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Exploring the Experiences of Faculty Learning to Teach Online: A Case Study

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Exploring the Experiences of Faculty Learning to Teach Online: A Case Study

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Virginia Commonwealth University.

by

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Dedicated to Miles, Bobby, and Spencer
Without your mom, none of this could have been possible.

Abstract

Through an examination of literature, interviews and focus groups with participants of a faculty development program on online teaching and learning at a large Public Mid-Atlantic Urban University (PMUU), this research aimed to uncover the elements of a faculty development course or other impacts that contributed to the success or hindrance of faculty in their online course delivery. This qualitative study aimed to foster collaborative relationships with participants and resulted in data that might inform the development of faculty and their online courses in similarly situated contexts.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

As more college students demand access to online courses (Castro & Tumibay, 2019; Carraher-Wolverton & Zhu, 2021; Ren, 2023), designing quality online learning has become an increasingly significant consideration in higher education (Lowenthal et al., 2019). It is well established that pedagogical and technical support systems are crucial to faculty teaching online successfully (Baran et al., 2014; Borup & Evmenova, 2019; Leary et al., 2020). Faculty need to be adequately supported to execute and apply online teaching and design strategies properly, and a strong faculty development program that teaches online pedagogy should be part of that support (Martin et al., 2019).

Statement of the Problem

While we know that a faculty development program should be part of the support infrastructure for online teaching, there is inadequate research regarding what characteristics of a faculty development program in online teaching and course design might best contribute to faculty success in the online classroom (Brinkley-Etzkorn, 2018; Meyer, 2014). Similarly, it remains unclear exactly what contributes most to success for online teaching faculty or what inhibits faculty success in the online classroom (Cutri & Mena, 2020).

Should such a program focus primarily on the usage of technology? Should it focus primarily on pedagogical or andragogical instructional strategies? Should it encourage mentorship or supportive communities among online teaching faculty colleagues? What assessments and learning activities in a faculty development program might best contribute to an instructor's ability to apply the practices successfully? Specific content choices for faculty development and their contribution to faculty success in the online classroom remains largely unexplored. Exploring the potential answers to these questions might inform future faculty

development program design and implementation choices for online learning stakeholders like program managers, instructional designers, and faculty development experts, and in the end, produce better outcomes in the online classroom environment for faculty and students alike.

Statement of Purpose

Through the exploration of existing literature on faculty development for online teaching, as well as interviews and a focus group with participants of a faculty development program for online teaching at a large Public Mid-Atlantic Urban University (PMUU), this case study explored what characteristics of such a faculty development program might have positive impacts on faculty's online teaching and, consequently, their students' experiences. It was my hope that the interviews and focus group would result in rich data on faculty participants' perceived experiences in the faculty development program and the components that they found bolstered or impeded success in their own online courses. As a second step to my data collection methods, it was also my hope that in relying on qualitative methods and developing collaborative relationships with the participants through multiple interviews, the participants would be comfortable enough to share and discuss their own online course experiences and explore how their application of the faculty development program's teachings might have improved or harmed student experiences. Relying on multiple interviews can further explore complexities, iterative change in thinking, and sensitive data that involves criticism (Read, 2018).

Rationale for Study

Faculty development in online teaching and course design is rarely subjected to evaluation or scrutiny with regards to its efficacy (Brinkley-Etzkorn, 2018; Meyer, 2014). This gap might exist due to the urgency surrounding the launch of such faculty development programs

as institutions try to keep up with the growing demand for online learning (Meyer, 2014). Regardless of the limiting factors behind this gap in the research, this study hopes to fill it.

Besides exploring the existing literature on this topic, this case study focused on the experiences of participants in a faculty development program (FDP) at Public Mid-Atlantic Urban University, PMUU, which offers hundreds of online courses annually. The FDP was a course created by a department at the university that is specifically tasked with collaborating with faculty to design online courses and develop faculty's online teaching and course design skills. The FDP instructed participants on research-based practices for online teaching and course design. The FDP's goals were to improve faculty participant's experiences teaching their own online courses and improve the learning outcomes of their online students. The FDP was part of a larger certificate program made up of five asynchronous online courses that were housed in Canvas, the university's learning management system. These courses covered research-based practices for online course design, teaching and managing online courses, mentoring in online teaching, developing and leading online programs, and quality reviews of online courses. Upon successful completion of any of the courses or the entire program, participants were awarded a digital badge.

Because the FDP emphasized the importance of quality online teaching and course design with technology, it also had to be an example of quality online teaching and course design with technology. In other words, the FDP must practice what it preaches. As such, this research resulted in findings that can be applied in order to improve program quality and efficacy, which will help ensure that the program is properly supporting faculty while also exemplifying the best practices that it aims to teach. More importantly, this case study's findings may inform revisions

and improvements to other programs similar to the FDP, and ultimately improve faculty and student experiences in online courses.

The Faculty Development Program (FDP) and Opportunities for Research

The iteration of the FDP that study participants took part in had been running for approximately one year. The table below provides a summary of the FDP content.

Table 1

A Summary of the FDP

Course Description
Offers instructors insights into understanding different aspects of online course management, instructor presence, communication with students, time/work management, and accessibility. The course is designed for faculty that will teach an online course that has already been built.
Course Objectives
• Create an inviting online community; • Create a communication & feedback plan for your online course; • Gain skills to improve your time management teaching online; • Manage discussions and student engagement in an online course; • Gain skills to manage group work and collaboration in their online course; • Describe effective strategies for discouraging plagiarism.
Modules Content
• Welcome Module: Course Overview, Meet Your Instructors, Technology Support and Course Tech Requirements, Philosophy of the Course (UDL Principles), Quick Tip (Having students set goals), Discussion Assignment (Introduce Yourself) • Module 1 "Establishing a Virtual Community": Online Presence and Instructor Roles, Community Building, Humanizing Your Course, Creating a Course Welcome Video, Discussion Assignment (Creating Social Presence), Learning Check Quiz, Assignment (Create a Welcome Video) • Module 2 "Creating Course Policy and Workflow": Establishing and Communicating Course Policies, The Importance of Feedback and Instructor Presence, Instructor Time Management, Discussion Assignment (Communication Online), Learning Check Quiz, Assignment (Submit a Syllabus) • Module 3 "Ensuring Engagement Throughout the Course": Engagement, Universal Design for Learning, The Dreaded Discussion Board, Student-Moderated Discussions, Discussion Assignment (Engagement in an Online Course), Learning Check Quiz • Module 4 "Mitigating the Challenges of Online Teaching and Learning": E-Learning, Hyflex, Group Work, Preventing Plagiarism and Cheating, Quick Tip (Peer Review Projects), Issues of Equity in Synchronous Sessions, Assessing Course Quality, Discussion Assignment: Challenges to Online Learning, Learning Check Quiz • Module "Course Conclusion": Concluding Thoughts, Course Evaluation, Resources for Further Learning
Certificate Requirements
Participants must achieve a final score of 80% or higher to be awarded a badge.
Facilitator
PMUU Online Instructional Designer

Because the FDP is referred to regularly throughout this research paper, the summary of FDP course content is also available in Appendix A, "A Summary of the FDP Content." The FDP was designed collaboratively among a team of instructional designers at PMUU and each of the courses were facilitated by a single member of the team.

Part of this study's aim was to gain an understanding of what content and assessments from the FDP course best served faculty needs and translated into perceived success in their own online classrooms. Such findings can then inform revision of the FDP to improve efficacy and outcomes for future faculty participants and perhaps even inform the design of similar faculty development in online learning.

It's also worth noting that while each course in the series has its respective learning objectives, the program as a whole does not have explicitly identified objectives. Likewise, each course has an exit evaluation that participants must complete at the conclusion of the course; however, there is no program-wide evaluation that participants must complete after completing the entire program. These two gaps, the lack of program-wide objectives and of a program-wide evaluation, are addressed as potential opportunities later in Chapter 3: Methodology.

Awareness of the FDP and persistence rates in the program's courses were other potential areas for exploration for this study. The team of professional development instructional designers perceived a lack of awareness of the FDP among the university's faculty community. Completion of work and persistence in the program courses among faculty that enroll was another challenge. Because of this, it was important to discuss with participants how they learned about the FDP and how effective they found the messaging. One question that remained though was how to explore what prevented faculty awareness of the FDP. It was also appropriate to

include study participants that did not complete the course in order to explore what barriers, in the course or elsewhere, prevented them from finishing.

With regard to potential impact of the research findings, it was important to consider other resources at the university as assets and possible compliments to the FDP's objectives. For example, a web resource that covers accessibility in an online course might be an especially useful additional source of learning to an instructor who teaches a media-dependent subject matter. If the FDP promoted access to such resources or other assets through hyperlinks, were faculty likely to venture into these additional opportunities of learning? If so, what were the driving motivations for doing so and what were the outcomes? If not, what were the barriers that prevented the faculty member from engaging with additional opportunities offered at the university?

Overview of the Literature

While existing literature suggests that faculty development affects the quality of online teaching and that online instructors need a wide range of ongoing support to design and teach online courses (Amaro-Jimenez et al, 2022; Baker et al. 2018; Cole et al., 2004; Knight at al., 2007; Luck & McQuiggan, 2006; Reidinger & Rosenberg, 2006; Salajegheh, 2021; Shelton, 2011; Shipp, 2022; Smith, 2005 Steinert et al., 2006, as cited in Brinkley-Etzkorn, 2018), there is insufficient research on what specific characteristics and components of a faculty development program translate to faculty and student success in the online classroom (Amaro-Jimenez et al, 2022). This overview offers a glance at literature and research surrounding online learning, faculty development in online learning, and faculty and student experiences in online learning, before concluding with where the gaps remain in the research of these topics.

What Is Online Learning?

According to Singh and Thurman (2019), the term "online learning" first appeared in 1995. While online learning has evolved in many ways since then, a broad definition of online learning is "learning experienced through the internet/online computers…where students interact with instructors and other students and are not dependent on their physical location for participating in this online learning experience" (Singh & Thurman, 2019, p. 2).

Within this definition are different kinds of online learning, specifically, asynchronous online learning and synchronous online learning. Asynchronous online learning means that learners and instructors engage with the course content and each other via the internet at different times, whereas synchronous online learning means that learners and instructors engage with the course content and each other via the internet at the same time (Ryan, 2001).

Even still, in the literature there are other terms used interchangeably with online learning, such as "e-learning," "online education," "distance education," and "web-based education" (Curtain, 2002; Moore & Kearsley, 2012; Singh & Thurman, 2019).

Why We Need Online Learning

Online learning has been instrumental in expanding access to higher education, especially among community college settings (Sublett, 2022). To many adult learners, especially those juggling jobs and families, online learning offers a more efficient and flexible use of their time and less expenses (Ilgaz & Gulbahar, 2017). Online learning also involves more creation of media-rich information, allowing the learners themselves to take part in producing information rather than just consuming it (Sullivan et al, 2018).

However, access and equity are two different matters. While online learning might increase access, it has also been shown to exacerbate equity issues among students of color and

low-income students in the community college setting (Sublett, 2022). However, an online faculty development program has been shown to empower teachers to design course content that is "engaging and accessible to all students" (Goode et al., 2020, p. 51), which highlights the need for further research into supporting considerate design of online faculty development in online learning and leveraging its impact on the quality of online learning.

Defining Quality and "Best Practices" in Online Learning

How do we define quality in online learning and what do we mean when we say "best practices" in online learning? A best practice is a teaching method that "has been deemed more effective than other alternatives due to the positive outcome produced. A best practice is a technique or methodology that has been shown by experience and/or research to lead to a desired result" (Luscinski, as cited by Steele, Holbeck, & Madernack, 2019). However, what is considered "best practice" differs across learning environments, educational level, curriculum, and teaching styles (Steele, Holbeck, & Madernack, 2019). Part of this study's investigation will explore what skills and knowledge faculty perceive as beneficial to their online teaching and course design, which might lead to implications for further research into the idea of "best practices" being unique to teaching online versus teaching face-to-face, or if "best practices" are more universal.

Faculty Development in Online Learning

Faculty development is necessary to prepare and support faculty to teach and design online courses, and there are many different modalities of faculty development for online learning, such as face-to-face, hybrid, or completely online (McQuiggan, 2012; Meyer & Murrell, 2014). Because faculty are adult learners, they apply their different experiences and viewpoints, both personally and professionally, while learning (Knowles, 1984). These many

unique learner characteristics should be considered in the design of faculty development programs. However, in literature on faculty development in online learning that predates 2012, most programs follow a one-size-fits-all approach (McQuiggan, 2012).

In their 2014 review of 39 higher education institutions' faculty development programs for online learning, Meyer and Murrell found five major groups of content commonly found in such programs:

> 1) basic uses of the course management system (CMS); 2) technological tools (e.g., wikis, blogs); 3) appropriate pedagogies originally used in the face-to-face classroom but applied to online learning; 4) online resources; and 5) instructional design principles or models (p. 2).

What remains unclear, however, is how such content choices translate into faculty and student success in the online classroom. In other words, we know what topics tend to be covered in faculty development for teaching online, but we don't know which specific characteristics of faculty development have the most positive impact on the quality of online courses, both from a faculty perspective and student perspective.

Why We Need Faculty Development in Online Learning

Research suggests faculty need both pedagogical and technological support to teach online (Martin, Budhrani, & Wang, 2019); however, many faculty do not feel adequately supported to teach online (Lichoro, 2015). Preconceived notions also play a role in faculty willingness to venture into online teaching. These act as barriers, such as concerns about student success rates, time and workload concerns, and faculty being sensitive about their reputation as online instructors (Wingo et al., 2017; as cited by Martin, et al, 2019). However, faculty development in online learning has been shown to change beliefs about teaching (McQuiggan,

2012) and increase confidence to integrate learning technologies (Sullivan et al, 2018). Exploring the outcomes of a six-week faculty development course on online teaching, Roman, Kelsey, and Lin (2010) found that three-fourths of the participants finished the course feeling that both their pedagogical and technological skills had improved. One participant noted that the course allowed them to "experience what students will experience in this environment," while another participant said, "Online teaching is no more a mystery for me. I am not a technology savvy person, but the classroom routine and design, homework policies; feedback aspects of this class have enabled me to teach an online class successfully," (Roman et al., 2010, p. 7). Nonetheless, like any other faculty development program, challenges, barriers, and design choices can hinder faculty experiences. Roman, Kelsey, and Lin also found that some participants of the faculty development course for online learning struggled to find time for the course, encountered navigation issues, or found the content itself to be non-beneficial. "I had a hard time finding and understanding many of the assignments," one participant said, while another complained that "[t]he course was content lean. Lots of busy work, very little content, discussion board dominated and was not helpful at all," and still another remarked, "This course did not prepare me to teach online, but taught me how to take a course online. The methodologies are still unexplored" (p. 7). This feedback emphasizes the need for continued research into participant experiences in faculty development courses for online learning in order to better understand the potential implications for the design and implementation of future courses.

Characteristics of a Quality Faculty Development Program

There is not a single formula for properly developing faculty to teach and design online courses (Lowenthal et al, 2019). There are a number of considerations and a variety of characteristics that can make a faculty development course for online teaching effective. Faculty

development for online teaching should not just focus on how to use technology; pedagogical input must also be included (Brinkley-Etzkorn, 2018; Schmidt et al, 2016). Participating in faculty development in the online modality is also an important consideration, because this allows faculty to see what it's like to be an online learner and then apply that experience to their own teaching (Lowenthal et al, 2019).

Further complicating the formula for a quality faculty development course on online learning, participants can come to the course at different points in their teaching career, with diverse needs and a wide variety of experience or lack of experience. In their 2019 study of an online faculty development course, Powell and Bodur found that personalization, or "relevancy" as they identify it in their paper, of the course content can be important so that faculty find that it applies to their unique needs and circumstances (p. 24). Authenticity, Usefulness, Interaction and collaboration, Reflection, and Context were other areas of concern that Powell and Bodur gleaned from their interviews with faculty participants. These areas are explored further in this paper under the Chapter 2 subheading "Characteristics of a Quality Faculty Development Program."

Research and Evaluation of Faculty Development Effectiveness

As referenced earlier, studies like Meyer and Murrel's 2014 review of the content of 39 different higher education institutions' faculty development offerings for teaching online help establish what skills and knowledge might be important for faculty to learn. Besides simply identifying content, the study also discusses positive feedback from faculty regarding the perceived value of the various course content and activities.

> The "tried-and-true" activities of short sessions, workshops, one-on-one training, and hands-on training receive the highest marks…two additional activities—having the

> faculty person create an online course and peer review of that course once designed—are also highly regarded. These latter activities force the faculty person to become actively involved in not only developing his/her course but to see the developed course through the eyes of an outsider (p. 12).

Faculty perception of and experiences with the content and activities in development courses are important; however, the effectiveness and impacts of these content choices has rarely been explored.

While researchers and experts in the field have identified numerous strategies for training and supporting faculty to watch online, there is little research into the kinds of impacts these different approaches have on teaching (Brinkley-Etzkorn, 2018). Much of the research into faculty development has focused on beliefs and attitudes, and when questions of impact on teaching effectiveness are explored, much of the data gathering relies on self-reporting, such as surveys, reflections, and interviews (Brinkley-Etzkorn, 2018). Much like Brinkley-Etzkorn's 2018 study, this study hopes to rely on a more diverse means of data collection by asking participants to share their student evaluations.

Research Questions

Through the evaluation of the literature and interviews with faculty that have participated in the FDP and have had time to apply their newly-gained knowledge and skills in their own online classrooms, this case study aimed to understand how a faculty development program might best contribute to the success of faculty teaching online and how participants define success in online learning. This study aims to address the research questions below:

> *Research Question 1: How do faculty describe the skills and knowledge they acquired through the online faculty development course?*

Research Question 2: In what ways do faculty perceive the acquired skills and knowledge influenced their online teaching and course design?

Research Question 3: How do faculty define a successful online course?

Research Question 3A: How do faculty define an unsuccessful online course?

Research Question 4: How do faculty describe their needs for pedagogical instruction versus their needs for technological instruction in order to teach online successfully?

Overview of Methodology

In the paragraphs below, I explain how my research questions inspired and informed my reliance on the qualitative methods in this case study. Then, I summarize the qualitative methods on which this study relied. The purpose of this study was to explore what characteristics of a faculty development program for online teaching might have positive impacts on faculty's teaching and, consequently, their students' experiences. This case study relied on existing literature on faculty development for online teaching, as well as individual interviews and a focus group with participants of a faculty development program for online teaching at a large public university.

By asking *how faculty describe or define*, this study's research questions focused on exploring the perceived experiences of participants in the online faculty development course. By building knowledge through the interpretations of the participants' perceived experiences in the course and exploring the knowledge and skills participants developed as they worked to make sense of teaching online, this research aligned with the constructivist and interpretivist paradigms (Tomaszewski et al., 2020).

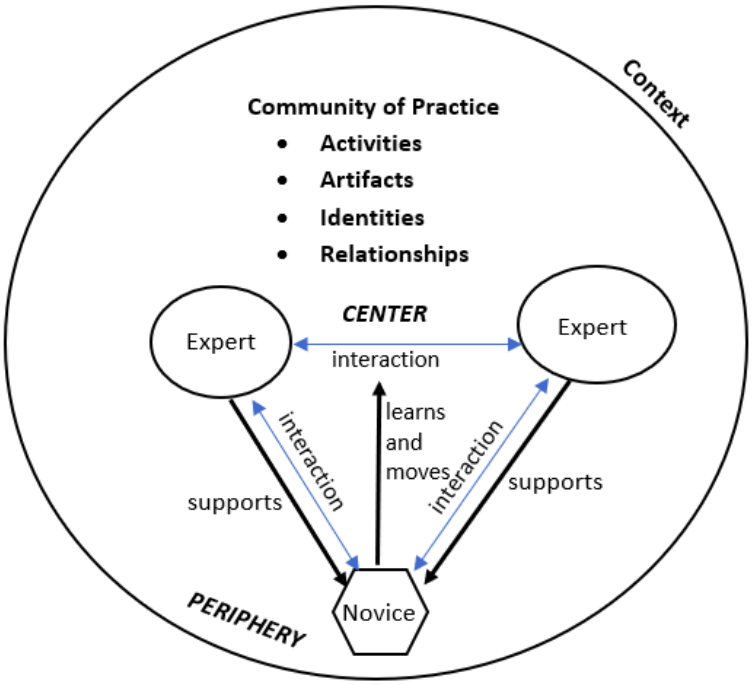
My Constructivist/Interpretivist Lens

The constructivist/interpretivist lens focused on the research participants' views in order to understand their unique, perceived experiences, develop meaning throughout the research process, while also acknowledging that the researcher's positionality and background impacts methods and data interpretation (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006; Tsakmakis et al, 2022). Typical sources of data for the constructivist/interpretivist are 'interviews, observations, document views, and visual data analysis' (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). Such qualitative methods allow the researcher to "find the story behind the numbers" (Mayan, 2023, p. 11), which aligns with my researcher perspective as writer, but more importantly, my research goals to understand the unique perspectives and experiences of faculty in a professional development course for online teaching.

