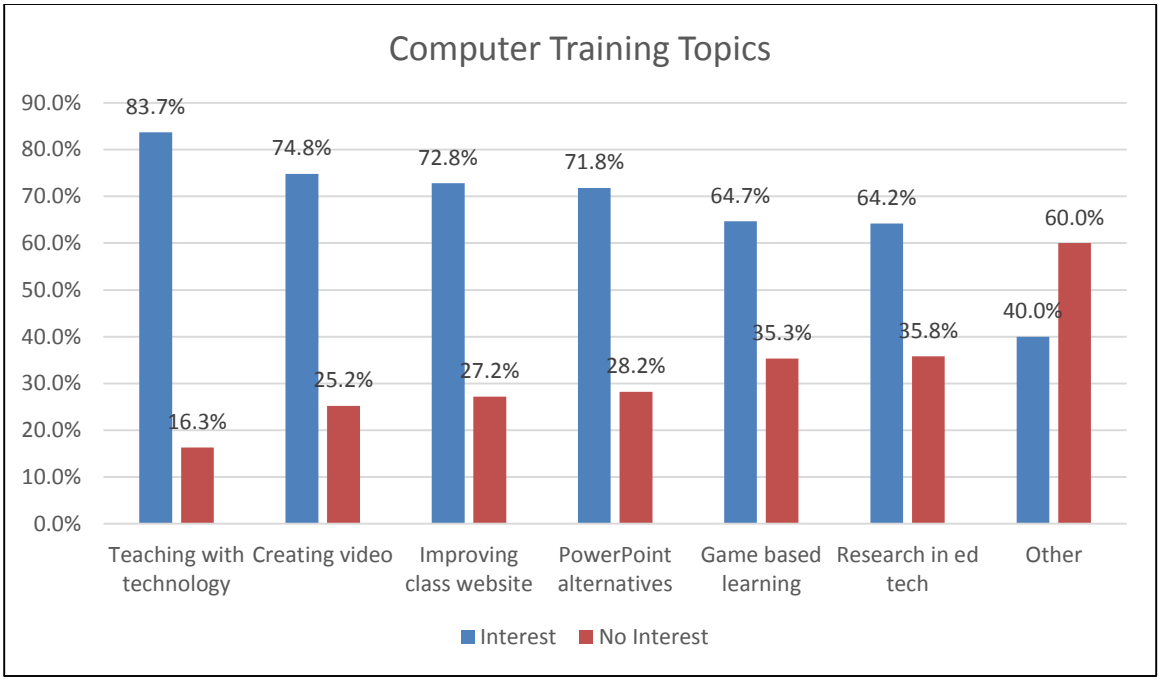
Question 14: Rank the following items on how much of an obstacle they are to you attending available faculty professional development?



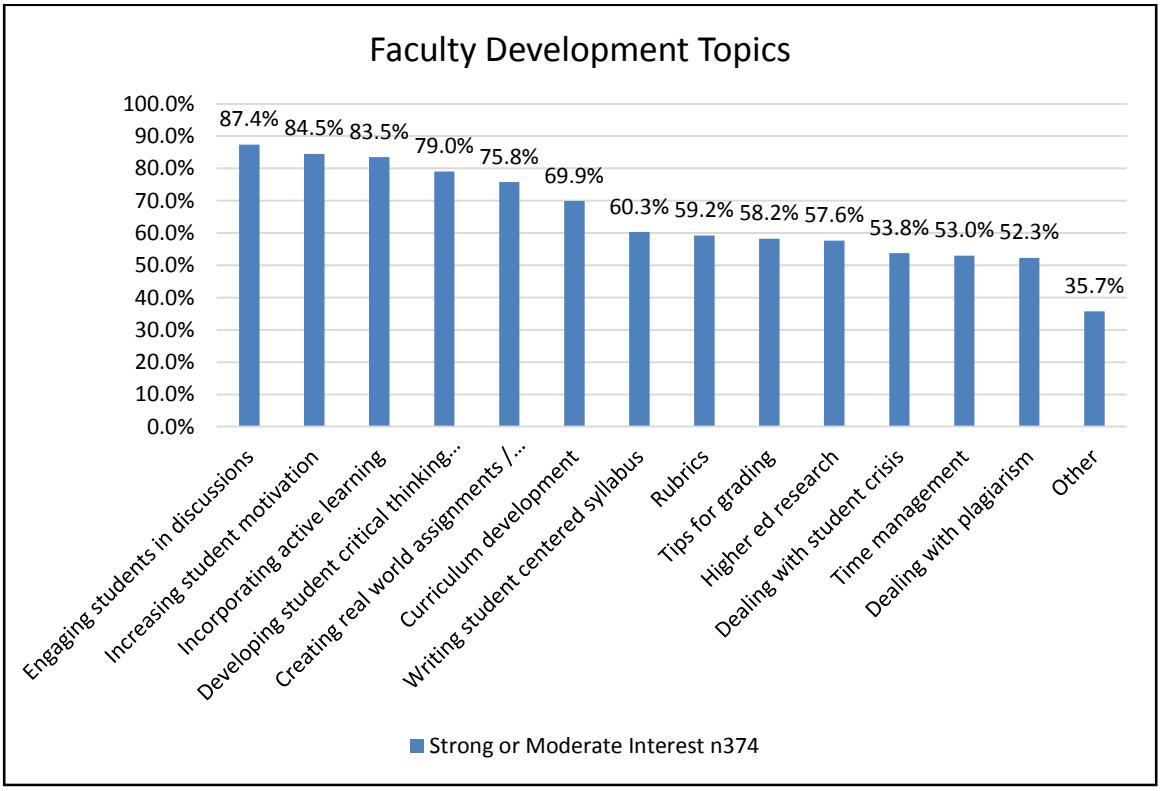
Question 15: Please rate your interest in the following topics as potential areas for faculty professional development.