My Theoretical Framework and Analysis

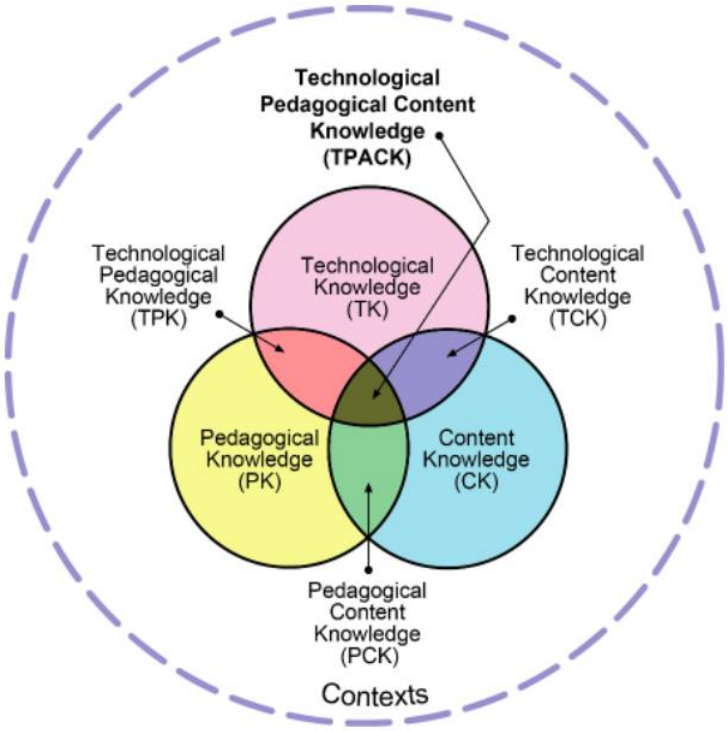
My methods and analysis were framed and informed by the theories Situated Learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991) and the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) model (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). Situated Learning explains that learning happens through participation in a community of practice, in which the learner is working with experts (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Figure 1 below illustrates Situated Learning in action.

Figure 1 *Situated Learning* (Egbert & Roe, 2019)



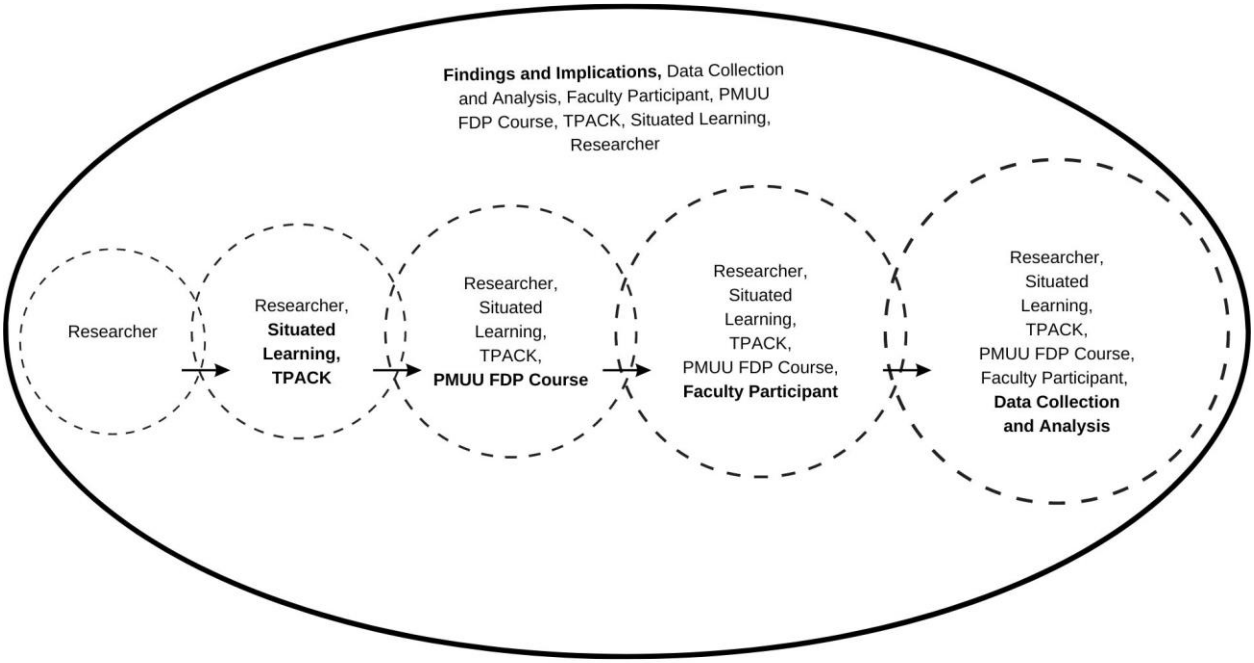
The TPACK Model provides an evaluation for what knowledge teachers need in order to use technology in their teaching successfully (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). In Figure 2 you can see an illustration for the TPACK Model.

Figure 2 *The TPACK Model (Koehler, 2011)*



Situated Learning and TPACK played a role in my theoretical framework, which is illustrated below in Figure 3 as this study's research and knowledge building process. My theoretical framework illustrates the acknowledgement of what I brought to the table (my bias, beliefs, etc.), and how I imagine the theories Situated Learning and TPACK played a role throughout the research process as the collaboration and knowledge building with my research participants occurred.

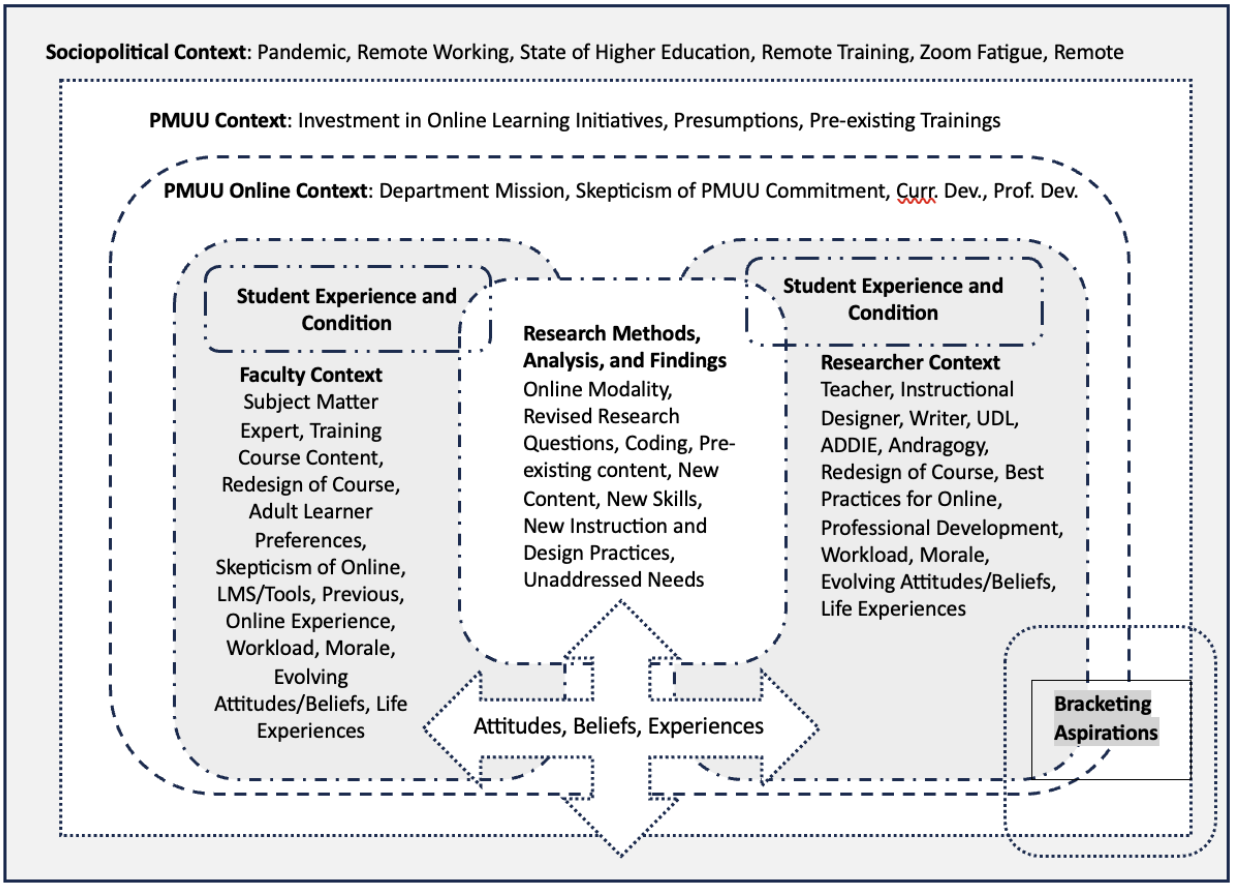
Figure 3 *This Study's Theoretical Framework*



My Conceptual Framework

Below, in Figure 4, is a mapping of my conceptual framework, which is the result of reflection and revision throughout my research in the spirit of my constructivist/interpretivist lens and the collaborative nature of my relationship with the participants. During the data collection process, the study's conceptual framework evolved as I reflected on participant testimonies from the interviews and the focus group and applied any new understandings or context.

Figure 4 *The Study's Final Conceptual Framework*



The original and final conceptual framework are presented together in Chapter 3, along with an explanation of its evolution into its final state.

This Study's Qualitative Methods

To better understand the complexities of the faculty experience in a professional development course for online teaching, we must develop an understanding of how the participants perceive and make sense of their experiences, and how their perceptions and sense-making impact their performance (Maxwell, 2013). "In whole, qualitative research values people's lived experiences and is inherently subjective and sensitive to the biases of both researchers and participants" (Tomaszewski et al., 2020, pp. 1-2).

This awareness of potential bias was crucial, considering my role as both an FDP course designer and facilitator as well as the researcher in this study. Qualitative methods were

appropriate because of the complexities of collaborative working relationships, such as ones between the instructional designers who designed and facilitated the FDP course and the course participants.

I relied on purposeful sampling for my recruitment of participants, which is a method used often in qualitative research because it allows researchers to select participants and access rich sources of data on specific knowledge of experiences and interest (Patton, 2002, and Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, as cited by Palinkas et al., 2015). Participants must have had time to apply some component of their learning in the FDP course in their own online course. The purposeful sampling also aimed to capture a wide spectrum of experiences among participants. That is to say, it was my goal to include participants that have both negative and positive criticisms of their experiences in the FDP course.

Initial contact with potential participants was initiated by an email solicitation sent to current and past enrollments in the FDP course. In the email, I explained the purpose of the study, the anticipated investment of time, identified my interview and focus group approach, and asked recipients to elect if they would like to join or not. I then reached out to those who had elected to join the study and shared with them my Research Participant Information and Consent form (see Appendix C). After signing the consent form, I assigned participants codenames (for example, P1, P2), which was assigned their participant profile and any data resulting from their participation in the study. This measure helped to ensure anonymity. I was able to recruit 5 participants to join this case study, which was my original goal, as "[t]he benefits of multicase study will be limited if fewer than, say, 4 cases are chosen, or more than 10" (Stake, 2006, p.22).

Each participant was invited to one individual interview session followed by a focus group meeting with all participants. Relying on multiple interviews can help further explore

undefined complexities, iterative change in thinking, and data that involves criticism (Read, 2018). Interview questions were not shared in advance; however, the purpose of the study and the study's research questions were shared in advance in order to establish some sense of expectations, understanding and context. It was my hope that taking both an individual interview and focus group approach would make participants more comfortable exploring honest and critical feedback, negative experiences, and even result in the sharing of other course artifacts, such as syllabi and assignments.

Data analysis relied on a within-case and cross-case analysis, which allowed analysis to be considerate of individual participant profiles and compare and contrast experiences across the cases (Powell, 2019). Data was coded and coding was organized into a Google Sheet. I relied on my research questions and theoretical framework for initial guidance during the coding process. I continued to develop my coding as themes emerged during my initial review of the data. Similar studies that served as models, such as Powell and Bodur (2019), and the following themes served as examples of coding: usefulness, barriers, technological, pedagogical, relevancy, collaboration, feedback, successful application, failed application, frustration, and relief.

The data collected through this case study's interviews, focus group, exploration of participants' FDP coursework, and other participant online course artifacts informed the development of participants' case summaries and resulted in rich data on the design of a faculty development program and online teaching and course design practices. The study provided evidence of what characteristics and components of a faculty development program might translate into faculty and student successes in the online classroom.

Implications and Significance of Findings

The application of such findings could improve outcomes in online learning, increasing satisfaction among online faculty and students and providing opportunities for growth in online learning.

Definitions of Key Terms

Best practices: A best practice is a teaching method that "has been deemed more effective than other alternatives due to the positive outcome produced. A best practice is a technique or methodology that has been shown by experience and/or research to lead to a desired result" Luscinski, as cited by Steele, Holbeck, & Madernack, 2019, Defining Effective Online Pedagogy

Faculty development: All activities faculty "pursue to improve their knowledge, skills and behaviors as teachers and educators, leaders and managers, and researchers and scholars, in both individual and group settings" (Steinert, 2020).

Instructional design: "[T]he focus of an instructional-design theory was on methods of facilitating learning rather than on processes of learning within a person's head (Reigeluth, 1983, as cited by An, 2021)

Instructional designer: An instructional designer applies a systematic process to identifying learning goals, designing courses, and ensuring online course quality (Chen & Carliner, 2021).

Online learning: "[L]earning experienced through the internet/online computers…where students interact with instructors and other students and are not dependent on their physical location for participating in this online learning experience" (Singh & Thurman, 2019, p. 2).

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Large bodies of research indicate that faculty development impacts the quality of online teaching and that online instructors need a wide range of ongoing support (Abel, 2005; Cole et al., 2004; Knight et al., 2007; Leary et al., 2020; Luck & McQuiggan, 2006; Reidinger & Rosenberg, 2006; Shelton, 2011; Smith, 2005; Steinert et al., 2006, as cited in Brinkley-Etzkorn, 2018). While approximately ten years ago, many faculty did not feel adequately prepared or supported to teach online (Lichoro, 2015), now many higher education institutions have embraced professional development in online teaching as a necessary resource; however, institutions are still investigating the best ways to train faculty to teach online (Leary et al., 2020). Much research indicates faculty need both technical and pedagogical support, as well as the development of time management strategies (Martin et al., 2019). Faculty development courses can provide important knowledge and skills that can better equip faculty to teach online, helping faculty wherever they are in their thinking and exploration of online teaching, from those faculty that are skeptical of online learning quality to those that have embraced teaching online and continue to develop their strategies. With the benefit of faculty development courses for online teaching, faculty can understand the demand for online learning, how to address the needs of online learners, how to design engaging and meaningful online course content and utilize effective online teaching strategies, and use the technology that facilitates online learning. Faculty development courses in teaching online can also empower faculty by creating awareness of university resources that support their online teaching and course design, while also providing a venue for and enabling the development of a community of support among faculty.

With these attributes and possible outcomes in mind, many institutions, have created faculty development programs to support online teaching faculty and introduce faculty to online

teaching. Some institutions have gone so far as to require faculty to take development programs before teaching online. University of Central Florida, for example, requires faculty to complete IDL6543, an 80-hour faculty development course, before designing and teaching an online or blended course at their university (Meyer, 2014; University of Central Florida, 2016). In what seems like a clear acknowledgement of the importance of online learning and faculty development for teaching online, some institutions offer faculty financial incentives for learning to design online courses and teach online. For example, as part of an ambitious plan to offer new online programs, between 2016 and 2018, Loyola University New Orleans offered anywhere between $2,000 and $5,000 to faculty for successfully completing a faculty development course in online teaching and designing an online course of their own. However, it wasn't that long ago that many institutions had not yet embraced faculty development in online teaching, with as much as 20 percent of institutions not offering any faculty development opportunities in online teaching at all (Seaman, 2009), and as much as 70 percent of faculty expressing disappointment with the lack of faculty development opportunities for teaching online at their universities (Allen & Seaman, 2010). Since these studies in 2009 and 2010 and the Covid-19 pandemic, professional development opportunities have increased, but administrators and faculty both express a desire for more opportunities, with only 24 percent of administrators and 54 percent of faculty saying they are content with their institutions' faculty development and support for online teaching (Johnson et al., 2021).

While faculty development can impact instructional practices and improve morale among faculty moving courses or programs online, it remains unclear how faculty development affects student experience and success in online learning (Brinkley-Etzkorn, 2018). Does faculty development in online teaching and course design have a clear impact on the experiences of

online students? A better understanding of the potential impacts of faculty development in online learning, especially in the context of student success in the online classroom, might support faculty development initiatives, improve the design of faculty development programs, and fuel faculty adoption of development programs and, perhaps, even online learning in general.

Much of the literature and research is centered on what faculty development for online teaching consists of and the manner in which it is offered to faculty. However, there is a gap in the research and literature on faculty development in online learning that explores the outcomes of faculty development in the online classroom. In other words, what skills and knowledge learned by participants in a faculty development course for online teaching have positive outcomes in the online classroom, what skills and knowledge do not, and why?

In the following literature review, after a brief explanation of the literature review methods, we will explore the history of faculty development in online learning, how it has evolved, and where it might be going, as part of an effort to define faculty development in online learning. We will then explore how faculty development programs like the FDP have been instrumental to the success of online learning and faculty teaching online. The characteristics of a strong faculty development program will also be examined through the literature. Then, we will explore literature that attempts to define success in online learning through the faculty perspective and student perspective. Finally, we will explore evidence that supports the need for further research into the connections between faculty development programs and student success in online learning, in order to inform the design of faculty development programs like the FDP.

Literature Review Methods

A review of the literature on faculty development in online learning and faculty and student perspectives on success in online learning was conducted to provide a thorough context of the related issues surrounding the problems and questions this research sets out to address. My search for literature takes three different approaches: my own, initial informal search; followed by a search conducted with the help of an Assistant Professor of Research and Learning at PMUU, and ongoing search and review of new literature as I continue to develop and work on my research.

I used PMUU Library search tools to conduct my searches for literature. To establish the history, evolution, and perceived future of faculty development in online learning, I used the following terms and phrases to search literature that would help me: “faculty development in online learning,” “online faculty development,” “faculty training for online teaching,” “online faculty training,” “online pedagogy training,” “andragogy and online faculty training,” “history of online faculty development,” and “future of online faculty development,” and “future of online teaching.” I limited my search dates between 1980 and the present in order to get a sense of the history surrounding online teaching and faculty development. To explore faculty and student perceptions of success in an online course, I relied on the same search tools and used the following terms: “faculty success and teaching online,” “faculty satisfaction in online learning,” “student success in online learning,” and “student satisfaction in online learning,” “faculty perceptions teaching online,” “faculty experiences teaching online,” “student perceptions of online learning,” and “student experiences in online learning.” Because online learning has changed dramatically over the years (Singh & Thurman, 2019), it is important to explore how perceptions might have evolved over the years as online learning evolved. As such, the search

for literature surrounding faculty and student perceptions of success in online learning was limited between 2000 and the present in order to try and capture this potential evolution of faculty and student perceptions while also remaining relevant to our current setting.

My collaboration with Dr. Chapparo was highly effective and resulted in an enormous wealth of articles to explore, which is most likely due to the much more comprehensive and systematic search methods and queries below. I have an enormous amount of literature to explore. My ongoing exploration of the literature and development of this chapter will depend on my continued combing through Dr. Chapparo's results coupled with my own continued informal searches, as explained previously.

Dissertations were also explored using PMUU's electronic theses and dissertations database. Dissertations were saved as models to consider and as resources for peer-reviewed articles and other useful and relevant sources.

All of the resources that I rely on are organized into folders within my password protected PMUU institutional Google Drive.

What We Talk About When We Talk About Online Learning

It is typical practice for authors researching online learning to dedicate space to establishing the definition of online learning in their articles, especially since confusion remains over what exactly online learning refers to; in fact, literature as recent as 2017 expressed confusion in defining online learning (Singh & Thurman, 2019). The term "online learning," since its first use in 1995, has come to encapsulate an ever-evolving landscape of learning that involves different modalities and strategies dependent on the internet and technologies (Singh & Thurman, 2019). Because of the evolving complexities of online learning, it's important to define what we mean by online learning for the purposes of this paper. And, of course, there are

other terms, such as “e-learning,” “online education,” “distance education,” “distance learning” and “web-based education,” that are used in reference to and interchangeably with online learning (Curtain, 2002; Moore & Kearsley, 2012; Singh & Thurman, 2019). Also, nestled within the meanings of these interchangeable terms, online learning can consist of synchronous and/or asynchronous formats, characteristics of online learning that also require defining. In synchronous online courses, all instruction is provided in real-time, requiring students and instructors to meet at the same time over some internet-based technology like Zoom; on the other hand, in asynchronous online courses instructors and students do not meet at the same time, but rather all instruction and assessments, such as recorded lectures, are delivered through a learning management system like Canvas (Sublett, 2022). That said, online courses can have both synchronous and asynchronous components.

Singh and Thurman conducted a systematic literature review seeking to identify different definitions of online learning and how it has evolved. Their review resulted in a systematic review of 151 articles published between 1988 and 2018; and in doing so, they were able to identify key elements that define online learning, as well as terms used as synonyms for online learning (2019). For example, among the literature explored by Singh and Thurman, e-learning and online learning tended to be used interchangeably the most, and these terms generally refer to “the bridging of the space between the teacher and the student through the use of web-based technologies” (Miller et al., 2016, as cited by Singh & Thurman, p. 295). Some of the articles included characteristics of online learning, such as asynchronous or synchronous interactivity and physical distance as part of their efforts to define what online learning is; however, technology was the most common term and characteristic associated with defining online learning, as it is commonly identified as the effective tool through which teacher and student

connect. Ryan (2001) also described e-learning and online learning as being used interchangeably and "implemented in a variety of ways, such as through the use of self-paced independent study units, asynchronous interactive sessions (where participants interact at different times) or synchronous interactive settings (where learners meet in real time)" (p.202). Kauffman takes a more straightforward approach, relying on "a typically-used definition of online learning as courses in which all of the instruction/materials are presented online" (2015, p. 2).

The need for Singh and Thurman's systematic review is highlighted by the fact that much of the literature they explored emphasized a general confusion around what online learning means and the interchangeability of the terminology. In the end, Singh and Thurman suggest three definitions to consider for different variations of online learning:

> Online learning is defined as learning experienced through the internet/online computers in a synchronous classroom where students interact with instructors and other students and are not dependent on their physical location for participating in this online learning experience.
>
> OR
>
> Online learning is defined as learning experienced through the internet in an asynchronous environment where students engage with instructors and fellow students at a time of their convenience and do not need to be co-present online or in a physical space."
>
> OR
>
> Online education is defined as education being delivered in an online environment through the use of the internet for teaching and learning. This includes online learning on

> the part of the students that is not dependent on their physical or virtual co-location. The teaching content is delivered online and the instructors develop teaching modules that enhance learning and interactivity in the synchronous or asynchronous environment (p.302).

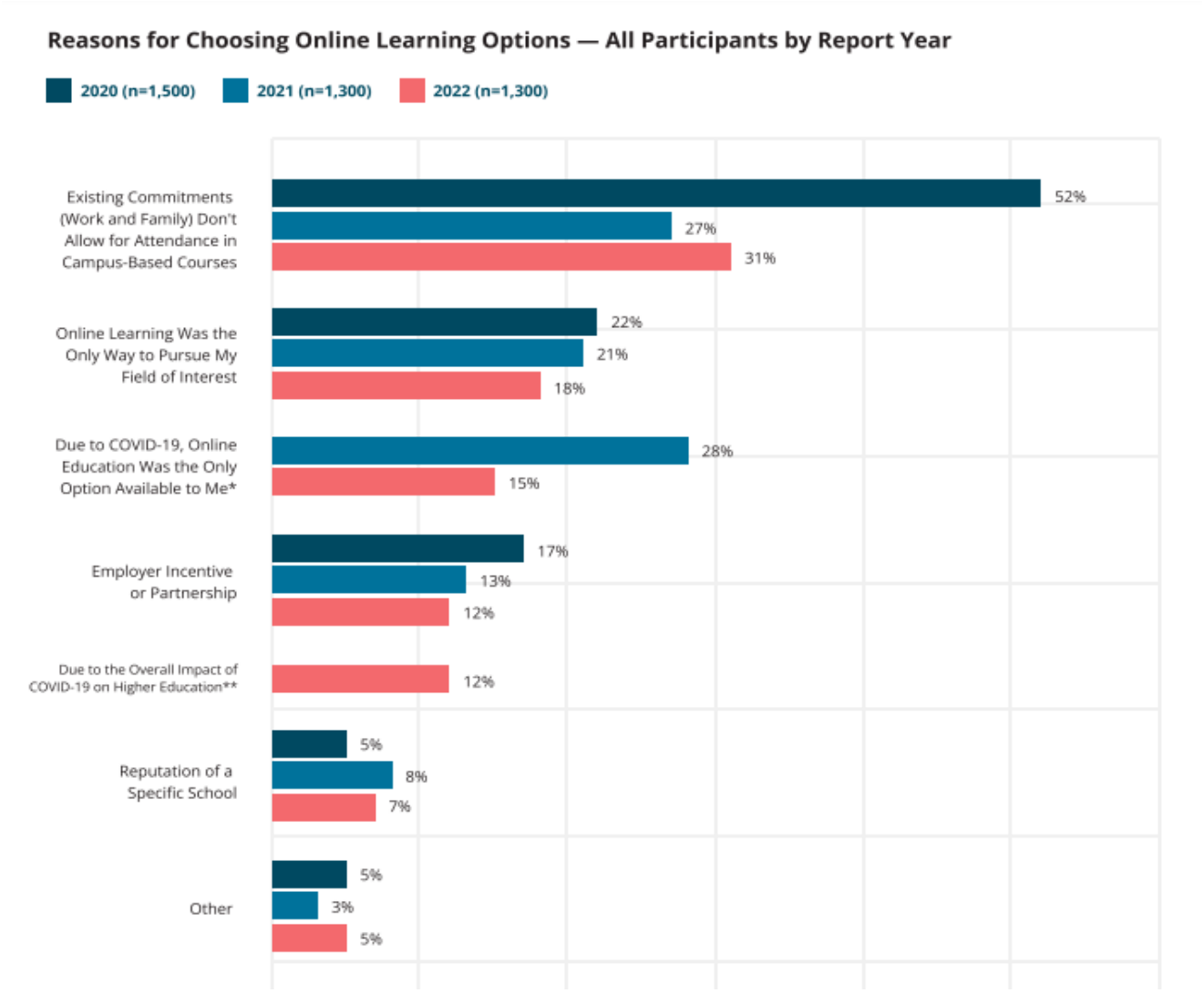
One could say that it makes complete sense that such a rapidly and ever-evolving field like online learning will always be hard to pin down with one term and one definition. For example, look at the metaverse, a place (or thing?) that really has no clear definition because it evolves with the daily imaginations and creations of its developers and users.

Why We Need Online Learning

Parts of higher education's evolving landscape are the evolving needs and expectations of higher education students. For example, online education has allowed community colleges to expand access for students, and "online education makes it possible for working, rural, disabled, and quarantined students to study where and when it is convenient" (Sublett, 2022, p. 27). The working student is another member of the student body that benefits from the flexibility of online learning (Lorenzo, 2004); in fact, students have said that the flexibility is the number one benefit of online learning (Kim, Liu, & Bonk, 2005). The percentages of students who are working has remained fairly consistent since 2010, with anywhere between 74 to 78 percent of part-time undergraduate students working and 40 to 43 percent of full-time undergraduate students working (National Center for Education Statistics, 2022), suggesting the preference for flexible learning isn't going anywhere anytime soon. However, while online education might increase access, research also shows that online learning might exacerbate equity issues, as students of color and low-income students struggle in online courses (Sublett, 2022).

A 2022 report, “Trends in Online Student Demographics,” led by Dr. Melissa Venable, collected a wealth of data not only on who online students are, but also on why they chose online and what they want out of it. In Figure 5 below, we get data on what inspired online students to choose online.

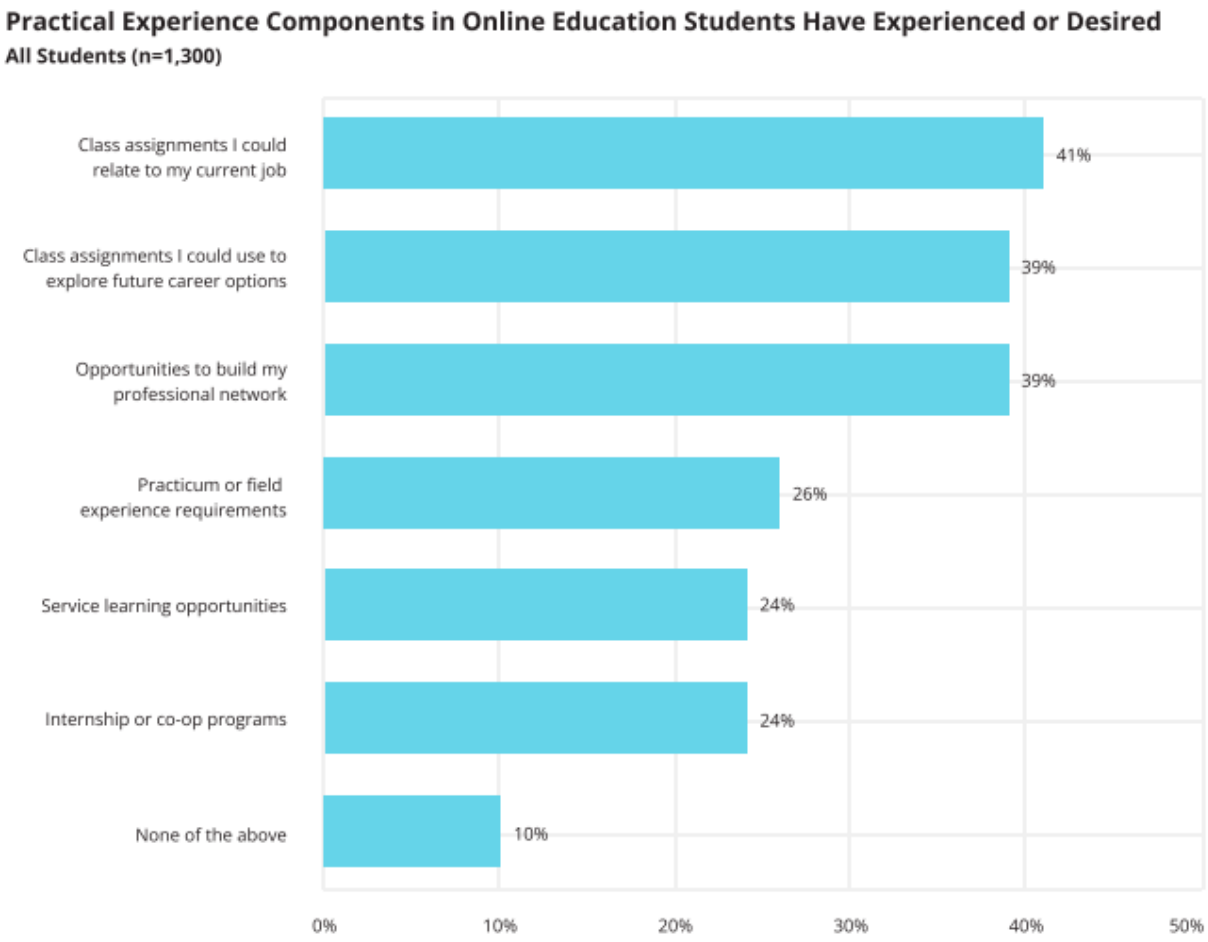
Figure 5 *Reasons for Choosing Online Learning Options (Venable, 2022)*



Understanding motivation is part of the equation when it comes to faculty serving their online students’ needs. Online student demographics and online student motivation are directly connected to another part of the equation: understanding what sort of learning students want in

an online course. In Figure 6 below, we see that many online students, especially in the context of *working* online students, want learning activities and skill development that relate to their job and/or immediately apply to their work and career aspirations.

Figure 6 *Practical Experience Components in Online Education Students Have Experienced or Desired (Venable, 2022)*



By sharing information like this in faculty development courses for online teaching, faculty will be able to make informed decisions about their student's needs and expectations. Such concerns should be taken into consideration when developing and launching online programs and courses and the faculty that will teach them. Teaching in a new and constantly

evolving venue to an increasingly diverse student body with diverse needs requires adequate support. Administrators, support staff, and most importantly faculty (because they are on the frontlines), need to be equipped with the appropriate knowledge and of their online learners so that they have the skills to adapt their services and teaching to students according to their needs. As such, faculty development courses in online learning can be a place for faculty to learn about who their online students are, what their online students might need in terms of resources and teaching, and how they can teach and design courses to cater to their online students' needs.

What Is Faculty Development?

Faculty development is typically made up of programs, courses, and workshops that are aimed at improving faculty's teaching; however, in light of the many roles faculty can play across an institution, such programs can also be designed for empowering faculty to achieve personal and career goals and developing knowledge and skills for administrative work, research, and technology (Amundsen et al., 2005; Centra, 1989).

Similar to how online course design should consider the characteristics, needs, and desires of online students, faculty development designers should consider the characteristics, needs, and desires of the faculty. Oftentimes, the design of faculty development is considered in the context of adult learning, which means that the models and theories of adult education, such as andragogy, play a role in the consideration of faculty needs and faculty development program design (Lawler, 2003, as cited by McQuiggan, 2012). Knowles' six assumptions can provide a template for considering the characteristics of adult learner faculty. Dr. Imed Bouchrika (2022) provides an excellent explanation of Knowles' six assumptions in the context of their implications for course design:

- Self-concept. Adult learners have a self-concept. This means that they are autonomous, independent, and self-directed.
- Learning from Experience. Experience as a rich resource of learning. Adults learn from their previous experiences. Thus, it is a good repository for learning.
- Readiness to Learn. Adults tend to gravitate towards learning matters that matter to them. Their readiness to learn things is highly correlated with their relative uses.
- Immediate Applications. The orientation of adult learning is for immediate applications rather than future uses. The learning orientation of adults tends to slant towards being task-oriented, life-focused, and problem-centric.
- Internally Motivated. Adults are more motivated by internal personal factors rather than external coaxes and pressures.
- Need to Know. Adult learners have the need to know the value of what they are learning and know the whys behind the need to learn them (p. 4).

As adult learners, faculty bring many different experiences and viewpoints, both personally and professionally, and these characteristics can impact the considerations for program design (Knowles, 1984). In other words, if we consider adult learning theory in faculty development, what's needed for some faculty might not be needed for other faculty. But, according to McQuiggan's review of literature predating 2012, most faculty development programs rarely followed adult learning theories and models but instead were "designed as a one-size-fits-all solution" (p. 28).

While higher education institutions have a long way to go with faculty diversity in order to achieve demographic parity with student populations, faculty are slowly becoming more diverse (Matias et al., 2022). As faculty continue to become more diverse, it will become increasingly important to consider adult learning theory when designing and revising faculty development in online learning and evaluating faculty development programs to ensure they are meeting the diverse needs of the changing faculty body.

What is Faculty Development in Online Learning and Why Do We Need It?

It is widely acknowledged that professional development is needed in order to equip faculty to teach online, and faculty development for online learning exists in many different forms and modalities, such as face-to-face, hybrid, or completely online, and exposes faculty to many different teaching and design models (McQuiggan, 2012). Faculty development for online teaching, whether simply one-time workshops or web resources, has existed for almost as long as online education itself. By the early 2000s more than half of 2-year and 4-year higher ed institutions offered distance learning (U.S. Dept. of Education, 2003), with online programs such as Sacred Heart University's Nursing School relying on insights into faculty barriers as demonstrated in Table 2 below to inform their faculty development offerings.

Table 2

Barriers to Change and Change Strategies for Overcoming Them (Clay, 1999, as cited in Baker 2003)

Faculty Concerns/Barriers	Strategies to Overcome Resistance
Increased workload	Set reasonable limit for class size
	Reimburse or provide release time for course development
	Provide support of instructional design consultant
	Provide individualized technical support
Altered role of the instructor	Assist with paradigm shift from teaching to learning
	Recognize that this shift is happening in the traditional classroom as well
	Base course design on sound principles of learning
Lack of technical and administrative support	Hire adequate support in the Information Technology department for software training and individual support
	Set up a Help Desk for students and faculty
	Assign an Online Coordinator within the department/college
Reduced course quality	Integrate the online learning into the program evaluation plan and the outcome assessment plan
	Compare traditional and online courses
	Determine sound educational theory and principles to underlie course development
	Use instructional design consultant and/or principles
Negative attitudes of other faculty	Develop faculty innovators to serve as alternative positive role models
	Assure equal recognition for online courses and traditional courses
	Reward innovation
	Voluntary participation

These faculty concerns and barriers remain relevant, however more complicated due to the evolving landscape of higher education as a whole. By 2012, one study found that

approximately 81 percent of institutions that offer online programs also provide some form of faculty development for their online teaching faculty (Herman). Some schools required faculty development while other schools hoped that faculty would volunteer, with many development programs ranging anywhere between 6 weeks or many months (Abel, 2005, as cited by McQuiggan, 2012).

In the previous chapter section "What We Talk About When We Talk About Online Learning," we explored the historical and present confusion in defining what online learning is exactly. As such, it makes sense that faculty development in online learning might be such a crucial component to understanding online learning and how one might be successful teaching online. In the classroom, faculty members are generally subject matter experts that tend to teach how they were taught (Meskill & Anthony, 2007, as cited by Mohr & Shelton, 2017), and because many faculty have not been online students themselves, they lack a model for teaching online (Schmidt et al., 2016, as cited by Mohr & Shelton, 2017).

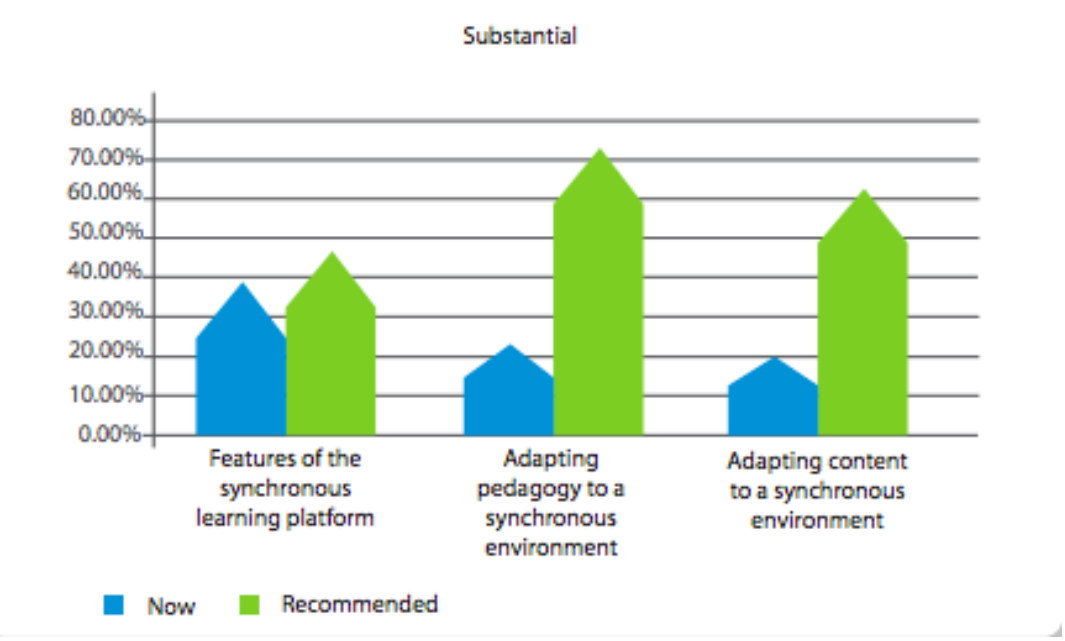
Faculty support of online learning initiatives can be an uphill battle "because of a number of perceived barriers, including perceived barriers to student success in online classes, uncertainty about their image as online instructors, technical support needs, and their desire for reasonable workload and manageable class enrollments" (Wingo, Ivankova, & Moss, 2017; as cited by Martin, et al, 2019). Faculty development for online learning can change faculty beliefs about teaching in general, even affecting faculty's strategies for teaching in the face-to-face setting (McQuiggan, 2012). That said, faculty satisfaction is one of the five pillars of high quality online learning, according to the Online Learning Consortium, which identifies faculty development as a crucial component to faculty satisfaction (Meyer & Murrell, 2014).