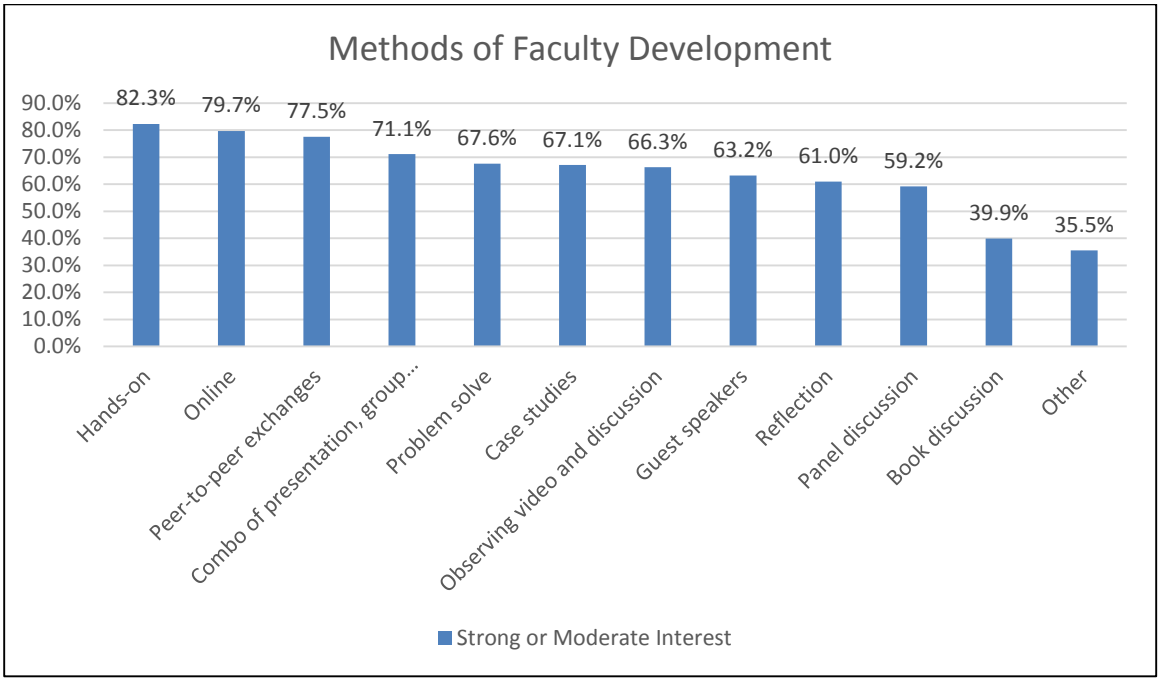
Question 16: Please rate your interest in the following topics as potential areas for computer training opportunities.



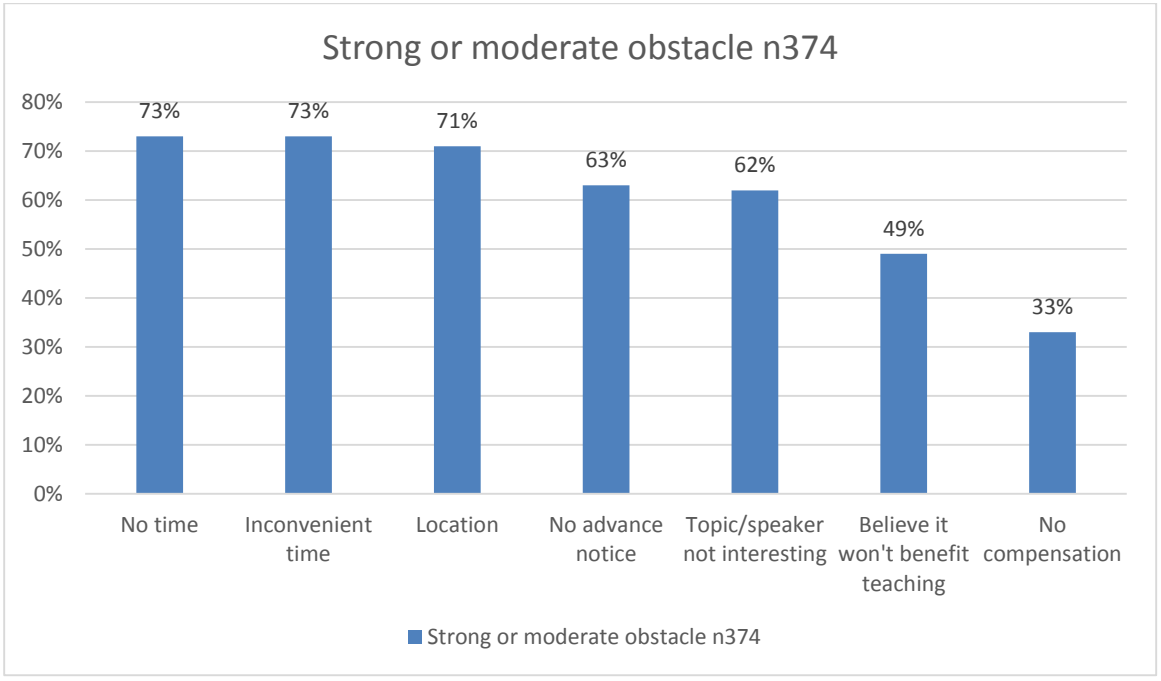
Question 17: Please rate your interest in the following topics as potential areas for faculty development opportunities.



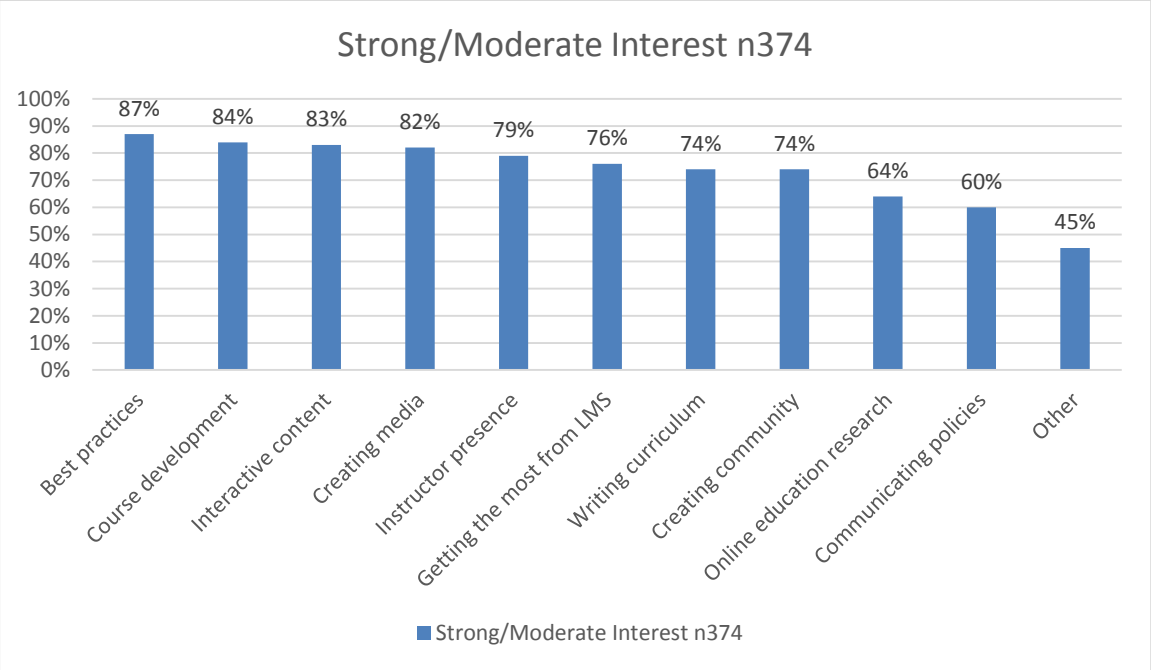
Question 18: Please rate your interest in the follow methods of faculty development.