Characteristics of a Quality Faculty Development Program

Faculty needs vary depending on the needs of the students, the university's mission, and the faculty's level of experience teaching online. As Lowenthal, Shreaves, Gooding, and Kepka observe, "there is not one right way" to develop faculty for teaching and designing online courses (p.8). Many faculty need more than just courses that teach them how to use technology; faculty also need instruction on curriculum design for online courses and how to use technology effectively (Schmidt et al, 2016).

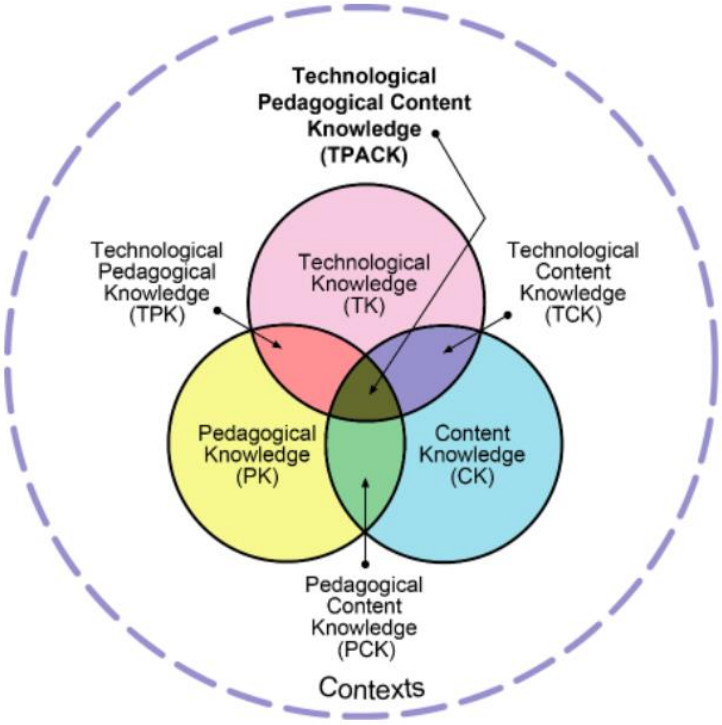
Despite its crucial role in faculty satisfaction and the success of online learning, it remains difficult to identify examples of faculty development courses with a focus on online pedagogy (Leslie, 2020). In fact, a 2016 survey that asked online instructors about their experiences in development courses indicated faculty want courses to focus more content on online teaching pedagogy, as illustrated in Figure 7 below.

Figure 7 *Virtual Classroom Survey Outcomes (Online Learning Consortium, 2016)*



Survey respondents asked that faculty development for online teaching take a more balanced approach to content on technological skills and online teaching pedagogy. We can see this conceptual approach demonstrated in the TPACK Model shown below in Figure 8.

Figure 8 *The TPACK Model (Koehler, 2011)*



The TPACK Model is a major component of the theoretical framework on which this research bases its methodology. This model of course content consideration does away with the historical norm of faculty development for online teaching, which puts too much emphasis on technological skills, the bells and whistles of tech. Instead, the TPACK Model provides a more holistic consideration for how to teach online, acknowledging the equal importance of online teaching strategy, the course content, and technology know-how.

Studies have also suggested that faculty benefit from smaller, more focused faculty development offerings that tackle one strategy or practice at a time; this way faculty are able to pick, develop, and apply one strategy or tool for their course, instead of being overwhelmed by a

larger faculty development course that covers a broad amount of topics and strategies (Schmidt et al., 2016). Faculty also benefit from hearing success stories from their colleagues (Schmidt et al., 2016), and so opportunities for colleagues to exhibit and model success, perhaps even discuss their success in online courses, could be a very effective component to a faculty development program.

While historically faculty development has consisted of face-to-face workshops, online opportunities have become more and more popular as a way to overcome complicated logistical issues because of faculty's many different responsibilities (Steinhart, 2010, as cited in Cook & Steinhart, 2013). As adult learners themselves, faculty benefit from self-directed learning opportunities that they can access at any time on a need-by-need basis (Schmidt et al., 2016). And since many faculty have never taken an online course as a student, they do not have that experience from which to base their own online teaching (Lowenthal et al., 2019). Consequently, it might benefit faculty to learn in an online venue similar to the one in which they will be teaching.

As touched on earlier in Chapter 1, Powell and Bodur (2019) conducted qualitative research on a faculty development course for online teaching and were able to identify five areas of concern among faculty participants after completing the course: Relevancy, Authenticity, Usefulness, Interaction and collaboration, Reflection, and Context. Following the theme of relevancy, some participants responded positively to knowledge building and activities that reminded them of student-centered learning approaches; however, one participant expressed concern that the course did not meet them where they were in their career and ability. This suggests that faculty development courses should take into account who they are serving, consider the diversity of their participants and their needs, and offer more prescriptive

opportunities for unique learners. Authenticity was another area of participant concern, meaning participants wanted content on teaching strategies and learning activities that they could envision actually working in the real world. Based on my own experience, an example of this that comes to mind is the discussion board or forum, which is commonly leaned on as a way to get students discussing course topics but can end up being no more than a mindless task, with students 'checking off the box' rather than engaging in genuine discussion. Instructors can be left frustrated with the resulting level of engagement. Participants in Powell and Bodur's study wanted to learn strategies and learning activities that would work in their world. Similarly, it was important that the content be useful, which I interpret to mean, in the context of Knowles' assumptions, to be immediately applicable in their teaching. Interaction and collaboration was also important in that the participants wanted to work with their colleagues, share ideas, and get feedback from each other on their teaching designs, which feels representative of Lave and Wenger's communities of practice. Reflection was another area of concern in that participants wanted to consider what they had learned by actually designing something and then receiving feedback, instead of just answering objective questions as part of wrapping up a lesson in the professional development course. And finally, context was important to participants in that they wanted the professional development to be considerate of their time constraints, the financial concerns of their work environment, and class sizes. It is important that the professional development is aware of the world its participants are teaching in and that its content is designed with their world in mind.

The Faculty Experience

Faculty experience and perceptions of online learning can be a crucial factor in the experience of online students and the overall success of an online program (Borup & Evmenova,

2019; Leary et al., 2020). As such, it's important that faculty are equipped to succeed in online teaching, as Walters et al (2017) say:

> Awareness of faculty perceptions of the institutional climate, whether online teaching is valued, satisfaction with the reliability of technology, and concern about the effectiveness of their instruction, can help shape the content and format of faculty development initiatives (p. 5).

Faculty development initiatives can contribute to positive experiences and perspectives of online teaching among faculty (Walters et al., 2017).

The Student Experience

Despite there being ample research supporting that learning outcomes are comparable in online learning and face-to-face learning (Kauffman, 2015), online learning isn't for every student out there. Online students must be able to rely on self-awareness of their own needs, time and work management skills, and overall strengths and weaknesses (Kauffman, 2015). As Kauffman points out, in online learning "[m]ore responsibility is placed on the learner, especially in asynchronous courses. The student is responsible for reviewing course material, taking exams at scheduled intervals etc., which requires adequate self-regulation skills" (p.7).

It is well established that active learning, having students actually do something and reflect on what they are doing, improves their learning experience and outcomes; and the same can be said for active learning in the online setting (Benek-Rivera & Matthews, 2004; Sarason & Banbury, 2004; Smart & Cappell, 2006). Specifically, interactive experiences like simulations in online learning, especially when interspersed throughout the course content as part of the learning process, have shown a positive impact on the student experience (Smart & Cappell, 2006).

Prior experience with technology might also improve the likelihood that a student has a positive experience in online learning (Smart & Cappell, 2006). Ease of use might be the cause of this positive experience, as it can affect the ratio of a student's investment of time versus the payoff, i.e. learning outcomes.

One of the major sources of satisfaction for students is the quality of an online course's overall instructional design, that is the design of the course as far as structure, moments of interaction and collaboration, clear learning goals, instructional content, and other course content (Kauffman, 2015). The amount of content and organization of instructional content must also not be overwhelming (Smart & Cappell, 2006); in other words, too much content loaded into one unit or section of a course can lead to a negative student experience.

Faculty Success and Student Success in Online Learning

What makes for a successful experience in an online course? How are faculty perceptions of success and student perceptions of success different and similar in online learning? We know that effective teaching practices can facilitate and guide students in achieving their academic goals and leave students feeling satisfied with their learning experience (Gorsky & Blau, 2009). However, when we consider student definitions of success in an online course, students can define success inconsistently, some relating success to a course meeting expectations and others seeing success in terms of grades and outcomes (Chou, 2013). How might this impact faculty choices with online teaching strategies and course design? Faculty tend to define success in terms of student engagement and outcomes (Leslie, 2020). Do faculty perceptions and student perceptions of success in online learning meet somewhere in the middle? There is a gap in the research addressing such questions. This research aims to begin exploring the possible answers to those questions.

What is Quality Online Learning

There are a number of resources available that aim to establish quality assurance criteria for online learning. For approximately twenty-one years, research initiatives and comprehensive literary reviews focused on developing quality criteria for online learning and, as a result, criteria and resources have been produced by a variety of online learning stakeholders, including private corporations like Blackboard, higher education institutions, and online learning professional communities (Littlefield et al., 2019). These rubrics and resources provide consistent standards to consider when designing and launching online courses and programs. Table 3 below identifies a number of examples of rubrics and resources that aim to establish quality standards and criteria for online learning.

Table 3

Quality Assurance Criteria Rubrics / Resources

Rubric / Resource Name	Creator	Link to Rubric / Resource
Quality Matters	Maryland Online Inc.	https://www.qualitymatters.org/index.php/
Online Learning Consortium	Sloan Consortium	https://onlinelearningconsortium.org/about/history/
SUNY Online Course Quality Review Rubric	State University of New York	https://oscqr.suny.edu/
PMUU Online Course Quality Rubric	PMUU Online	n/a

While research into and the development of such quality criteria and rubrics has been ongoing for roughly 21 years, this criterion is still coming into existence and further research will be necessary as learning technology and pedagogy continue to evolve (Littlefield et al., 2019).

Why the FDP Is Important

More and more college students are taking online courses. According to the National Center for Education Statistics 2019 report, more than 37 percent of college students took at least one online course during the 2018–2019 academic year. And since the COVID-19 pandemic, online learning has become a normal component of most college students' experiences, with more than 51 percent taking at least one online course during the 2019–2020 academic year (Smalley, 2021). As student needs and expectations have evolved over the years, the majority of higher education institutions are embracing online learning as a major part of their future success (Allen & Seaman, 2014). Online learning and distance education programs are specific components of many universities' strategic plan (Walters, 2017); in fact, increasing online offerings is a specific component of the plan for growth at the university in which this research takes place. With such ambitious plans for strengthening online learning and increasing online offerings comes increased pressure on faculty to evolve their teaching methods and adopt new technological skills and a growing amount of evidence shows that faculty development plays a role in student satisfaction in online learning (Walters, 2017).

The Need for Evaluation of Faculty Development Programs

While many institutions offer faculty development in online learning, there is a concerning lack of evaluation of these programs, most likely due to urgent demands for such support in the face of growing demand for online learning (Brinkley-Etzkorn, 2018; Meyer, 2014; Rizk et al., 2022; Salajegheh, 2021).

As PMUU faculty embark on new teaching endeavors like expanding online course offerings, it's important that they can trust the resources and personnel put in place to support them. Negative experiences with faculty development can leave faculty wary and suspicious of

whether future development opportunities might actually help them or be worth their time; they can also sabotage buy-in for larger efforts (Guskey, 2000).

This evaluation can offer a systematic process that allows stakeholders to reform professional development as it is offered continuously over time. Professional development, as Guskey points out, is not regarded as a simple, one-time experience any longer, but instead, a continuous and complex process with a higher level of accountability than before (2000). The FDP is an ongoing professional development program offered without any end dates. As a living program that is always running live and accessible to participants, it's important to evaluate and reform the program as online pedagogy, faculty needs, student needs, and the needs of the university at large evolve.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter explains the case study's qualitative methods, including the conceptual framework, descriptions of the participants and how they were selected, the data collection procedures and the measures used, and the steps taken to improve the study's validity and trustworthiness. I also make a case for why I relied on qualitative methods in this study and why such methods were appropriate for the goals and contexts of the study. However, I will begin with an examination of my researcher positionality, as my positionality and identity impacted the way I navigated and interpreted my world and my qualitative research (Jacobson & Mustafa, 2019).

Researcher Positionality

I am, at heart, a lover of stories and a storyteller myself. I believe that such an adoration for narratives is built on my fascination with both our unique and shared experiences and perceptions. It is both our commonalities and our differences that engender empathy for each other, and I find that complex contradiction to be at the core of what it means to be human. And while I value quantitative methods, my current thinking as a researcher and lover of storytelling has me most curious about the complicated perspectives and experiences of those navigating the world of my research topic, faculty development for online teaching.

Developing a Love for Storytelling, Teaching and Instructional Design

I'd like to explain where my love for storytelling comes from, as I believe it provides foundational thinking and perspective that impacts my gathering and interpretation of qualitative data. When I was in high school, I had a difficult time acclimating to a new school. At the same time, my family was struggling with my sister's health and battles with addiction. I think this led to me isolating myself. My English teacher at the time assigned our class to write a short story,

and it was through this assignment that I discovered a love for storytelling and something productive to do in my isolation. Since then I've continued practicing fiction writing, and part of that craft is listening to my characters and allowing them to develop and dictate their own voices and perceptions, or as some writers say, 'lose control of their characters' (Davies, 2019). This strategy helps to ensure that our characters are autonomous, that they have their own voices, their own perceptions, and that we as authors are true to that.

Over the years, I've had some success with my fiction writing, attending New York University for my Masters of Fine Arts in Creative Writing, publishing a collection of short stories *The Fry Pans Aren't Sufficing*, and recently seeing the first chapter of my novel-in-progress published in *The Paris Review*. This small amount of success has also provided me with the opportunity to teach creative writing.

I taught my first creative writing workshop at New York University in 2011 and continued to teach composition and creative writing at various universities. In turn, it was teaching that allowed me to discover my love for instructional design, faculty development, and student success. I researched and developed strategies for teaching both face-to-face and online and recognized the methods that improved my students' learning outcomes and my own experiences as an instructor as well. While at Loyola University New Orleans, I shared these methods with fellow faculty, first in an unofficial capacity, and then in a more official capacity as the university's first instructional designer, training Loyola faculty to teach with technology. Since then, my fiction writing, teaching, instructional design, and research have been intertwined. As such, my research perspective is heavily influenced by the belief systems that influence my fiction writing, teaching, and instructional design.

Developing an Appreciation for Qualitative Methods

When I first began dabbling in qualitative methods in Fall of 2021, only about one year prior to beginning my dissertation work, I had a hard time articulating why I was drawn to this particular approach to research design. Then, while doing work for a research paper in the doctoral course, Qualitative Methods and Analysis, I discovered an article by J. Douglas Toma titled, "How Getting Close to Your Subjects Makes Qualitative Data Better" (2000) in which he writes of subjective qualitative methods, "researchers and subjects collaborate to determine meaning, generate findings, and reach conclusions. The research relationship is a partnership" (p. 177). As a creative writer, teacher, and new researcher, this explained to me the connection I had been feeling with qualitative methods, but until then could not quite articulate. Authors collaborate with their readers, as each reader works with what the author gives them to create their own version of the story. As Stephen King says in *On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft* (2000), "Description begins in the writer's imagination, but should finish in the reader's" (p. 174). Teaching can also be seen as a collaborative process between teacher and student instead of teachers simply "depositing" knowledge into students (Freire, 2000). As an instructional designer, I collaborate with subject matter experts (faculty), to help them reimagine and redesign their courses. Within these collaborations, strong interactions can result in better outcomes. Likewise, "intense interactions strengthen end products in qualitative research. Getting closer to your subjects makes better qualitative data" (Toma, 2000, p. 179).

Epistemological Perspective

I embrace the collaborative nature of the researcher and participant relationship in qualitative research and the resulting construction of knowledge that occurs through such a collaborative relationship, as Toma describes (2000). Because of this collaborative relationship, my research design was malleable and underwent various inputs and revisions as I reflected and

revised throughout the process and welcomed input from participants, especially with regard to sources of data collection, as part of our continuous pursuit to construct knowledge. Being receptive to this kind of input affirms the collaborative design of the research (Read, 2018). For example, the focus group might be a primary source of data collection in this study, but if a participant suggests I consider their course syllabus as well, I will include it as a potential source of data.

In that sense, my researcher lens aligned with Maxwell's (2013) description of the qualitative design method:

> To design a qualitative study you can't just develop (or borrow) a logical strategy in advance and then implement faithfully. You need, to a substantial extent, to *construct* and *reconstruct* your research design…Qualitative research design, to a much greater extent than quantitative research, is a "do-it-yourself" rather than an "off-the-shelf" process, one that involves "tacking" back and forth between the different components of the design, assessing their implications for one another (p. 3).

My Constructivist/Interpretivist Lens

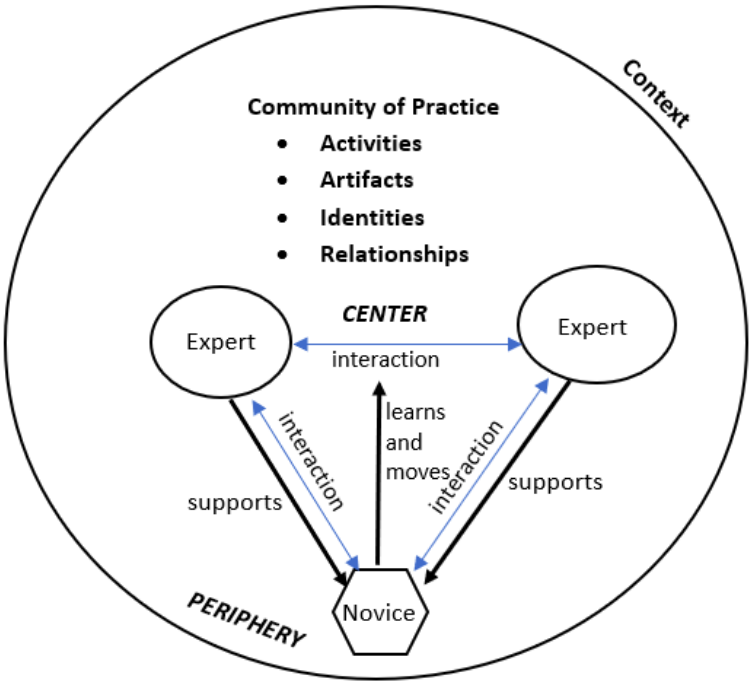
Because my research methods embraced a collaborative approach, and, as Maxwell points out, a constructing and reconstructing of my design with my participants (2013), a concerted effort to build understandings, my methods align with the constructivist/interpretivist paradigm. The constructivist/interpretivist paradigm assumes that there are varying realities based on unique perspectives and interpretations (Creswell & Poth, 2016). This lens was applicable to this study because the research questions focused on *how* the research participants *define* or *describe* or *perceive* their unique experiences, knowledge, and skills during and after completing the FDP course. In order to address such questions and provide participants the

opportunity to describe their experiences, feelings, and acquired knowledge and skill, the typical tools of the constructivist/interpretivist researcher, 'interviews, observations, document views, and visual data analysis,' were employed (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006).