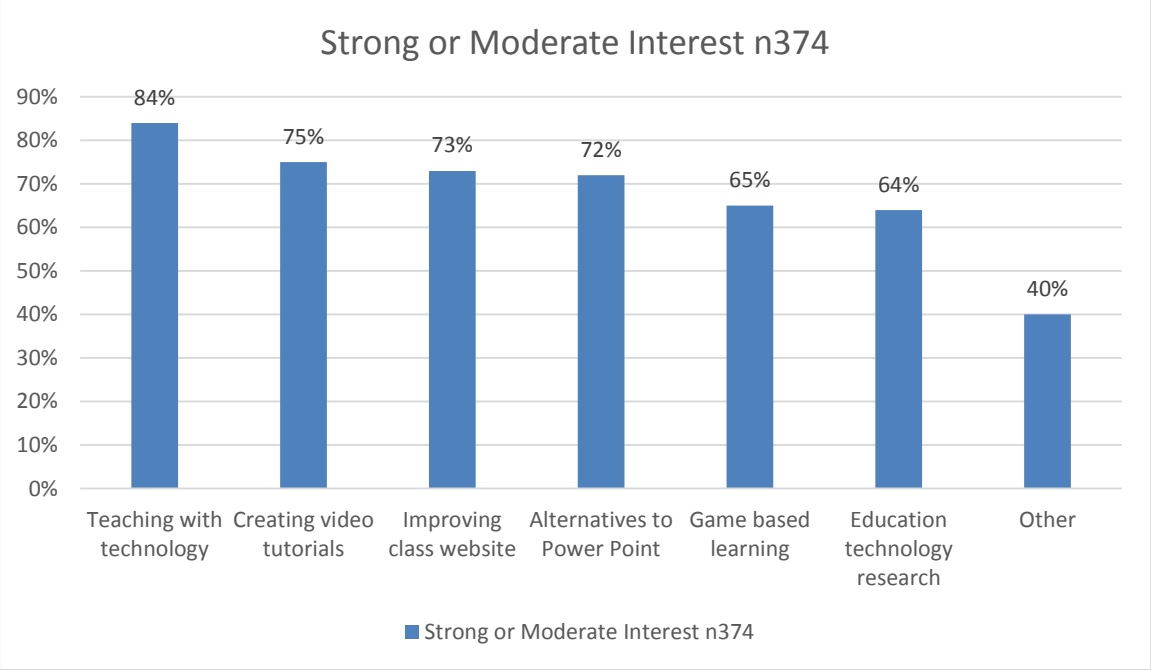
Question 19: Please rank the following items on how much of an obstacle they are to you attending available faculty professional development.



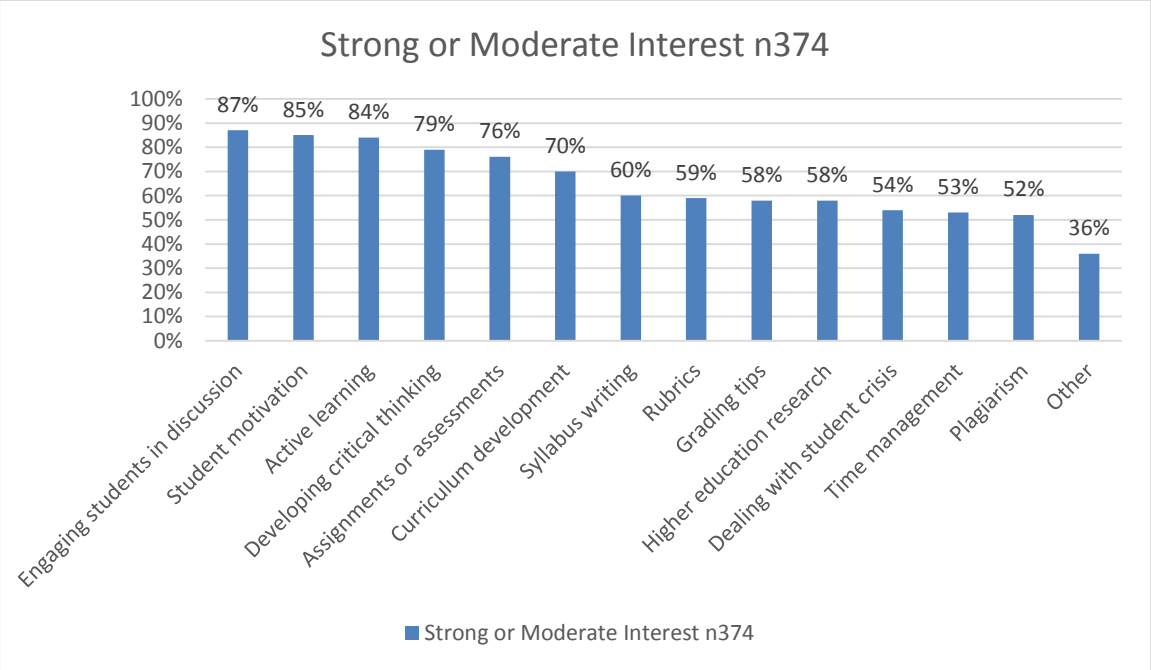
Question 20: Please rate your interest in the following topics as potential areas for faculty development opportunities.