Theoretical Framework and Analysis

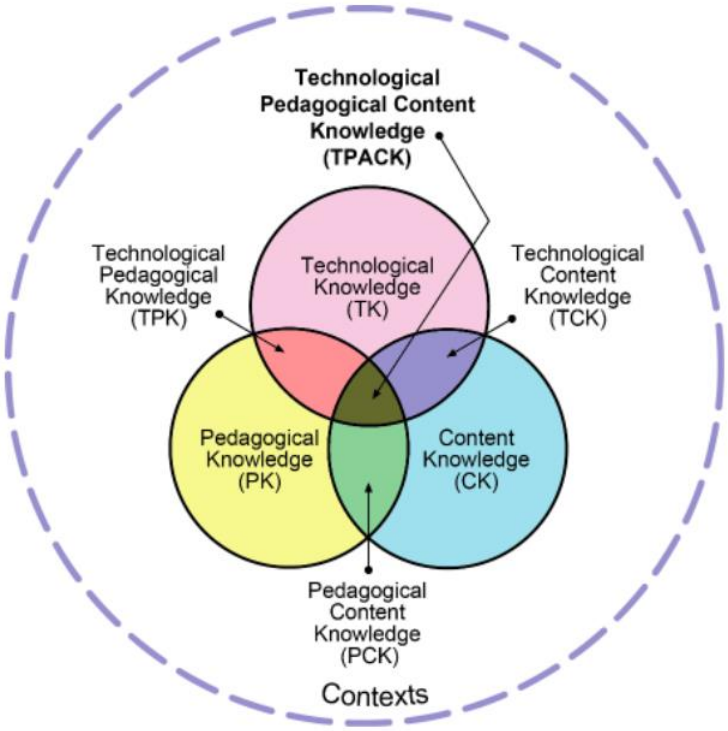
My methods and analysis were framed and informed by the theories Situated Learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991) and the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) model (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). Situated Learning centers the learning in "acts of social co-participation" and that the learner "acquires the skill to perform by actually engaging in the process, under the attenuated conditions of *legitimate peripheral participation*" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 14). Opportunities for reflection and collaboration are crucial to learning as well (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Situated Learning's emphasis on learning through participation in a community of practice and the adoption of specific skills aligned with this study's research questions because the professional development course in which the faculty participants took part was one that worked to build relationships among the faculty learning to teach online and the instructional designers that guided them through their learning experience. Faculty members' "professional identities are impacted by this shared learning experience" (Smith et al., 2020, p. 83). Figure 9 below illustrates Situated Learning in action.

Figure 9 *Situated Learning* (Egbert & Roe, 2019)



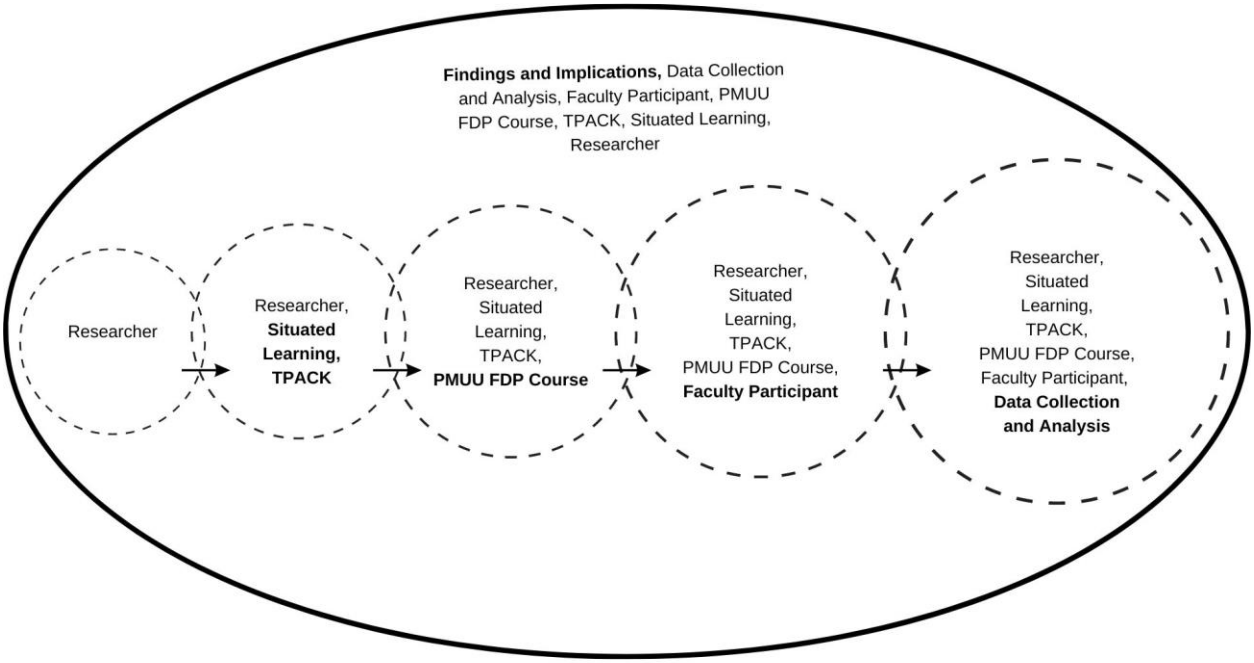
The TPACK Model (Mishra & Koehler, 2006) finds its origins in Shulman (1987), who argued that an educator's content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge or skills are not "mutually exclusive domains" (Brinkley-Etzkorn, 2018, p. 29). Mishra and Koehler (2006) took Shulman's theory a step further by acknowledging the dramatic increase in the use of technology to teach. TPACK provides an evaluation tool for understanding the knowledge and skills teachers need to have in order to successfully use technology to enhance their teaching (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). Each of the elements of the TPACK Model can be found in the learning objectives of the FDP course, which aimed to help faculty participants understand the relationships between their content knowledge, their technical skills, and their pedagogical skills and how those relationships translate to successful online teaching and course design. In Figure 10 you can see an illustration for the TPACK Model.

Figure 10 *The TPACK Model (Koehler, 2011)*



My theoretical framework, which is provided below in Figure 11, illustrates the roles Situated Learning and the TPACK Model, as well as the other impactful elements, including Research Positionality, Faculty Participants, and the PMUU FDP, shaped this study's research and knowledge building process.

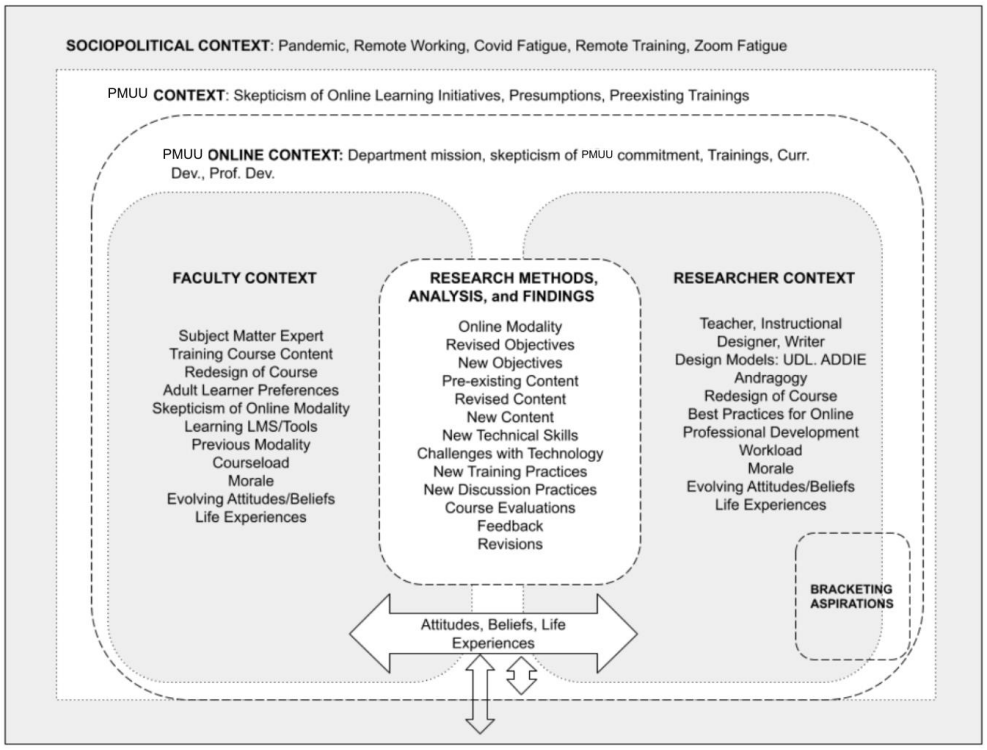
Figure 11 *This Study's Theoretical Framework*



Conceptual Framework

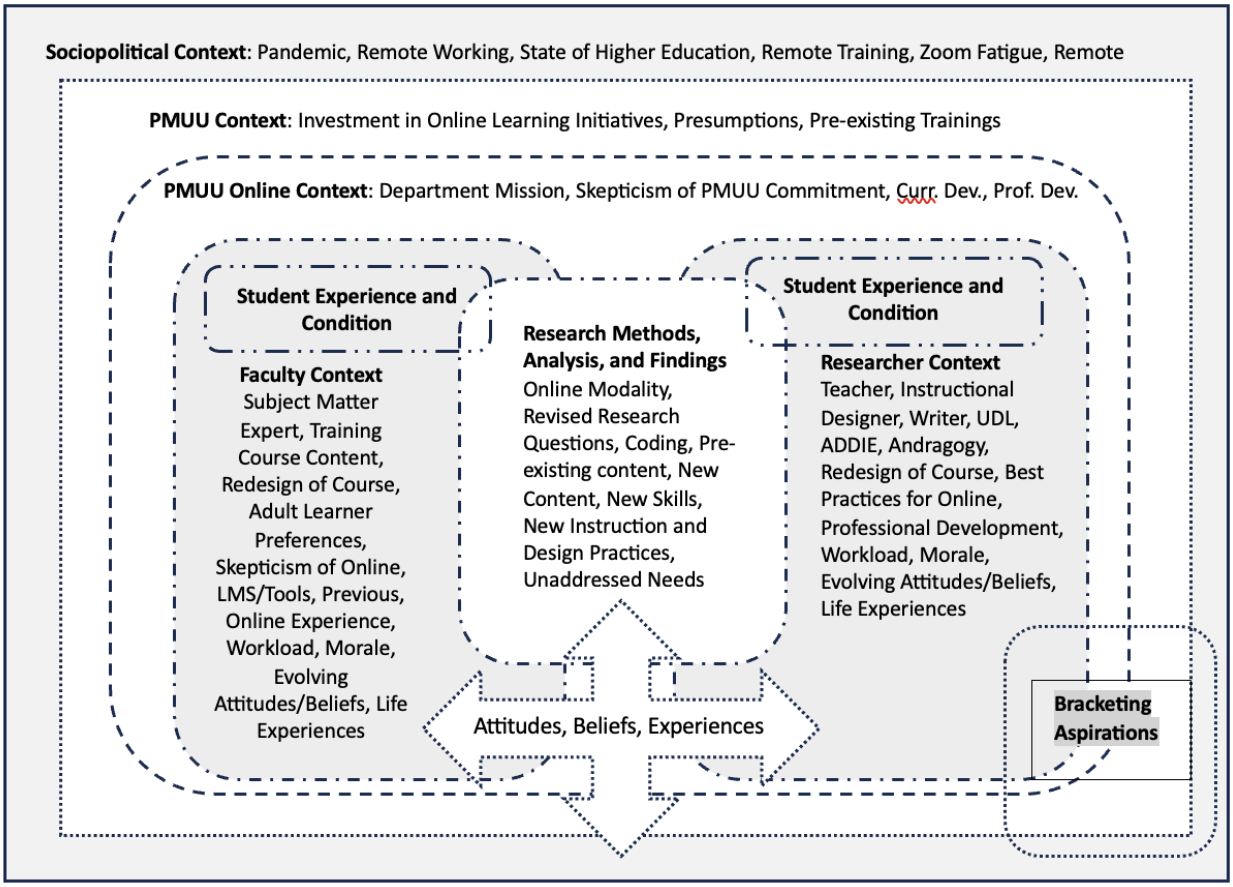
My conceptual framework served as a reminder of the many factors I should remain conscious of as I prepared for and conducted my research. Below, in Figure 12, is a mapping of my original conceptual framework, which, in the spirit of my constructivist/interpretivist lens and the collaborative nature of my relationship with the research participants, I reconsidered and revised throughout the process. Further, I applied revisions to my conceptual framework as I considered and reflected on data provided by the participants through the interviews, focus group, and various documentation such as syllabi. The different layers of context were meant to address these factors and attempt to understand their relationships and implications for my research design, data gathering, and analysis.

Figure 12 *The Study's Original Conceptual Framework*



As briefly touched on in Chapter 1, my conceptual framework evolved, which is illustrated below in Figure 13. This revised conceptual framework is explored further in Chapter 5 in the context of the study's findings as my ongoing interpretation of the data is what led to the most significant impacts on the conceptual framework.

Figure 13 *The Study's Final Conceptual Framework*



Study Design

In this section I explain the study's case study design, identify the sources of data, and identify the research questions.

Case Study

This study sought to understand faculty learners' experiences in the FDP, and by extension their experiences teaching and designing online courses and how they defined success in online learning. Case study research can provide a detailed study of participant perceptions and experiences related to a phenomenon in that specific context. By taking a case study approach, this study is able to explore the FDP in multiple contexts, their common bonds in relation to the FDP and online teaching and course design, as well as the different relationships each participant had with the FDP and online teaching and course design.

Data Sources

This case study relied on one individual interview with each of the study's five participants, a focus group meeting with all participants, and, in some cases, data volunteered by participants in the form of their own online course syllabi and assignments and their coursework in the FDP. These four different data sources worked together to strengthen validity of the data overall and the findings.

Research Questions

Although not an absolute rule, qualitative methods tend to be appropriate when exploring multiple perspectives and experience through addressing 'how' and 'why' research questions (Leppink, 2017). Such questions leave room for participants to construct their own truths according to their unique perspectives, experiences, and contexts (Maxwell, 2013). With this in mind, Table 3 below aligns this study's research questions with the qualitative methods that were employed to answer them.

Table 3

The Research Questions and Aligned Methods

Research Question	Individual Interview / Focus Group	Triangulating Data
RQ1: How do faculty describe the skills and knowledge they acquired through the online faculty development course?	Individual Interviews Focus Group	Participants' Course Syllabi Participants' Course Assignments
RQ2: In what ways do faculty perceive the acquired skills and knowledge from the online faculty development course influenced their online teaching and course design?	Individual Interviews Focus Group	Participants' Course Syllabi Participants' Course Assignments Participant FDP Assignment Submissions FDP Participation Data

RQ3: How do faculty define a successful online course?	Individual Interviews Focus Group	Participants' Course Syllabi Participants' Course Assignments
RQ3A: How do faculty define an unsuccessful online course?	Individual Interviews Focus Group	Participants' Course Syllabi Participants' Course Assignments
RQ4: How do faculty describe their needs for pedagogical instruction versus their needs for technological instruction in order to teach online successfully?	Individual Interviews Focus Group	Participants' Course Syllabi Participants' Course Assignments Participant FDP Assignment Submissions

Methods

The following subsections lay out the methods of this case study, including the context and setting, recruitment of participants, and the data collection and analysis procedures.

Context and Setting

The faculty development program (FDP) was one course offered at Public Mid-Atlantic Urban University (PMUU) as part of a larger, five-course certificate program administered at the direction of the Assistant Director of Professional Development. This assistant director was supported by a team of four instructional designers, including myself, known as the professional development team (PDT). The PDT's webpage briefly described the five-course series:

> Each course in the certificate program earns its own digital badge culminating with a certificate badge upon successful completion of all five courses. Each course is asynchronous with support and facilitation from PMUU Online's experienced and seasoned instructional design team with expertise in online learning and teaching with technology (PMUU Online).

The participants in this study all took part in the same course (the FDP), which was the first course in the five-course series described above. The FDP covered what were considered by the PDT to be introductory knowledge and skills on the best practices for online teaching and course design. The FDP that the participants took part in was advertised as such, “This course helps instructors understand different aspects of online course management, including instructor presence, communication with students, time/work management, and accessibility” (PMUU Online).

My roles as researcher and instructional designer for the FDP included researching online teaching strategy and online course design, which I then used to inform design and facilitation of the FDP courses. PMUU faculty were invited to participate in the courses year-round. See Appendix A for an outline of the course content.

Participants and Recruitment

Current and former enrollees in the FDP course were contacted via a form email which described the purpose of the study and allowed recipients to elect if they’d like to participate. Participant emails were obtained automatically from all faculty or other learners that enroll in the FDP as part of standard learning management system workflow. The form email was as follows:

> I'm an instructional design lead at PMUU Online and also a doctoral candidate at PMUU's School of Education. I'm entering the data collection phase of my dissertation titled "Exploring the Experiences and Outcomes of Faculty Learning To Teach Online." I'm writing to ask if you'd be available to take part in my research, which would consist of two interviews (an individual interview, followed by a focus group) about your experiences and outcomes after participating in the PMUU Online course "FDP."

I would be very appreciative of your contributions towards my research. Please let me know if you have any questions. Thank you for your valuable time.

After a participant agreed to take part in the study, I shared the Research Participant Information and Consent form (see Appendix C) via Docusign. After signing the consent form via Docusign, participants were assigned a generic pseudonym (P1, P2, etc.), which will be associated with the data collected during the research.

I aimed to have at least five participants take part in the study and was able to recruit five participants. Five participants was my original goal, which aligned with Stake's guidance that the benefits of a case study can be limited if fewer than 4 cases, or more than 10 cases are included (2006). The participants of this study were teaching online courses at PMUU and had completed or began the FDP course. Participants also had time to apply in their own course the knowledge or skills gained from the FDP course. Along with these similarities, the participants also had many differences in terms of their participation in the FDP, their subject matter expertise, their levels of experience teaching and designing online courses, and the characteristics of their online teaching practices and online courses.

Purposeful Sampling. Participants for this study were the result of purposeful sampling, which can result in access to information-rich data sources (Palinkas, et al, 2015; Suri, 2011). My purposeful sampling was driven in part by the contexts in which the research took place and the aim to obtain rich and diverse data. As touched on above, participants came to the FDP with a variety of experience or no experience with teaching and designing online courses. Their experiences as learners in the FDP itself also varied, some completing the course and some not, for various reasons. Their experiences as online instructors after taking part in the FDP also varied, for example, some teaching online asynchronously, some online synchronously, and

some teaching courses that were pre-designed as part of their department's online program delivery efforts.

Human Subjects Protection. As described above, when I first contacted a potential participant via email, I provided a standard summation of the study's purpose. I also provided a consent form, which was a tailored version of the PMUU Institutional Review Boards' "social-behavioral consent template" (2021), see Appendix C. The consent form was distributed via Docusign to participants and included details regarding protection of identity, including specifics about the participants' names being excluded from the interview transcripts and the study's resulting research paper. I offered opportunities to discuss the consent form or any other concerns about taking part in the research.

Data Collection Methods

This qualitative research relied primarily on interviews with individual participants and a follow-up focus group meeting with all participants together. Other sources of data included syllabi and online course content from the participants' own teaching and courses, if the participants were open to sharing such materials. Content and information from the FDP was also used as a source of data, such as discussion posts and participation data. The data collection methods are explained in greater detail below.

Coursework in the FDP

Many participants allowed their assignment submissions in the FDP to be considered in the research. This data source was instrumental in developing the participants' case descriptions and evidence of the FDP's role in the participants' development. It also complimented the data from the testimonies gathered during the one-on-one interviews and focus group meeting.

Individual Interviews

I contacted participants directly via email about scheduling convenient times for their individual interviews. The initial individual interviews were held via Zoom, although participants were informed that we could meet in person if they preferred. All participants elected to meet via Zoom. The Zoom video recording and transcription features were activated in order to assist with capturing data.

I began each interview by sharing my screen to review documents that identified the purpose of the study and the research questions. I relied on a set of questions for the initial one-on-one interviews with each participant. These questions were not shared in advance. The Methods Matrix for the one-on-one interviews can be found in Appendix B. These one-on-one interviews were semi-structured, which allowed me to develop a rapport and collaborative relationship with each participant, the kind of relationship on which qualitative methods thrive (Maxwell, 2013; Toma, 200), before moving on to a focus group meeting.

Focus Group

For the focus group meeting, in which all five participants gathered together, I emailed participants directly in order to identify a convenient time for all to meet via Zoom. The focus group meeting was held via Zoom in order to provide flexibility for all participants and enable our opportunity to meet despite participants' busy schedules. Again, the video and transcription features were activated in order to capture the text of the discussion for analysis.

I also relied on a set of questions, but again, this session was semi-structured so participants could take the discussion where they saw value. The focus group meeting provided the opportunity for participants to engage in an informal conversation about their shared experiences. My scripted questions were not the only inspiration for discussion. Participants were allowed and encouraged to take the conversation where they saw fit. Appendix B provides

the Methods Matrix for the focus group meeting as well. The matrix provides interview questions aligned with each research question, as well as plans for addressing validity threats.

Participants' Course Artifacts

During our collaboration on the research, participants described specific components of their online teaching and course design, which at times were offered up as concrete examples of their practices. Some participants were willing to share these items, such as syllabi and assignment rubrics, for inclusion in the data, which, in some cases, acted as affirmation of their testimonies from the one-on-one interviews and the focus group meeting.

Data Analysis Procedures

Transcripts were reviewed for errors from the machine transcription. I reviewed the recordings and Zoom's machine captioning in order to check for accuracy. I found numerous errors in the transcripts and made corrections where necessary. If I needed further clarification, I would have contacted participants about any aspect of the recording; however, this wasn't necessary as usage of the video recording proved sufficient for making corrections. Participants' identities were protected by use of codenames and storage of the recordings in a password protected Google Drive folder.

The coding of transcripts was informed by the research questions, the theoretical framework, the conceptual framework, and the themes that emerged throughout my exploration of the data. My conceptual and theoretical frameworks and my own experiences as an instructional designer working with faculty in professional development for more than seven years influenced the development of the coding. The results of the coding were collected in a password protected Google Sheet. Table 3 below provides the coding that was used during data analysis.

Table 4

Coding for Data Analysis

Category	Code	Abbreviation	Definition
Sociopolitical Context	Instructor Pandemic Effects	SP_I_Pan	Participant describes how the pandemic affected their online instruction and course design.
	Instructor Remote Work	SP_I_Rem	Participant describes how remote work affected their online instruction and course design.
	Instructor Workload	SP_I_Work	Participant describes how workload and job obligations impact online instruction and course design.
	Student Pandemic Effects	SP_S_Pan	Participant describes perceptions of the pandemic effect on students.
PMUU Context	Skepticism of Online	PMUU_Scep	Participant describes how existing policies/guidance affected their work in online learning negatively.
	Optimism in Online	PMUU_Opt	Participant describes how existing policies/guidance affected their work in online learning positively
	Existing Training Positive	PMUU_TrainingPos	Participant describes the positives or benefits of existing training.
	Existing Training Negative	PMUU_TrainingNeg	Participant describes the challenges of existing training.
	Online Training Positive	PMUU_OnlinePos	Participant describes the positives or benefits of online training.
	Online Training Negative	PMUU_OnlineNeg	Participant describes the challenges of online training.
	Expectations from Leadership Positive	PMUU_LeadPos	Participant describes how the expectations from leadership affect their work positively.
	Expectations from Leadership Negative	PMUU_LeadNeg	Participant describes how the expectations from leadership affect their work negatively.
Faculty Context	Subject Matter Expert	FC_Subject	Participant describes their role as subject matter expert.

	Motivation Online	FC_Motiv_Online	Participant describes motivating factors for teaching online.
	Motivation for FDP	FC_Motiv_FDP	Participant describes motivating factors for participating in the FDP.
	Relevancy	FC_Relevancy	Participant describes experiences as relevant to their teaching or work.
	Non-Relevancy	FC_Non-Rele	Participant describes experiences as not relevant to their teaching or work.
	Teaching and Learning Preferences	FC_Pref	Participant describes their preferences regarding teaching and learning.
	Skepticism of Online Modality	FC_Skepticism	Participant describes their skepticism regarding online.
	Learning Technology Positives	FC_TechPos	Participant describes positive experiences using technology.
	Learning Technology Barriers	FC_TechNeg	Participant describes barriers using technology.
	Workload	FC_Workload	Participant describes how workload affected or is affecting their life and/or work.
	Morale	FC_Morale	Participant describes how morale affected or is affecting their life and/or work.
	Attitude / Beliefs	FC_Att	Participant expresses how attitude or beliefs affected or are affecting their life/work.
FDP Course Context	Teaching Resources Positive Impact	FDP_TeachingPos	Participant describes how FDP improved their online teaching.
	Teaching Resources Negative Impact	FDP_TeachingNeg	Participant describes how FDP did not improve their online teaching.
	Technology Resources Positive Impact	FDP_TechPos	Participant describes how FDP improved their use or understanding of technology.
	Technology Resources Negative Impact	FDP_TechNeg	Participant describes how FDP did not improve their use or understanding of technology.
	Course Designing Positive Impact	FDP_DesignPos	Participant describes how FDP improved their online course design.
	Designing Negative	FDP_DesignNeg	Participant describes how FDP did not improve their online course design.

	Attitude / Beliefs Positive Impact	FDP_AttPos	Participant describes how FDP had a positive impact on their feelings about online learning.
	Attitude / Beliefs Negative Impact	FDP_AttNeg	Participant describes how FDP did not a positive impact on their feelings about online learning.
Technology and Pedagogy Needs	Tech / Pedagogy Integration Positive	FDP_TechPedPos	Participant describes integration of pedagogy and technology instruction in the FDP in a positive light.
	Tech / Pedagogy Integration Negative	FDP_TechPedNeg	Participant describes integration of pedagogy and technology instruction in the FDP in a negative light.
	Tech Instructional Needs	Tech_Needs	Participant describes additional needs for technological instruction or support.
	Pedagogy Instructional Needs	Ped_Needs	Participant describes additional needs for pedagogical instruction or support.
Online Teaching and Course Design	Online Course Design Positive	Dn_Pos	Participant describes course design in positive light.
	Online Course Design Negative	Dn_Neg	Participant describes new course design in negative light.
	Original Version Positive	Dn_Orig_Pos	Participant describes the original course version in positive light.
	Original Version Negative	Dn_Orig_Neg	Participant describes the original course version in negative light.
	Barriers	Dn_Barr	Participant describes any barriers encountered while designing an online course
	Online Teaching Practices Positive	TP_Pos	Participant describes course design in positive light.
	Online Teaching Practices Negative	TP_Neg	Participant describes new course design in negative light.
	Barriers	TP_Barr	Participant describes any barriers encountered while designing an online course
Student Experience	Student Experience	SE_Pos	Participant describes positive student feedback or experiences.

	Positive		
	Student Experience Negative	SE_Neg	Participant describes negative student feedback or experiences.
	Student Recommendations	SE_Reqs	Participant describes student suggestions regarding course design or teaching.
Successful Online Course		Success_Online	Participant describes attributes of a successful online course.
Unsuccessful Online Course		Fail_Online	Participant describes attributes of an unsuccessful online course.

Validity and Trustworthiness

My primary source for validity and trustworthiness was memoing, which provided a source of self-reflection and reconsideration of methods and analysis (Maxwell, 2013). It also helped me consider reactivity in between the first and second focus group sessions (Maxwell, 2013). I watched the recordings of each interview before continuing on to the next interview or the final focus group meeting, in order to practice awareness of how I was engaging with participants in discussion and to be mindful that I was not coaching participants while also remaining open to collaboration. Collaboration with participants on the analysis will result in better, richer data as well (Toma, 2000), and so I communicated with participants about their work in the FDP and the development of their case summaries as I analyzed data and recorded my findings in this research paper.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

In this chapter, I provide brief descriptions of this case study's five participants in hopes of offering the reader useful context to understand participant experiences and the data resulting from both the individual interviews and the focus group meeting. Other sources of data, including documentation and archival records, are also represented as part of the study's efforts to rely on triangulation to improve quality. These sources consist of syllabi and assignment instructions or rubrics from the participants' own courses, as well as assignment submissions, discussion contributions, and archival data on their participation in the FDP itself, when such data was approved for use by some participants. After the participant descriptions and explanation of documentation and archival data, the data and emergent themes from the interviews and focus group are explored, both in the context of individual participants and in the context of the focus group they took part in together as they relate to the study's research questions. As is typical in case study research, the interviews are the primary source of the data while the other sources of data and context serve to affirm and inform it (Hancock & Algozzine, 2011, as cited in Smith, 2018).

Because participants were assured that their identities would remain anonymous, the participant descriptions are in general terms and all identifying elements in the data and documentation, such as that in syllabi, were omitted. In some cases, the topics addressed in the discussions and focus group veered into sensitive areas involving their concerns with modalities, the perceived quality of online teaching or course design and program design and support. It's important that the participants aren't harmed by their contributions to what I anticipate to be a study that will provide useful insights to online teaching and online program delivery support

and faculty development. It's not lost on me that some instructors are in more advantageous positions to speak their mind. For example, an adjunct instructor might not be afforded the same latitude to speak as openly as a tenured professor, or at least the adjunct might perceive they have less latitude to speak their mind for fear of retribution.

Despite this broader approach to the participant descriptions, important context is still provided in the individual descriptions, such as years of teaching experience, familiarity with different teaching modalities (online asynchronous, online synchronous, hybrid, for example), familiarity with certain learning technologies or learning management systems (Canvas, Blackboard, etc.), and general academic disciplines (humanities, healthcare, etc.). As Stake instructs:

> [O]ne of the most important tasks of the multicase researcher is to show how the program or phenomenon appears in different contexts. The more the study is a qualitative study, the more emphasis will be placed on the experiences of people in the program or phenomenon (2006, p. 27).

Triangulation of data in case studies is largely acknowledged as a measure of quality in order to improve an understanding of the context of the phenomenon (Smith, 2018). While this study relied on interviews and a focus group as its primary sources of data, participants were also encouraged to share other artifacts, such as syllabi and assignment instructions. The data in the learning management system, Canvas, in which the FDP was facilitated, is also offered to complement the participants' testimonies on their experiences in the FDP. Time taken to complete the course, or assignments or areas in the course where the participant thrived, succeeded, struggled, floundered or ceased their work, are all useful data points to consider along with interview and focus group testimony.

Case Descriptions

Five participants took part in this study. According to the FDP data in Canvas, four of the five participants completed the FDP. Participants will be referred to by their simple codenames: Participant 1 (P1), Participant 2 (P2), Participant 3 (P3), Participant 4 (P4), and Participant 5 (P5). These very generic codenames aim to anonymize the participants as much as possible, not implying age, gender, or race or ethnicity. Each participant took part in an individual interview lasting approximately 50 minutes. Then, all five participants took part in a focus group meeting together, which also lasted approximately 50 minutes. All interviews and the focus group took place in Zoom and were video and audio recorded, with participants given the option to turn their cameras off if they preferred. Zoom's transcription software provided the transcripts, which were all reviewed for accuracy through observing playback of the video and audio recordings. Some inaccuracies were discovered in the transcripts, including improper designation of speaker and inaccurate representation of words. Although participants were told they might be contacted to confirm accuracy of the transcripts, the use of the video and audio recordings proved sufficient and most clarifications were based on minor grammatical errors and confirming the speaker. Furthermore, any identifying content was removed from the transcripts as well, including names and specific references to institution names, course names, or cities. These actions were taken before further analysis and coding commenced. The case summaries that follow were developed through data gathered from participant discussion posts in the FDP, when the participant approved of using such data, and the first line of the questions and resulting conversations during each participant's individual interview.

Participant 1

P1 teaches in the humanities and has been teaching online since 2014. P1 has taught in both synchronous and asynchronous online environments. The FDP course was P1's third experience taking a faculty development course on teaching. At the time of the interview session, P1 was teaching completely online at two different institutions. Moreover, each institution relied on a different learning management system; Canvas at PMUU, the setting for this research, and D2L at P1's other institution.

During preparatory communications leading up to P1's interview, it seemed clear that they are a passionate, generous, and considerate educator. Their response to my inquiry to join the study was prompt (25 minutes after my email) and to-the-point ("No problem. Let me know what dates you are considering."). The nature of their communication felt reminiscent of a responsive and accessible instructor who communicates regularly and effortlessly with their students. P1's calm and thorough demeanor would be a consistent feature during the data gathering process, and one that helped this novice researcher stumble through a couple of hiccups. For example, while I was wrapped up in my nerves conducting my first-ever focus group, P1 reminded me to push the record button on the Zoom before I launched into my first line of questions.

Participant 2

By the time P2 joined the FDP, they had a great deal of online teaching experience; however, most of their experience was limited to the synchronous environment. P2 taught in education at PMUU and was concerned about effective interactions, specifically in the asynchronous online environment, as well as how they might alleviate feelings of burnout among working students in education.

At the time I contacted P2 to take part in this research, they expressed significant enthusiasm for the opportunity, responding promptly to my inquiry and quickly confirming a time to conduct our one-on-one interview. By this time, P2 had moved on from PMUU to another institution and, coincidentally, was working in curriculum design, regularly engaging in instructional design as part of their official role.

Finding P2 in their new role felt like a natural progression, as back when P2 started the FDP, they had been tasked with helping a department within the School of Education at PMUU redesign courses with online learning in mind. “One of the things [my dean] expected me to do was to help redesign a lot of the courses in the program.” Suffice to say, P2 was providing instructional design input in an unofficial capacity. “I essentially was doing instructional design without knowing I was doing instructional design,” P2 said. Tapped to provide instructional design services to help with the growth and development of their department, P2’s main motivation for enrolling in the FDP was to expose themself to the latest evidence-based practices in online teaching. P2’s *acknowledgment* of the need for their own professional development in online teaching was a crucial component of their willingness to join the FDP. “It was really just that self-awareness I’m sure there’s still things I can learn.” Self-awareness, and awareness in general, seems to be a cornerstone of P2’s teaching philosophy, as they emphasized the need to practice reflection on their teaching practices and the impact that they have on their students.

Participant 3

When P3 joined the FDP, they were faculty teaching in social sciences and had not taught online until the onset of the Covid-19 Pandemic. They were essentially forced to start teaching online because of the pandemic, and leadership at their school recommended that faculty enroll in the FDP. In that sense, the pandemic, the resulting requirements for remote learning, and

pressure from their leadership played a major role in P3's participation in the FDP and online learning in general. "Otherwise, it (the FDP) would not come to my attention," P3 said.

As they began the FDP, P3 expressed concerns regarding the quality of learning and the student experience in an online course. Admirably, these concerns were student-centric and related to the quality of education students would receive in an online environment. They worried that a lecture that is typically enriched with class discussion in a face-to-face format might not translate effectively into the online environment. P3 was also concerned that their specific course topic and content would not be engaging enough for students in an online course.

Participant 4

P4 had more than 20 years of experience in higher education and was working towards their doctorate at the time they enrolled in the FDP. They had taught a handful of courses and aspired to teach more, but much of P4's experience with online courses was from the student perspective, as their doctoral courses were forced to go online as a result of the pandemic (something this researcher can relate to).

P4 had never created an online course, and before landing in the FDP, P4 had been searching the web for anything and everything via Google and YouTube that provide helpful input for teaching online. Their enrollment in the FDP wasn't the result of a specific recommendation or PMUU word-of-mouth, but instead something P4 stumbled upon while searching for any resources. "I was just looking for any and all help," they said.

Participant 5

Working in social work for more than 20 years, P5 had just started teaching in 2022 as an adjunct. "I was still very new to teaching," said P5. "And so I was asked to teach online in the fall, and I had not taught online before." P5 didn't recall anybody recommending the FDP to

them. “I feel like it was probably more of a stumble,” they said. “I thought this was a good opportunity to have some specific training and focus on how to conduct the online course.”

P5 expressed an open mind to learning, in part because they had never taught online before. “Since I had no knowledge of online instruction, anything was helpful, like creating a presence and staying connected to students. I was open to just any knowledge, because teaching was new and still felt new.”

Intro needed. “Teaching online was just very abstract, not having done it. So I didn't know what to expect.”

P5’s situation was especially unique: they would be teaching an online course that was already created for them, the readings, the assignments, the navigation of the course, everything was already designed and built in Canvas.

Management and use of technology, student engagement, and effective communication over video were top concerns for P5.

Emergent Themes

Through the analysis of the data, four themes emerged. The four themes are as follows: Theme 1) Participant Motivations and Alignment with Department Online Program Considerations; Theme 2) Engagement and the Use of Technology as Barometers of Success; Theme 3) Awareness of Student Perspective and Experience; Theme 4) The Content of the FDP. In the following sections, the themes are explored through the lens of the research questions with which alignment was discovered.

Theme 1: Participant Motivations and Alignment with Department Online Program Considerations

When pondering over their motivations for seeking out and enrolling in the FDP, study participants expressed their desires to improve their online teaching and course design skills in terms of their own growth, but many also recognized their development in online teaching and course design as part of the larger departmental missions or goals in online education. The Covid-19 Pandemic and its lingering impacts on student needs and the higher education landscape at large provided a backdrop for participant motivations to seek out the FGDP as well, as many participants' engagement with online learning had increased since the onset of the pandemic.

Participants wanted to maintain their awareness of evidence-based practices and new technology in order to teach online more effectively. However, while recognizing these more personally ingrained motivations to improve their own online teaching and course design skills, participants also acknowledged that department and school leadership encouraged faculty development in online learning. While it's not clear if there were specific incentives (such as stipends, course releases, or if such development would be considered as part of promotion), participants described leadership encouraging them to take part in development in online learning and/or participants felt that it was important to their departments' missions in online learning.

Towards the end of the focus group meeting, some of the participants discussed concerns over program administration in the context of course authoring and the implications of courses being taught by instructors who did not design the courses. While this discussion was brief, it felt like a climactic moment during which the participants reached a level of comfort and rallied around a common concern. However, during data analysis, undertones of concerns with online program delivery emerged in other areas of the data. It became clear that there are intersections

between individual; participant goals and concerns and the concerns of program design and delivery at large.

Research Question 1: How do faculty describe the skills and knowledge they acquired through the online faculty development course?

The study participants teach in a variety of subjects and thus arrived at the FDP with a range of experience in online teaching, or no experience in it at all. However, a common theme was that study participants perceived the skills and knowledge they might acquire in the FDP to be of service to their own goals and their respective departments' goals. The expectation was that the knowledge and skills acquired in the FDP would have a positive impact on study participants' online teaching, course design, and therefore contribute to the quality of online course or program offerings within their respective departments or schools.

P1's motivations. Despite P1's significant experience teaching online and working with a variety of learning management systems, they felt that taking the FDP would provide opportunities for further professional advancement while also staying up-to-date with online teaching strategies, stating:

> Part of my goal was to show my department and my college that I am the most qualified to teach these online classes and to create these online classes for my discipline, and having these certifications would kind of show that I'm taking this process seriously, and I want to make sure that I'm as current as possible on best practices.

P1 felt that their colleagues might value faculty development in online teaching, stating, "I think my chair of my department does. I believe my dean does. Any further up the ladder? I have no idea." This implies a lack of clarity regarding institutional incentives for participating in the FDP. But because P1 teaches online nearly exclusively, it seems their own personal investment

in development in teaching online and current best practices was their main inspiration for taking part in the course, stating, **"**I'm always looking to get better because I teach 100 percent online across two institutions."

While P1 has taken part in other development opportunities before, they acknowledged that the venue and nature of online learning has changed since the Covid-19 Pandemic. "It's been a while since I took one of these. You know, there's been more research, more things have been uncovered. This will be post-Covid, so there might be even newer information about best practices."

P1 demonstrated an awareness of department goals in online program delivery and that taking part in something like the FDP aligns with those goals, saying, "The second thing is I wanted to get the certifications just for professional reasons and for advancement."