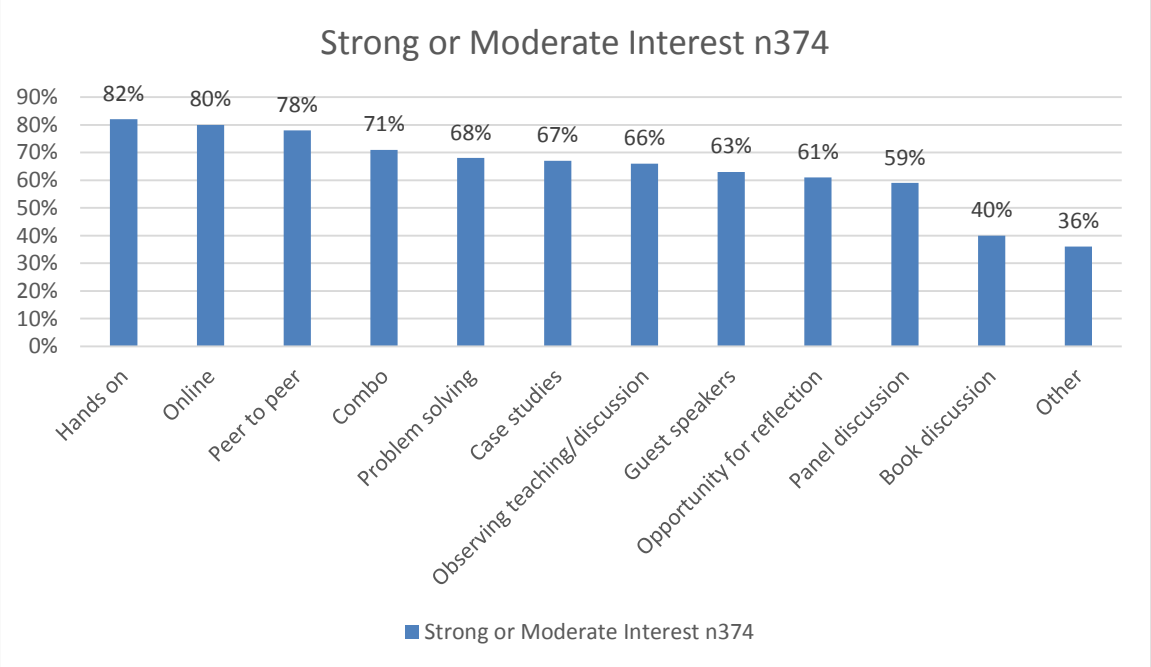
Question 21: Please rate your interest in the following topics as potential areas for computer training opportunities.



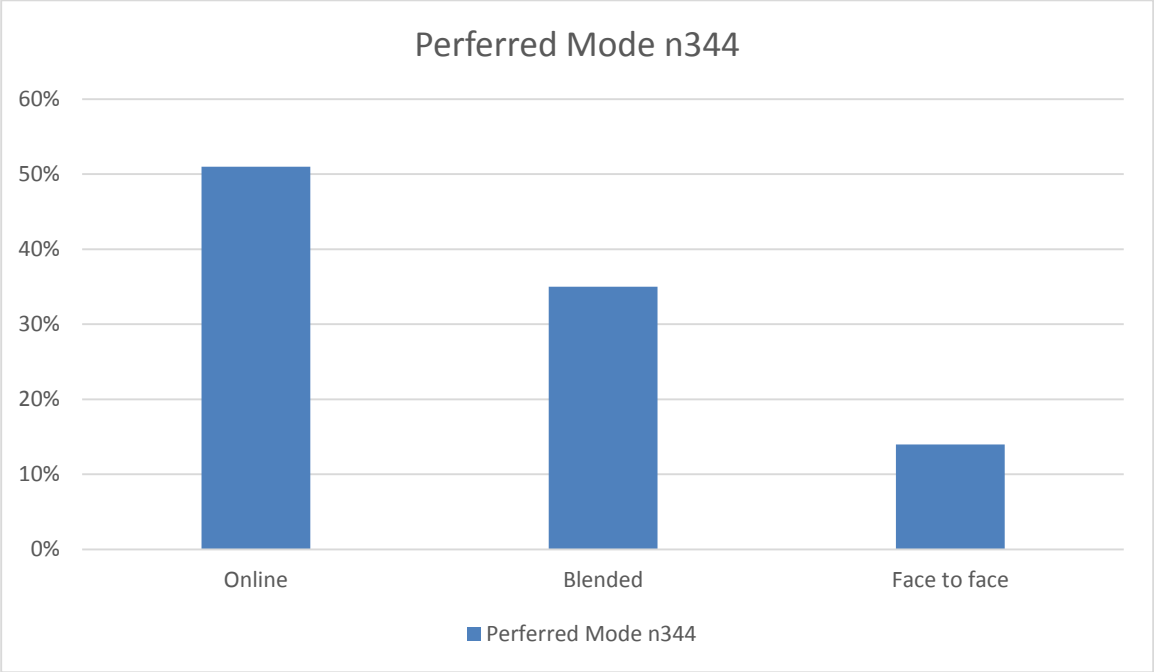
Question 22: Please rate your interest in the following topics as potential areas for faculty development opportunities related to online teaching.