P2's motivations. P2's motivations in taking the FDP were also rooted in continuing professional development that aligns with department goals in online learning. While touching on what inspired them to attend the FDP, P2 said, "I want to make sure that I know what evidence-based practices…what's happening organizationally. That was my motivation." P2 also explained, "One of the things [my dean] expected me to do was to help redesign a lot of the courses in the program that I was teaching."

P2 discussed their development in online learning using terminology representative of a personal passion for their own growth in teaching. "It was really just that self awareness of I'm sure there's still things I can learn." Reminiscing on their path to their new curriculum design position at a different institution, P2 considered how the FDP might have played a role in the evolution of their career. "In retrospect, I can't help but wonder if it actually helped me make that shift into more of a curriculum design, instructional design space," they said. This tendency

towards self-awareness and self-reflection would be a regular feature of P2's testimonies, and will be explored further in other themes, especially in "Theme 4: Awareness of Student Perspective and Experience."

P3's motivation. Having never taught online before the Covid-19 Pandemic, P3's motivation for joining the FDP came from a place of necessity and on the recommendation from their school leadership. "I think it's my school that recommended it. Otherwise, it would not come to my attention." However, P3 also recognizes the benefit of continued development in general. "Of course, I think it's always good to have additional training and improve from where you were before." In that sense, like other participants, P3 exhibited a self-awareness of the need to continue their own development, while also recognizing the goals of their school by considering a development course that was recommended to them by program leadership.

P4's motivation. P4 was another participant that had little experience teaching online. Much of their experience in online courses was as a student in their doctoral program. "I had never created an entire course for an online class and was very interested in the resources available at PMUU, any best practices, any, just anything." And like P3, P4 came to the FDP as a sort of starting point for their entrance into teaching online, saying, "I mean, I was kind of starting from scratch." Besides the FDP, P4 had spent time scouring the internet for guidance and relying on what instruction they could find on YouTube.

P5's motivation. Because P5 had never taught online before, they were also looking to the FDP as a starting point. "I was still very new to teaching...I was asked to teach online, and I had not taught online before, and this would have only been my second semester teaching." However, P5 was in a unique situation; their department had provided them with a course already designed and built by another faculty member and instructional designer at PMUU.

P5's attention was primarily focused on learning how to manage and facilitate the preexisting course, as well as becoming familiar with content choices made by the faculty member that had previously developed the course. "I thought this was a good opportunity to have some specific training and focus on how to conduct the online course." To that point, P5's efforts were part of a larger online program mission. P5 explained their mindset as they began to prepare themselves for online teaching:

> Since I had no knowledge of online instruction, anything was helpful like how to, you know, I think some of it touches on like creating a presence and staying connected to students...I was open to just any knowledge, because teaching was new and still felt new. Teaching online was just very abstract, not having done it, so I didn't know what to expect.

Focus Group. Questions and discussions during the focus group meeting were not designed to explore sources of motivation for joining the FDP or expectations because the individual interviews engaged participants in such foundational information.

Research Question 1 Conclusion

Participants described the knowledge and skills they acquired in the FDP as a source of development in online teaching, one that would benefit their own professional teaching goals, as well as align with the online program goals of their respective departments. Despite the differences between the participants with regards to the subjects they teach and their range of experience teaching online, the participants touched on similar motivations for joining the FDP.

Research Question 3: How do faculty define a successful online course?

The participants' aspirations to succeed in online teaching and course design tended to align with their understanding of their department's goals in online learning and/or what they felt

their department or institution should be aspiring to accomplish in online learning. Oftentimes, our discussions regarding participant's own aspirations in the online classroom escalated into needs on the program or institutional level. It felt as if success in an online course can be seen as a microcosm for success in an online program. It can serve as a model for other online program courses. In describing a successful online course, the participants also touched on the success in online programs, what's at stake, and what might be some good objectives that program administrators and their faculty can strive to achieve together.

P1's alignment with online program considerations. While discussing important considerations when teaching online or designing courses for online, P1 identified things that are applicable on the program level or might be worth considering as online program administrators design and deploy their programs. P1 felt that since the Covid-19 Pandemic, it has become more reasonable to ask students to utilize technology in order to learn and complete assignments, that it's become a reasonable expectation. "I'm not asking you a Herculean task," said P1. "You've been doing it since you were in high school...so that has leant itself to more peer-to-peer interaction." Relying regularly on technology like Google and Zoom and asking students to submit video assignments felt like a reasonable ask to P1.

P1 also discussed the implications of class size, another important consideration on the program level, while discussing successful online teaching practices. P1 said:

> In a smaller class, the communication is even more direct, because I might not catch everybody's activity in an eighty person class every week. If somebody slips off for two weeks, I might not catch it. I'll grade and do all those things, but I might not be able to see the pattern. But in the class with about 30 students, you can kind of see more of the patterns, if somebody hasn't turned in work for two or three weeks.

P1 felt that smaller class sizes allow instructors to have closer connections with their students; however, a large class isn't an excuse to thoroughly communicate with students and provide a presence. "Having larger classes still doesn't excuse not being able to stay in communication," P1 explained. "Because it takes fifteen minutes to sit down, write an email, or sit down and record a video message and then send it out to your students."

P1 perceived online learning as an opportunity for PMUU and other higher education institutions to reinforce their place in a world that seems to be questioning the logistics and value of higher education degrees. P1 explained:

> This could be one of our saving graces in a dying university. And when I say a dying university, not just our institution, but just the whole idea of university education itself, folks don't see the value in it. This could be a way to reinvigorate ourselves and we can't mess it up. And the only way to do that is to stay diligent and keep following best practices and seeing what works, what doesn't, being aware of who our students are and what their needs are and using technology to accommodate that.

P2's alignment with online program considerations. In keeping with their student-centered reflections and considerations, P2's program-level concerns focused on issues of equity, retention, and how we think of pedagogy. P2's student-centered approach meant that they were checking in on their student's experience regularly and mindful of the challenges they might be facing throughout the semester. P2 found that the students that didn't have reliable access to the internet or other technology and tools necessary to succeed in an online environment were the ones that faced the most challenges. "But those are the students that struggled more. And I don't think that has much to do with online design, as much as just digital access broadly. That's more of a societal issue."

P2 expressed an awareness of engagement through and designing courses that promote engagement through the organization of course content. Avoiding extraneously long video content and large blocks of text were two ways P2 hoped to improve retention. “I guess the non-example that comes to mind is, so many Coursera courses, where it's just unending video and giant blocks of text, and that's not nearly as accessible, nor does it lead to greater retention.”

In one of the more philosophical moments of P2’s testimony, they broadened their lens to interrogate a perceived tendency among educators to not handle issues of curriculum design and course design together with issues of pedagogy. “We take curriculum design and course design and think of that as separate from pedagogy, and teaching and learning,” they said.

P3’s alignment with online program considerations. The connection between faculty support and online program success was explored in Chapter 2. Faculty support can help instructors navigate the uncharted waters of online teaching and course design. Part of this support can come in the form of feedback and encouragement. P3 indicated that feedback on their teaching and course design was a major source of motivation and encouragement. They received feedback that their course was “seamlessly put together, really well designed,” and this seemed to catch P3 by surprise. “Because I thought that online teaching was not my strength at all.” P3 expressed a sense of success from what seems like some much needed and unexpected positive reinforcement and encouragement.

P4’s alignment with online program considerations. P4’s explorative nature, as demonstrated by their willingness to seek out development in online teaching by any and all means, led them to encountering questions about the evolving landscape of online learning and higher education in general. Many of these concerns, which relate to new technology, online

program quality, and relevancy of higher education in a rapidly changing job market, align with some of the issues online program leaders should also be considering.

Unprompted by my questioning, P4 expressed concern over the increasing impact of Artificial Intelligence content generators like ChatGPT. “I have no idea what to do about that. I know that's not just an online teaching issue. I know that's an in-person teaching issue as well.” Looking to see how institutions will develop guidance on such tools in the higher education landscape, P4 stated, “I have not seen an actual policy.”

Academic rigor was also a topic that P4 raised, as they felt grading standards for student-submitted work aren’t as demanding as they once were. P4 said:

> I feel like grades are a lot easier. I feel like it was a little tougher when I was going through school. Grammar mattered. Spelling mattered. I mean, all this stuff, you got dinged for a lot of things that I don’t think are being dinged now.

Another consideration P4 raised was how institutions like PMUU will stay relevant in the job market landscape and differentiate themselves from other higher education institutions. “How can traditional institutions like [PMUU] really stay relevant and competitive? And so that means you're gonna need students, and then enrollment has been steadily decreasing. So how do we stay in that game? Sorry to say it's a game. You know what I mean, like a market driven system…without students, none of us would have jobs.” These remarks align with the sort of reasoning we see in institutions developing and launching online learning programs, as they attempt to reach new demographics and students that do not find the traditional face-to-face setting feasible with their current life circumstances.

P5’s alignment with online program considerations. The insights P5 brings to the conversation are unique because they would be teaching online for the first time and with a

course that was already designed by another faculty member and an instructional designer as part of an online program development effort. P5 said, “And they're just sort of plugging me into it…so all the material is there, it was just me needing to learn it and go through it.” This meant that P5 had to prepare for teaching the course online not just in the context of learning the technology and teaching strategies, but also learning the specific subject matter content that had already been selected and organized in the Canvas course. P5 said:

> It was a whole different set of readings and videos and all that stuff, so I wanted to learn it, so that if the students were coming to me with questions, I knew how to answer or how to guide them.

P5 also described what they felt was most likely a unique student population attending the online program courses they were teaching. P5 said:

> I feel like a lot of students in the online program are parents and working and going part time, and this is something they're adding in addition to, versus other students who might just be, this is all they’re focusing on, just finishing this degree in two years and moving on.

These descriptions of the student population characteristics mirror the perceived populations that online program coordinators hope to enroll: students that aren’t able to attend daily classes on campus because of other responsibilities like jobs, families, and working around childcare.

Widening their lens on their experience in education, P5 grappled with what they describe as a “culture of grades,” in which getting a good grade can be central among the students’ motivations. “Students are just, we're just raised in a culture of grades, and focusing on grades and earning good grades and doing what we can to have good grades.” P5 chuckled a

little bit as they pondered over the possibility of just doing away with grades altogether, something with which other programs have actually experimented.

From the faculty needs perspective, P5 touched on the need for busy faculty to be supported and provided flexibility as well, in order to make time for development in online teaching and course design. P5 said:

> I work full time. I teach in person. I teach online. I'm a parent, you know. My list goes on and on and on, and so that the time to expand my own knowledge sometimes feels limited when I'm just trying to get through the semester, and then I can breathe during the break, but not if I'm being asked to teach something else I haven't taught before.

Focus group alignment with online program considerations. The focus group, which was attended by all five participants, also escalated into conversations that investigated the nature of online program delivery and explored what the participants perceived to be important issues related to online programs. Much of this was through a constructive critical lens that participants gradually arrived at towards the end of the focus group meeting, which lasted approximately 56 minutes. Many participants viewed the practice of programs handing over pre-built online courses to instructors that did not take part in the course design to be a potential source of problems. P1 explained:

> There's this big push to get so many things online and to create online programs for many of our majors, and they want a professor to work with PMUU to design a course that will be just, you plug in a professor and they'll be able to teach it, and I think that is going to cause a lot more problems in the future. Number one: professors like flexibility and like to be able to respond to the needs of the students and their own research agendas and their own ideas, and that kind of limits that and that cookie-cutter-type thing.

P1 continued to provide a hypothetical scenario, citing the conflict and humanitarian crisis in Gaza as an example, and asking, how can somebody teach an online course that is topical and relevant if the current issues in the Middle East aren't in the preexisting course content? Presumably, the instructor would have to pivot and scramble to change the course content, which can then have a domino effect on the needs of the course. "It's just not effective," P1 said, "particularly if you're teaching a course where politics and communications or something where things change rapidly. Sometimes the course can't respond to the rapid change." P1 saw the potential for problems in this program delivery approach, saying:

> It's going to become an issue, and I can already see it happening in my department with one course, where people are like, 'I'm not going to teach this module, I'm going to change this or that,' until it gets to the point where what was the point of going through that entire process of creating this course online…so whoever is calling the shots with that, I don't if they're aware of how that hamstrings professors.

P1 also engaged the group with their thoughts on adjunct hiring practices in order to serve the needs of a program. P1 felt that adjuncts might need support in order to be adequately prepared to teach a course they are unfamiliar with, in a learning management system they haven't used enough to feel comfortable with. "Sometimes you need a class on how to teach the class because you don't know Canvas," P1 continued. "You would have to go through that fifteen week course prior, see all the videos, read all the materials, see what all the activities are before you can even effectively teach it. And I think that's asking a lot of folks."

P1's passion on the subject spoke to P5, as they chimed in to agree. "You were speaking so much truth, about having to learn the course in a very, very short amount of time before you can then teach the course." Related to the issues of predesigned online courses, P5 also perceived

a noticeable difference between their flexibility in face-to-face courses versus their flexibility in the predesigned online course they were teaching. **"**In person I have an extreme amount of flexibility in what I bring in and discuss and assignments…but the online program is a built course that I'm being plugged into."

P4, who was brand new to teaching online in Canvas, raised the issue of support for full-time faculty versus adjuncts. Nobody at PMUU proactively offered P4 support resources on online teaching or online course design, and they wondered if this had something to do with their adjunct status. P4 explained:

> I had to seek out everything in terms of how to design a Canvas course and what is required in the syllabus, anything specific to online courses. I've sought it out myself. That could just be because I'm adjunct and not full-time faculty, if there are differences and support that way. I think there's a lot out there, it's just a matter of having to go out there and look for it, and teaching myself too.

P1, responding to P4 with sympathetic laughter, said, "I think that's a university thing. It's like, 'What's my schedule?' 'You're teaching this online.' 'Oh, okay.'"

Research Question 3 Conclusion

Much of how faculty define their own motivations for success in their online courses aligns with their thinking about online program delivery and what they believe are important issues for their leadership to consider. Good online course design can impact the success of an online program at large, but it also can cause issues relating to management of those courses, the selection of faculty who teach the courses, and their level of equippedness to teach them. Those issues in turn lead to concerns about faculty success relating to perception of proper support to

teach online, especially when teaching for the first time or in a course with which they aren't familiar.

Theme 2: Engagement and the Use of Technology as Barometers of Success

Engagement and the use of technology were originally handled as two separate themes, but as I continued to parse through the data and organize it into participant narratives, it became clear that the two themes were too intertwined to handle separately. Regardless of the participants' decisions and philosophies regarding student engagement in their online courses, their various uses of technology were consistent factors in *how* they executed their engagement practices.

Study participants described feelings of confusion over the lack of timely engagement with colleagues in the FDP's online discussion forum, and they felt this was due to the FDP not relying on a cohort structure. Many participants got a couple laughs at seeing discussion posts by other learners from many months prior and then receiving notifications months later that another learner had replied to their discussion post. For example, participants might be responding to a peer in the discussion forum who had originally posted their discussion comment three months prior, or vice-versa, a participant might receive notification of a reply to their own discussion post three months after completing the FDP. In some cases, participants noted that the lack of cohort delivery resulted in a lack of motivation to return to the course and persist through the content.

Discussion forums in general seem to be a regular source of concern as participants wrangled with their feelings about their experiences in the FDP discussion forums and their students' experiences in their own online courses. The nature of the FDP's open-enrollment, non-cohort structure exacerbated the study participants' concerns about the efficacy of the

discussion board and highlighted the benefits of relying on a cohort approach to an online faculty development program.

Research Question 2: In what ways do faculty perceive the acquired skills and knowledge from the online faculty development course influenced their online teaching and course design?

One of the benefits of taking the FDP that participants noted was that it was in the same learning management system, Canvas, as they teach in, and so experiencing an online course in the student perspective was in and of itself instructive and impactful. Participants noted how content was organized in modules, how it felt to interact with peers in the discussion videos, and how engaging content, such as videos and other media, were utilized to instruct and assess through multiple means. These features of the FDP served as useful models for the participants to apply in their own online courses.

P1's adoption of engagement practices with technology. While taking the FDP, P1 felt, via the student perspective, that it was easy to use video tools as a means of communication. P1 had been relying on video tools, like Kaltura and Canvas' built-in video tool, but their usage of such tools as a means of regular communication increased after taking the course. "I had started doing this somewhat before taking the course," P1 said, "but after taking a course, I really started to use Kaltura a lot." This testimony is echoed by P1's contributions to the discussion assignments in the FDP. P1 chose to create and post videos for all of their discussion contributions in the FDP, beginning first with Canvas' built-in video tool before moving onto using the more complex, yet accessible tool Kaltura.

Their experience as a student helped P1 realize how easy it is to use video tools for communications. P1 explained further:

> [W]hen I started using it myself in that role as a student, I said, 'this is so much easier than anything else so I'll just do this as a professor'…when you realize how to do it in discussion posts, and you realize how to embed things, it's just right there. They don't have to click on anything…everything is right there. It's so simple.

P1 used Kaltura video regularly to communicate with students, sending weekly check-in videos. P1 also encouraged students to do the same, particularly in discussions. P1 felt that it was easier to communicate via video than text, reducing the amount of text-dependent communication, while also establishing a stronger presence in the course. P1 said:

> If you can't establish presence, which was such a big element of our training courses with Canvas, you weren't paying attention. You don't know what you're doing, because it's so easy to do. It's easy to film a video in the weekly announcements.

The FDP also showed P1 the benefit of stopping to reflect on their content and organizational choices in their own online course. The FDP served as a model for navigation and organization of content for P1. "I really loved how it was organized," P1 said. P1 was able to consider how organization of content might impact the student's experience in the course, in terms of accessibility concerns with content choices and information paralysis due to module pages being overpacked with content. "I hadn't really thought about that in that way before taking the training courses. That really made me pause and say, okay, is this really effective?"

P1 also thought about accommodations in the context of engaging course content that is accessible. P1 explained:

> The [FDP] really made me think about accommodations, the accommodations element of an online class and making sure that students, whether they're visually impaired or

whatever the case is, that they are accommodated and that you create a course page that makes that possible.

The FDP inspired P1 to pause and reflect on how the student might experience and engage with the course content as they navigate the pages in Canvas. P1 would self-reflect on the strength of content choices, like YouTube videos, and consider the needs of students like English as a Second Language learners, prioritizing clarity and subtitles.

P1 described their engagement strategies before taking part in the FDP as focused on the individual student more so than the class as a whole. Their idea of engagement was focused on professor-to-student interaction and a student's engagement with the coursework. "I didn't think that you could truly foster that group-type work," P1 said. "I didn't see it as being effective until I took the training course, and it talked about different ways that you can do that and the different tools that are available, and I've come up with new assignments." Many of P1's online courses rely heavily on discussion and group work as a means for students to engage with the material and each other.

P2's adoption of engagement practices with technology. P2 also indicated that the use of Canvas' module feature to organize content and provide ease of navigation in the FDP served as an instructive model. "I think one of the key pieces was having the consistency, so however I design the course, it's easy to locate things online…I appreciated the organization that you all modeled and prompted us to think through." P2 also explained that, related to the clear navigation of the FDP, the expectations were clearly laid out. "To me, that's like accessibility 101."

The sequential organization of course content was another aspect of the navigation that P2 adopted in their own courses. "This was a really nice model of how to create a clean, clear

progression of learning activities. I was able to take that and apply that in my work and got great feedback from students." P2 also noted that the structure of modules modeled "thinking through the intersections of accessibility, visual design, cognitive load."

P3's adoption of engagement practices with technology. P3 relies on a variety of tools to create engaging content for their students, including Kaltura videos, Canvas discussion boards, and presentations in VoiceThread. Before taking part in the FDP, P3 had not experimented with discussion board tools in their courses and had modified their teaching prior to taking the course and has been subsequently relying on discussion board tools recently. "I've learned quite a bit during the past few years," P3 said. The discussion board forums in the FDP were a useful resource to P3 for getting feedback from instructional designers, saying that they would post discussion board comments in the FDP regarding issues they faced in their own online teaching and an instructional designer would reply with suggestions. "That's probably the core value of the learning experiences, the feedback." They found the tool to be useful in providing students with an avenue in which to present and contribute their perspectives to the course experience. "I think that people can express opinions and share their thoughts," P3 said. They also found it useful for developing their understanding of the major content and concepts in the course.