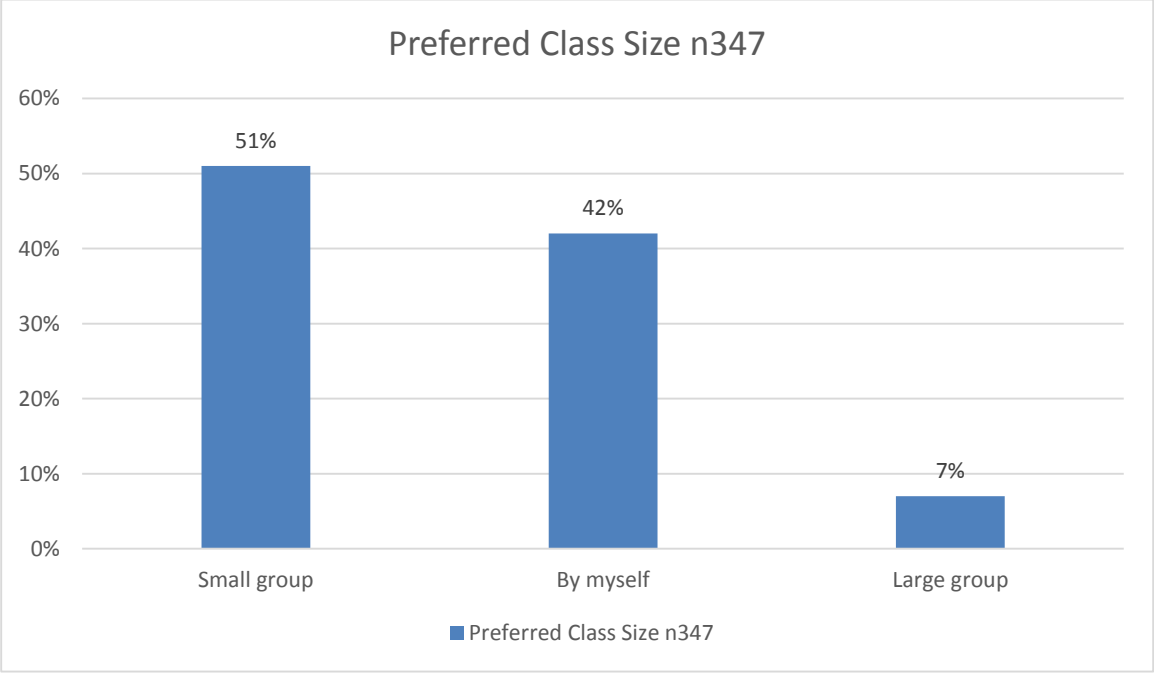
Question 23: Please rate your interest in the following methods of faculty development.



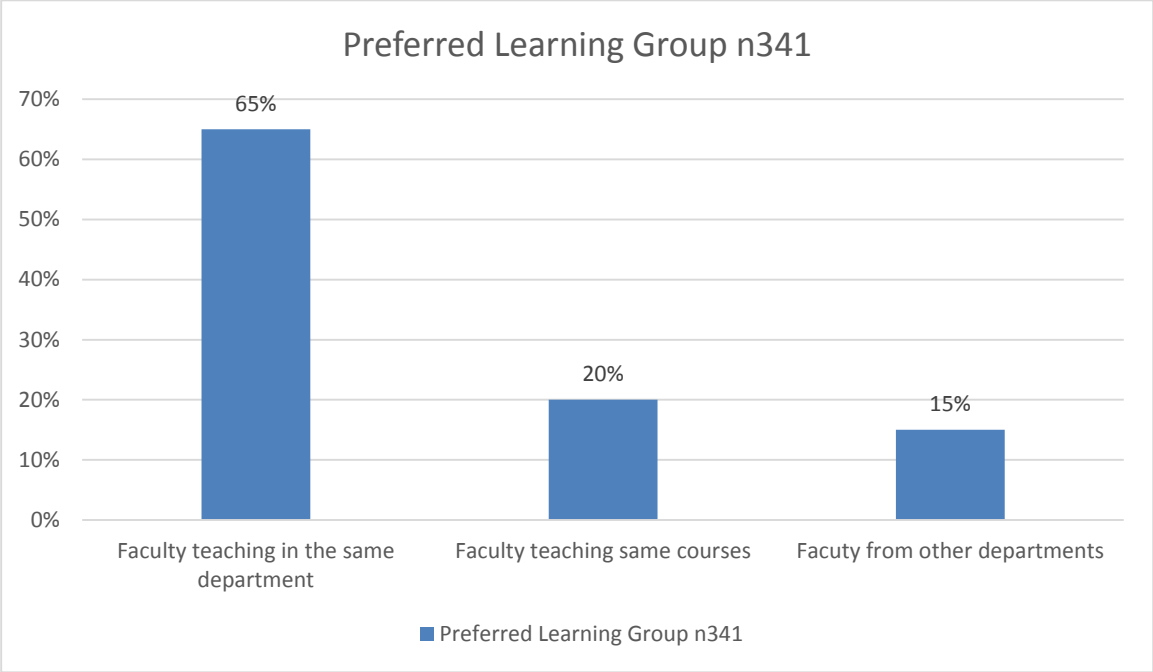
Question 24: I would prefer the following mode of training or development.



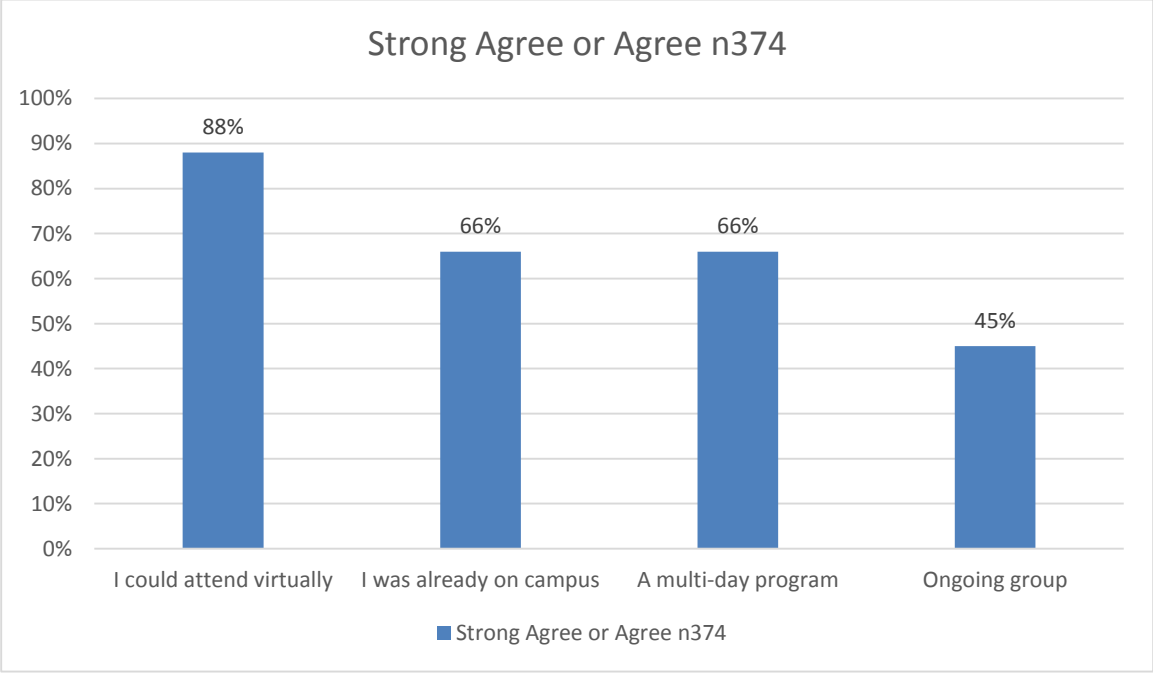
Question 25: I would prefer to learn:



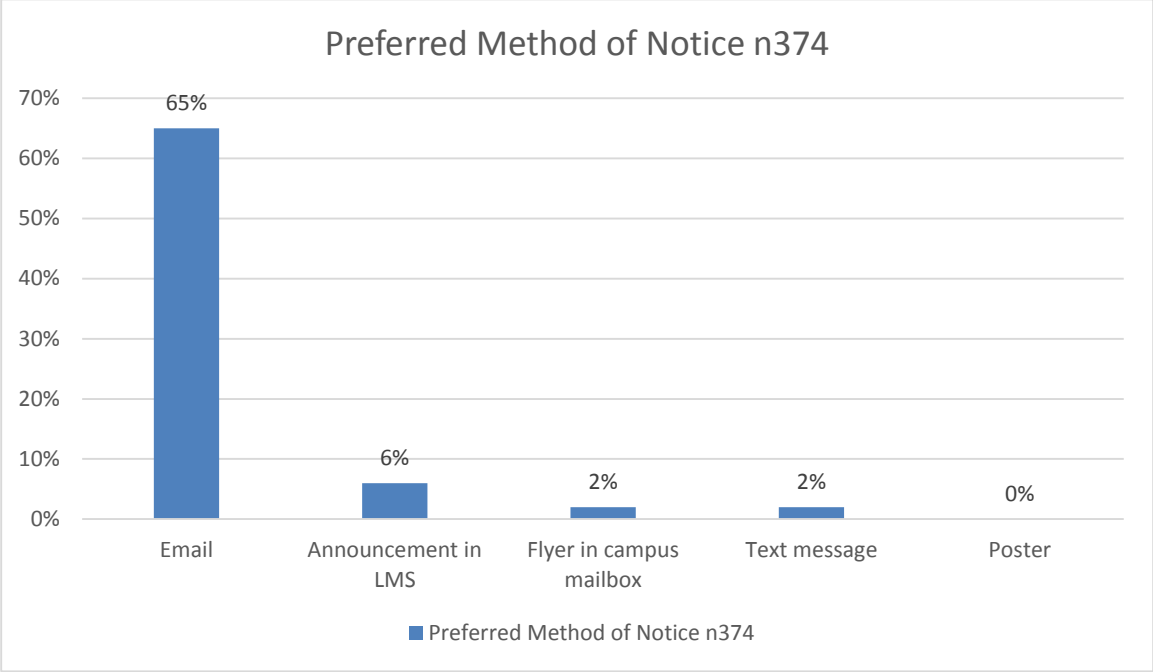
Question 25: In a faculty development program, I would prefer to learn with:



Questions 27-30: I would be more like to attend:



Question 32: How would you prefer to receive information about upcoming programs, events, or materials?



Appendix F

Summary of data from independent sample t-tests.

Table 6

Differences in Motivation for Attending Professional Development by Institution

Motivators	n	Western University	n	Northern University	t	p
Get together with colleagues	270	M=2.59, SD=.998	75	M=3.01, SD=.909	t(334)=-3.191	.002
Administrator urging	269	M=2.06, SD=1.004	74	M=2.34, SD=1.089	t(333)=-2.084	.038
Compensated	268	M=2.24, SD=1.10	73	M=2.64. SD=1.150	t(331)=-2.632	.009

Note: Higher mean equals less important motivator.

Table 7

Differences in Motivators and Obstacles for Attending Professional Development by Teaching Experience

Motivator or Obstacle	n	New Instructors	n	Veteran Instructors	t	p
Gain teaching skills	133	M=1.25, SD=.528	213	M=1.39, SD=.662	t(344)=2.155	.032
Advanced Notice	130	M=1.99, SD=1.067	210	M=2.39, SD=1.128	t(338)	.002

Note: Higher mean equals lesser motivator or obstacle.

Table 8

Comparison of Motivation by Teaching Load

Motivators	n	Teaches one course	n	Teaches 2+ courses	t	p
Interesting topic	239	M=1.39, SD=.604	108	M=1.26, SD=.481	t(345)=1.97	.050
Benefit to teaching	241	M=1.31, SD=.569	109	M=1.15, SD=.356	t(348)=2.781	.006
Administrator urging	241	M=2.22, SD=1.07	106	M=1.97, SD=.951	t(345)=2.023	.044
Impact number of classes offered	238	M=2.47, SD=1.189	105	M=2.04, SD=1.134	t(341)=3.147	.002

Note: Higher mean equals lesser motivation.

Table 9

Comparison of Obstacles by Teaching Load

Obstacles	n	Teaches one course	n	Teaches 2+ courses	t	p
Not enough advanced notice	237	M=2.35, SD=1.123	105	M=2.09, SD=1.093	t(340)=1.993	.047
Inconvenient location	235	M=2.01, SD=1.117	105	M=1.74, SD=1.074	t(338)=2.050	.041
Inconvenient time	234	M=2.00, SD=1.108	105	M=1.67, SD=.957	t(337)=2.668	.008
No compensation	235	M=2.99, SD=.996	104	M=2.71, SD=1.129	t(337)=2.289	.023

Note: Higher mean equals lesser obstacle.

Table 10

Comparison of Content Needs by Teaching Load

Content	n	Teaches one course	n	Teaches 2+ courses	t	p
Creating interactive content	239	M=1.78, SD=.909	106	M=1.50, SD=.694	t(343)=2.851	.005
Creating video tutorials	237	M=1.93, SD=1.027	105	M=1.70, SD=.876	t(340)=1.975	.049
Incorporating active learning	232	M=1.81, SD=.875	105	M=1.61 SD=.686	t(335)=2.123	.034

Note: Higher mean equals lower interest level.

Appendix G

Site Memo of Understanding

Memorandum of Understanding

To: Name withheld
From: Rosemary Tyrrell
Copy: Linda Rose and Christina Christie
Date: June 8, 2015
Subject: Research Project at the Western University

Statement of the Problem:
While quality teaching is essential to student success, many instructors teaching online have little to no professional training in online pedagogy. Instructors may be experts in their particular content area, but have little familiarity with the scholarship of teaching. Since most instructors in higher education simply teach the way they were taught, old pedagogical practices continue even though better methods can result in improved student outcomes.

Purpose, Goals and Need for the Project:
The purpose of this research project is to learn how to best serve online instructors' needs for growth and learning in the area of teaching. Ultimately, the goal is to improve online teaching practice to improve student learning outcomes.

Research Questions:
If faculty development is to improve online teaching within an institution, instructors need to first see the value of faculty development and then participate in professional development. Will instructors be more likely to attend faculty development programs that are designed to specifically meet their needs?

This study will attempt to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the perceptions that online instructors have about faculty professional development?
    a. What motivates online instructors to participate in faculty development programs?
2. What do online instructors say are their needs for professional development?
    a. What elements of faculty professional development do online instructors consider to be effective?
    b. What content do online instructors consider to be most important to include in faculty professional development?
3. According to online instructors and administrators, what should be included in an evaluation instrument for teaching in online courses?
    a. How do online instructors say an evaluation instrument will affect their teaching of online courses?

Research Methods:
The above goals will be accomplished using the following activities:

- Survey of online faculty
- Interviews with online instructors and other key persons
- Focus groups of online instructors

Key stakeholders from Western University agree to work jointly with primary researcher, Rosemary Tyrrell, to construct the project, gather data and analyze findings and suggestions. Ms. Tyrrell is an EdD Candidate at UCLA's Graduate School of Education and Information Science. This project is pursued by her as a component of the research she will conduct for her dissertation, toward the end of fulfilling her candidacy. The proposed research has been approved by UCLA's IRB under the auspices of faculty at GSEIS.

Timeline for the project:
Fall 2014 Conduct survey, focus groups, and interviews

Winter 2015 Begin data analysis and continue with focus groups, and interviews

Spring 2015 Report on results of study provided to Western University.

This MOU is not intended to create any legally binding obligations on either partner but, rather, is intended to facilitate discussions regarding general areas of cooperation. This MOU is at-will and may be modified by mutual consent of authorized officials from Western University. This MOU shall become effective upon signature by authorized officials from Western University and will remain in effect until modified or terminated by any one of the partners by mutual consent.

Each party represents that the individuals signing this MOU have the authority to sign on its behalf in the capacity indicated.

SIGNATURES:

Signature: _____, Western University Date: _____

Signature: _____, Western University Date: _____

Signature: _____, Researcher Date:_____
(Rosemary Tyrrell)

Appendix H

Recruitment Email for Interviews

Hello:

My name is Rosemary Tyrrell and I am doing a study on Faculty Professional Development for online instructors.

I am writing ask if you would agree to be interviewed either in person or via Skype for a research project entitled "Exploring the Needs and Perceptions of Online Faculty Towards Faculty Professional Development: a Qualitative Study"? This research aims to identify ways to improve faculty development and training programs for instructors teaching online courses. I hope you will be willing help with this study.

If you agree to participate, I will interview you for about 45-60 minutes. During the interview, I will ask questions about your experience with faculty development programs for online educators as well as your experience with evaluation of online teaching.

If you are willing to participate, please reply to this email with your contact information or call me at 619-723-2401. I will contact you shortly to schedule a time to interview you. In the meantime, if you have any questions, feel free to call or email me.

Sincerely,

Rosemary Tyrrell
Candidate for EdD, UCLA

Email: rtyrrell@ucla.edu
Phone: 619-723-2401

Appendix I

Recruitment Email Survey Follow Up

Research Study on Faculty Development for Online Educators

Hello:

Thank you so much for taking the survey on faculty development for online educators and for providing your email to be contacted to participate in a focus group or interview. Your input is instrumental in helping us understand the needs of online educators. I have created Doodles for scheduling purposes. Please select either the focus group or an interview.

Focus Group RSVP

> The focus group will be held at the offices of Northern University Extension. The focus group will take approximately 90 minutes and will involve approximately 6-10 other instructors teaching online courses. During the focus group, I will ask questions about what motivates you to attend faculty development programs, as well as what specific needs you have in the area of training and development. You may be asked to share your ideas verbally and in writing. Lunch will be provided.

Skype Interview RSVP

> All interviews for Northern University will be conducted via Skype. If you agree to participate in an interview, I will interview you for approximately 60 minutes. During the interview, I will ask questions about what motivates you to attend faculty development programs as well as what specific needs you have in the area of training and development.

If you would like to participate, but do not see a time slot when you are available, please let me know, and we can schedule a convenient time for you.

If you have any questions or would like to know more about the study, please contact me by reply to this email or at 619-723-2401.

Thank you again for your interest and participation,

Rosemary Tyrrell
Candidate for EdD, UCLA

Email: rtyrrell@ucla.edu
Phone: 619-723-2401

Appendix J

Study Information Sheet for Faculty Interviews

University of California, Los Angeles

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

EXPLORING NEEDS AND PERCEPTIONS OF ONLINE FACULTY TOWARDS FACULTY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

Rosemary Tyrrell, under the supervision of Linda Rose and Christina Christie, from the Graduate School of Education & Information Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) is conducting a research study.

You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you are teaching online in higher education. Your participation in this research study is voluntary.

Why is this study being done?

This study is examining the role of faculty professional development on changing teaching practice. The research study is also looking at whether participation in a faculty development program will change perceptions of the value of faculty development. This study also is exploring evaluation procedures for online teaching.

What will happen if I take part in this research study?

If you volunteer to participate in this study, the researcher will ask you to do the following:

- Participate in a one hour interview regarding your perceptions of faculty professional development and your needs for training and development.

How long will I be in the research study?

Participation will take approximately one hour.

Are there any potential risks or discomforts that I can expect from this study?

- I anticipate no negative consequences for you in taking part in this study.

Are there any potential benefits if I participate?

You may benefit from the study by reflecting on your online teaching practice and the role of faculty professional development.

The results of the research may provide data to the field of faculty professional development on what kinds of perceptions exist amongst online faculty, what kinds of training and development online faculty say they need, and how online faculty think their teaching should be evaluated.

Will information about me and my participation be kept confidential?

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can identify you will remain confidential. It will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by means of the use of pseudonyms. All data will be kept in password protected, secured files that are not connected with the UC system.

What are my rights if I take part in this study?

- You can choose whether or not you want to be in this study, and you may withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time.
- Whatever decision you make, there will be no penalty to you, and no loss of benefits to which you were otherwise entitled.
- You may refuse to answer any questions that you do not want to answer and still remain in the study.

Who can I contact if I have questions about this study?

- **The research team:**
  If you have any questions, comments or concerns about the research, you can talk to the one of the researchers. Please contact:

  Rosemary Tyrrell, principal investigator: rtyrrell@ucla.edu
  Linda Rose, Ph.D.: rose@gseis.ucla.edu
  Christina Christie, PhD.: tina.christie@ucla.edu

UCLA Office of the Human Research Protection Program (OHRPP):
If you have questions about your rights while taking part in this study, or you have concerns or suggestions and you want to talk to someone other than the researchers about the study, please call the OHRPP at (310) 825-7122 or write to:

UCLA Office of the Human Research Protection Program
11000 Kinross Avenue, Suite 211, Box 951694
Los Angeles, CA 90095-1694

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Appendix K

Study Information Sheet for Administrator Interviews

University of California, Los Angeles

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

EXPLORING NEEDS AND PERCEPTIONS OF ONLINE FACULTY TOWARDS FACULTY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

Rosemary Tyrrell, under the supervision of Linda Rose and Christina Christie, from the Graduate School of Education & Information Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) is conducting a research study.

You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you are teaching in higher education. Your participation in this research study is voluntary.

Why is this study being done?

This study is examining the role of faculty professional development on changing teaching practice. The research study is also looking at whether participation in a personalized faculty development program will change perceptions of the value of faculty development.

What will happen if I take part in this research study?

If you volunteer to participate in this study, the researcher will ask you to do the following:

- Participate in a one hour interview regarding your experiences with faculty professional development and your experiences with evaluation of online teaching.

How long will I be in the research study?

Participation will take approximately one hour.

Are there any potential risks or discomforts that I can expect from this study?

- I anticipate no negative consequences for you in taking part in this study.

Are there any potential benefits if I participate?
You may benefit from the study by reflecting on your online teaching practice and the role of faculty professional development.

The results of the research may provide data to the field of faculty professional development on what kinds of perceptions exist amongst online faculty, what kinds of training and development online faculty say they need, and how online faculty think their teaching should be evaluated.

Will information about me and my participation be kept confidential?

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can identify you will remain confidential. It will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by means of the use of pseudonyms. All data will be kept in password protected, secured files that are not connected with the UC system.

What are my rights if I take part in this study?

- You can choose whether or not you want to be in this study, and you may withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time.
- Whatever decision you make, there will be no penalty to you, and no loss of benefits to which you were otherwise entitled.
- You may refuse to answer any questions that you do not want to answer and still remain in the study.

Who can I contact if I have questions about this study?

- **The research team:**
  If you have any questions, comments or concerns about the research, you can talk to the one of the researchers. Please contact:

  Rosemary Tyrrell, principal investigator: rtyrrell@ucla.edu
  Linda Rose, Ph.D.: rose@gseis.ucla.edu
  Christina Christie, PhD.: tina.christie@ucla.edu

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If you have questions about your rights while taking part in this study, or you have concerns or suggestions and you want to talk to someone other than the researchers about the study, please call the OHRPP at (310) 825-7122 or write to:

UCLA Office of the Human Research Protection Program
11000 Kinross Avenue, Suite 211, Box 951694
Los Angeles, CA 90095-1694

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Appendix L

Study Information Sheet for Focus Groups

University of California, Los Angeles

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

EXPLORING NEEDS AND PERCEPTIONS OF ONLINE FACULTY TOWARDS FACULTY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

Rosemary Tyrrell, under the supervision of Linda Rose and Christina Christie, from the Graduate School of Education & Information Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) is conducting a research study.

You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you are teaching in higher education. Your participation in this research study is voluntary.

Why is this study being done?

This study is examining the role of faculty professional development on changing teaching practice. The research study is also looking at whether participation in a personalized faculty development program will change perceptions of the value of faculty development.

What will happen if I take part in this research study?

If you volunteer to participate in this study, the researcher will ask you to do the following:

- Participate in a 90 minute focus group on faculty professional development.

How long will I be in the research study?

Participation will take a total of about 90 minutes.

Are there any potential risks or discomforts that I can expect from this study?

- I anticipate no negative consequences for you in taking part in this study.

Are there any potential benefits if I participate?

You may benefit from the study by reflecting on your online teaching practice and the role of faculty professional development.

The results of the research may provide data to the field of faculty professional development on what kinds of perceptions exist amongst online faculty, what kinds of training and development online faculty say they need, and how online faculty think their teaching should be evaluated.

Will information about me and my participation be kept confidential?

All participants will be asked to keep what is said during the focus group between the participants only. However, complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can identify you will remain confidential. It will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by means of the use of pseudonyms. All data will be kept in password protected, secured files that are not connected with the UC system.

What are my rights if I take part in this study?

- You can choose whether or not you want to be in this study, and you may withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time.
- Whatever decision you make, there will be no penalty to you, and no loss of benefits to which you were otherwise entitled.
- You may refuse to answer any questions that you do not want to answer and still remain in the study.

Who can I contact if I have questions about this study?

- **The research team:**
  If you have any questions, comments or concerns about the research, you can talk to the one of the researchers. Please contact:

  Rosemary Tyrrell, principal investigator: rtyrrell@ucla.edu
  Linda Rose, Ph.D.: rose@gseis.ucla.edu
  Christina Christie, PhD.: tina.christie@ucla.edu

UCLA Office of the Human Research Protection Program (OHRPP):
If you have questions about your rights while taking part in this study, or you have concerns or suggestions and you want to talk to someone other than the researchers about the study, please call the OHRPP at (310) 825-7122 or write to:

UCLA Office of the Human Research Protection Program
11000 Kinross Avenue, Suite 211, Box 951694
Los Angeles, CA 90095-1694

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

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