However, P3 found that relying on the discussion board too much, every single week for example, can be overwhelming for themself, their graduate teaching assistants, and their students. This is explored further in the section dedicated to RQ3A within this theme.

Sequential navigation of content within the Canvas modules is another practice P3 is applying in their own online courses. Students have responded positively in the evaluations that P3's courses are "seamlessly put together, really well designed," according to P3. P3 also explained that holding office hours in Zoom seems to mean a lot to their online students and has

been a productive strategy for engaging students about their mistakes in assessments and helping them work through problems to find the correct answers one-on-one.

P4's adoption of engagement practices with technology. P4 makes a combined effort to engage students in discussion by relying on asynchronous Canvas discussion boards followed by live meetings in Zoom, where P3 circles back to the asynchronous discussion and engages their students further during the live meeting. P4 explained:

> So what I've brought into my course at the beginning of every class is a discussion wrap-up, and diving back into that discussion board…I will specifically address a students' conversation or comments, and just try and get them to talk about it in real time.

P4 says that relying on this approach has allowed the class to take advantage of "fruitful conversation" that had previously just been left to die in the asynchronous discussion board. Reflecting on their discussion board strategy, P4 said, "it has definitely gone into some good conversation. So I think it's successful."

Content wise, P4 builds in Canvas modules and uses modules to organize content for every week. P4 explained:

> I'll include a page called an 'Overview' for the coming week, share any additional readings, or if any readings have changed based on conversations in class or if we've changed what we're doing, I'll put it there. Just a reminder, your to-do list for the coming week.

Reflecting on how their course designs evolve over time, P4 stressed the importance of revision. P4 pondered over what they might do differently next time they teach an online course. "There are tweaks I would make. I think that's more to bring to the entire course, you just continue to tweak and make it better."

In considering their experiences as a student in online courses and their development as an online instructor since the Covid-19 Pandemic, P4 felt, despite the hardships faced by so many, that expectations and opportunities in online learning and engagement had evolved for the better. “There probably should be some kind of mandated licensure, not licensure, but like an onboarding process, to go through some training,” P4 said. “There’s all kinds of opportunities to make it a better experience.”

P5’s adoption of engagement practices with technology. Because of P5’s unique situation in which they inherited an online course already designed and built, many of the Canvas organizational tools and strategies weren’t something they had to consider from the course building perspective, but they did need to take certain considerations into account in order to facilitate the course and use the tools successfully. In looking to the FDP as a source of support, P5 explained that the discussion forums within the FDP provided encouragement. P5 said:

> I really appreciated hearing people’s perspectives or maybe things that they were using in the classroom online setting. I'm not very comfortable with technology and things of that nature, so you know, people were talking about Flipgrid and things like that incorporating all these different kinds of media and technology. I didn't know how to do that. So it was interesting to learn about.

While these were useful glimpses into online teaching, P5 hasn’t experimented with tools outside of what’s already being used in their Canvas course, although they recognize the benefits of technology. “I like learning new technology and incorporating it. I think it can be beneficial,” P5 said. The course P5 teaches was already equipped with embedded Kaltura videos for instructional content, and P5 also uses Kaltura to share weekly check-in videos as a means of instructor presence and promoting students to engage with each week’s content. P5 explained:

> I send them (weekly check-in videos) out on Monday morning to talk about what this week's module is focusing on and try to guide, make sure they're focusing on this reading, especially if something in the material is going to relate to an assignment, really helping make sure that they're aware of that.

For synchronous, live meetings in their course, P5 explained how things cans go well:

> when the students have cameras on and are engaged, and we've used breakout rooms for them to have some smaller discussions, because not everyone seems to feel comfortable talking in the larger group setting at times, so I've found having them breakout and maybe answering a few questions about something and then coming back and reporting has been helpful.

P5 recognized that students will engage differently based on how comfortable they are in live Zoom meetings with larger or smaller groups.

Focus Group and the adoption of engagement practices with technology. Discussion topics regarding engagement practices with technology reached beyond the context of participants' experiences in the FDP and centered more on their continuing development and own experiences teaching online. These testimonies are explored in later sections of this chapter. However, P1 did expand on how they're using video tools to communicate with students via announcements and even assignment instructions, something that was in part originally inspired by their experience utilizing video more as a learner in the FDP. Finding multiple benefits to this approach, P1 says it's easier work from their perspective and provides students with a sense of instructor presence. P1 said:

> I'm abandoning a lot of the written instructions for video instructions. This is easier for me. So when I make an announcement in class, I just record it straight onto Canvas and

> then come to our, you know, in the Kaltura or capture. I think students appreciate more because it might be easier for them to just hear it…I feel like I'm getting less follow-up questions. Students seem more apt to click on the video than to read text.

P1 also discussed the benefit of captions if students prefer to read the subtitles for accessibility reasons or because they're in a setting more conducive to muting the sound in videos and reading along instead of engaging with the sound on.

Research Question 2 Conclusion

Research participants reported that the FDP provided a model for utilizing video and Canvas and its various tools for providing engaging course content and methods of communication. The discussion board was also a notable source of insight from fellow faculty members experimenting with different technology as a way to engage students in an online course. Organization of content, weekly video check-ins, and normalization of informal video recordings as a substitute for regular text communication were some of the more common strategies participants identified as being modeled in the FDP and adopted in their own online teaching and course design.

Research Question 3: How do faculty define a successful online course?

Since taking part in the FDP, participants' online teaching and course design practices have continued to evolve as they respond to student feedback and outcomes in their own online courses. As pointed out earlier by P4, revision is an important part of good online course design practices. In this section, participants explore issues of engagement with technology in the context of how they define a successful online course in general, the strategies they've developed to increase engagement, and how they are using technology.

P1 defines a successful online course's engagement and use of technology. P1 focused on strong discussions as one measure of success for engagement in an online course. "In a good online class," P1 said. "Good online discussion, they're going back and forth and they're engaging."

Consistency and organization of course content were also central to P1's feelings on engagement. P1 stressed that making the "learner feel comfortable as they're engaging" depends on not overwhelming students with cluttered content in Canvas and organizing content within pages so students can easily navigate the content and locate items. P1 explained:

> I've seen other folks' Canvas pages that, I know if I was looking at as a student I would be intimidated. You don't need to put everything in one module. It looks like you have thirty things to do for the week. It just, yeah, psychologically, it just looks like I'm never going to get through this.

This awareness of course structure, navigation of content, and engagement has resulted in some good feedback for P1. A student advisor informed P1 that a lot of P1's students had been complimentary of their online courses, that "they're really enjoying your online class and how it's structured."

P2 defines a successful online course's engagement and use of technology. As discussed earlier, P2's teaching practices involve regular check-ins with students, utilizing anonymous, short Google Form surveys to check on their well-being and obtain feedback on their experience in P2's courses. P2 would pivot and rely on different teaching strategies, in turn relying on different technology or the technology in a different way. P2 provided an example:

> Some groups were like, 'I just can't handle another discussion board right now.' Then we would switch it. If there were synchronous sessions, we're going to use more small

> breakout rooms with clear prompts, and you'll take like three to five minutes and then we'll come back together as a group. That filled the same need, but it met their needs at the time.

By soliciting feedback from students and reorganizing the venue and logistics for discussions accordingly, P2 was able to create an environment that recognized the students' needs and in turn enabled more genuine engagement.

In thinking about technology, P2 acknowledged that discerning which tools to use and when can be confusing. However, if we return to the basic, foundational concerns of the course and students, and the desired measurable objective, it can help us identify the technology tools most needed and most applicable in specific situations. P2 said:

> I think it can be overwhelming for some faculty to think about using all kinds of new technologies. But if you're starting from that core place of, what do the students need to know and be able to do when they finish this course? How am I going to effectively facilitate that? Then technology should be the same thing, what's a need to use and what's a nice to use?

This aligns with current evidence-based practices in choosing technology, that the learning shouldn't be about the technology itself, that it should be accessible and not distract the students from the learning objectives.

P2 likes to delve into the more conceptual aspects of successful design and teaching online, the intentions, philosophies, and reasoning behind the strategies you and technology you choose. Referencing Fink's "Significant Learning Framework" (2013), explained their approach to effective online course design and teaching:

> You begin to care about the content and the application of the content in the world. You strengthen your own metacognition. You learn like the factual stuff, because otherwise, how do you apply if you don't know any of the foundational pieces? But foundational and then application into a space. And it's contextualized meaning making, it's all of those pieces put together. And then how do you back up and how do you design for it? How do you facilitate that, and how do you meet them, where they are?

It's in this "contextualized meaning making" where good online course design and the resulting engagement should come into play.

P3 defines a successful online course's engagement and its use of technology. P3 stimulates student engagement by utilizing feedback tools, like Canvas' SpeedGrader, to provide significant instructor feedback on assignments. Students have even gone on to engage P3 in conversations about the feedback they have received by using the commenting function in SpeedGrader. P3 said, "Once I give them feedback on each assignment, they usually comment. That one I think is very important. And also I realize if I provide timely feedback, it really helps them." For other means of communication, P3 relies on the Canvas email tool.

Besides Canvas SpeedGrader and email, P3 is relying on a variety of other technologies, such as Kaltura, YouTube, and VoiceThread. They believe that good online teaching means being able to know when to use certain tools and not relying too heavily on just one. "I will not say one tool is better than the other," P3 said. "You have to combine them."

Like other participants, P3 also emphasized the importance of using Canvas' modules to organize content in a sequential manner. "All the class activities line up," P3 said, explaining that each module begins with an overview of the content with the module learning objectives, followed by video lectures, readings, and activities.

P4 defines a successful online course's engagement and its use of technology. When P4 discusses engagement, they focus on their experiences utilizing both discussion boards and live meetings in Zoom in the same online class. They measure success, in part, by the amount and the quality of student discourse. "My idea of success for this course: level of engagement, the amount of conversation, answering questions, talking with each other." During synchronous meetings, P4 will provide inspiration for discussion by circling back to asynchronous discussion forums in Canvas where the class originally began their discussion, or by relying on the Zoom whiteboard feature or sharing a topical YouTube video to diversify content. P4 explained further, "I prefer to share a Powerpoint presentation so there's something on the screen. But I'm not reading what's on the slide. I'm talking to the slides, but also with pauses for interaction and engagement."

In order to take advantage of group work opportunities, P4 uses Zoom breakout rooms for groups to collaborate and then return to the entire class' main Zoom room to hold debates. P4 briefly explained this activity:

> I use the breakout rooms a lot for group exercises. We've done debates where two groups go away, tackle a certain topic, come back and debate with each other. A lot of group work. And then I've used the whiteboards. I've had them present as well and share their screen.

Like other participants, P4 also relies on anonymous Google forms to survey students on their experiences, conduct check-ins, and communicate with students. Regarding other sources of communication, P4 has had concerns about the efficacy of Canvas announcements and how consistently the messages actually reach students. They wondered if their students were really getting the announcements, so they experimented:

> I created the announcement, and then I sent an email through Canvas.
>
> And I said, 'I'm just curious, do you see the announcements? Do you get notifications that I have created an announcement? What does this look like on your end?' And they all had different answers. One person said, 'I don't get it. I only see it if I'm logged in and I actually go to the announcement tab.' One person said, 'Oh, I get an email notification that you've created an announcement.' And then someone said, 'I think it's based on our settings and what we set up.' And I'm like, well, Okay. I'm glad I asked.

In some cases, good communication as an online instructor means breaking through the limitation of physical separation by being proactive in interrogating the student perspective in order to find out what you don't know.

P5 defines a successful online course's engagement and its use of technology. P5 highlights instructor availability and presence as cornerstones of engagement and successful online course teaching practices. Instructors should be "making themselves available to students and responding in a timely manner and engaging. And I guess trying to make that connection, even though it's an online setting, there's still ways to make connections with individuals."

As an instructor, P5 provides presence in part by relying on weekly check-in videos using Kaltura. They embed the videos into their course in Canvas. P5 also posts supplemental materials focused on acknowledging their humanity, encouraging them to practice self-care, and sharing resources that encourage them to do so.

In terms of course design, P5 mirrors Universal Design for Learning principles, providing multiple means of representation of course content. P5 explained:

> So having a variety of ways that the material is presented. So some readings, some could be more scholarly, some could be maybe more general videos, interactives, just in being

> able to engage with the material in different ways, and having a variety of assessments. Not having all papers or all tests, because some students just excel in different ways. I like providing flexibility.

P5 expanded on their idea of flexibility, citing deadline extensions for assignments, and explaining that they recognize that many of their students are working professionals, and like P5, they are busy and juggling responsibilities.

Focus group defines a successful online course's engagement and use of technology.

The participants expanded somewhat further during the focus group meeting on how they've utilized technology to spark opportunities for engagement in their online courses. P1 spoke to the creative nature of New Quizzes in Canvas, saying that it provides more options than Canvas' old quiz creator, especially in terms of engagement. "I use the newer Canvas quiz option because there are more fun little things to do that assess knowledge but don't seem like a quiz," P1 said. When asked to expand on how P1 is using Canvas New Quizzes they explained that the matching options for key terms are better, the presentation of the content is better, and that some of the options feel more like a game than a quiz. This felt representative of P1's concerns with combatting testing anxiety, which they touched on previously in their individual interview.

P2, who is regularly reaching out to students and checking in on their well-being and course experience, also shared further details on combating their students' stress levels in dealing with school responsibilities during stressful times. Organizing course content in a "linear fashion" was one way P2 felt they efficiently lowered the cognitive load and made it easier for students to progress through the material without getting lost or overwhelmed. This also made it easier for students to track their own progress because of the Canvas completion checkmarks,

which indicate for the student which module pages they have explored and what pages they have left complete. P2 explained:

> And the green checkmark! They love the green check mark. For some reason it made a big difference with my classes. They're like, I just need to see that I'd already done it because they were so overwhelmed with all the rest of the things that they were doing.

P3 elaborated on the sentiment behind their feedback method more, explaining that while they try to respond to student emails within 24 hours, email isn't the only venue instructors should be using to ensure their students feel heard. P3 said:

> Sometimes a student will not write you an email. But they will leave a comment on the assignment that you graded. Even those things, I think we should not ignore. So if they make a comment and they feel shy to reach out to you, they just want to be heard. If you don't post a response, I think they will feel ignored,"

Research Question 3 Conclusion

The participants have experimented with different strategies for increasing engagement in their own online courses. They've utilized many tools, including Kaltura, VoiceThread, Zoom, and many of the features in Canvas, to facilitate their efforts in engagement. It was clear that participants' sense of student engagement was a major indicator of course success and, in many cases, participants would take specific steps to improve engagement, whether in hopes of having a positive impact on student wellbeing, learning outcomes, or both.

Research Question 3A: How do faculty define an unsuccessful online course?

The answer to RQ3A in this context might seem obvious: an online course with no engagement is an unsuccessful online course. But what does that actually look like? How might you recognize it if you've never taught online or been an online student? Participants were able

to describe specific examples and indicators of an unsuccessful online course in terms of engagement and use of technology.

P1 defines an unsuccessful online course's engagement and use of technology. P1 described signs of lack of engagement in terms of disingenuous posts in discussion forums or other activities where students are contributing to a conversation or collaborative effort. P1 provided the scenario, "'Wow, I really enjoyed your posts. Great work.' That's the worst thing to read as a professor when you start seeing those types of replies. They're just checking off a box. They're not engaged."

P1 identified low levels of student-to-student engagement as another indicator of an unsuccessful online course experience. "If the student feels alone and not really engaged with the others," P1 said.

Construction elements of the online course in the learning management system was another factor on which P1 reflected. "Anything that's disorganized," P1 said, "anything that causes students unnecessary anxiety, more so than what they would normally have as students, I think it is unsuccessful." Basic course construction issues like broken links and bad camera angles in video lectures were other culprits P1 cited as inhibitors of engagement and success.

P2 defines an unsuccessful online course's engagement and use of technology. P2 described an unsuccessful online course as one where students are just submitting work into the ether, progressing at their own unstructured pace, and not really receiving feedback. "I guess the non-example that comes to mind are Coursera courses," P2 said. "Where it's just unending video and giant blocks of text, and that's not nearly as accessible, nor does it lead to greater retention." Briefly touching on different levels of cognitive processes that an online course should require, P2 said, "Terrible courses have no big ideas. They're just like a series of factoids, information

strung together. You get to the end and go, 'I crammed and took this and now I don't even know what to do with it.'"

Lack of feedback from the instructor, regardless of the technology, was another indicator of an unsuccessful online course, according to P2. They elaborated further, touching on the potential impact of a student progressing through a course without proper guidance. "To me, the bad course is the one where there's a probability that somebody would move through the course and not get it, or misapply their learning because there wasn't feedback." P2 believes you can occasionally rely on automated feedback tools, but that some interaction is required in order for an asynchronous online course to really be successful.

P3 defines an unsuccessful online course's engagement and use of technology. Cutting right to the chase, P3 defined an unsuccessful online course as, "Disengaged." When P3 pondered the sources of disengagement, they landed on student stress levels and workload week-by-week work-induced exhaustion. "When they become overwhelmed, they disengage," P3 said. Relying on discussions too much, week-by-week-by-week, can be part of this work-induced exhaustion, according to P3. Instead, an online course should rely on opportunities of genuine feedback as a source of engagement.

P4 defines an unsuccessful online course's engagement and use of technology. P4 recalled being a student in a couple online courses that had required live sessions. P4 recounts one of the ordeals:

> All we did, the entire semester, was watch him in Excel, do computational formulas. I mean, it was just we didn't learn. I never learned a thing. The only way I was able to learn was to teach myself in between our classes by Googling and figuring out how to do the homework on my own. It was just not good at all.

The uninterrupted, shared screen demo in Excel was not an engaging or effective experience, and so P4 was left to find more efficient resources on their own. P4's experiences as a student in an unsuccessful online course do not end there, unfortunately. They recounted other painful courses:

> I've had courses before where the instructor just sat there in the class, no slides, no visuals, nothing, and just talks and talks and talks and talks. I mean, that's just not a great way to learn.

P4 saw these failures as examples in which the instructors weren't "allowing the students some ownership to figure things out and be engaged in the process of learning, instead of just talking at them and expecting them to absorb it and understand it." One way to prevent this sort of experience for students is to check in with them and examine their processes of learning, according to P4. "The most unsuccessful," said P4 "is just total lack of checking in to see if folks are learning."

P5 defines an unsuccessful online course's engagement and use of technology. P5 also articulated lack of engagement in terms of lack of *instructor* engagement, specifically communication and support. If students are left on their own to complete the course, without any check-ins or feedback, P5 felt that would result in an unsuccessful course. P5 said, "Not being supportive, not answering questions, not providing some support and flexibility, I think, could make for an unenjoyable course."

Focus group defines an unsuccessful online course's engagement and use of technology. Focus group conversation on engagement and use of technology was more concentrated on what should be implemented to generate a *successful* online course. Again pointing to the notion that the causes of an unsuccessful online course in terms of engagement and use of technology are obvious enough. P1 did reflect on the importance of a university's

choice in the learning management system it uses. They attributed much of the engagement possibilities in an online course to PMUU's adoption of Canvas as its LMS. P1 called out another LMS, D2l as the antithesis, saying, "I work at another institution that doesn't have Canvas, that uses D2l, and it's horrible."

> P2: D2L, is that Desire To Learn?
> P1: Yes.
> P2 (laughing): We just adopted that where I am.
> P1 (cringing): Oh my god.
> P2: They're getting better, but yeah, it's a struggle. Yeah, Canvas made a lot of those design choices possible.
> P1: I'm not sure if it's the version of D2L that this institution is using. Maybe they're being cheap and haven't bought all the bells and whistles. But in Canvas it's so easy for me to just click and say what I need to say to my students. It looks neat, it has bigger font, it just screams user-friendly. D2L, it has drab colors, it's so difficult to post things, the font is tiny. It just screams worst practices.

While P1 identified challenges in D2L in terms of engaging students, they did acknowledge what they perceived to be superior data analytics in D2L compared to Canvas. It's easier to see how long students are engaging with specific content in D2L, according to P1.

Research Question 3A Conclusion

Participants defined an unsuccessful online course in terms of lack of engagement and use of technology. They were able to point to specific examples, such as lackluster discussion contributions, cluttered or disorganized course materials in the learning management system, poor instructor engagement, and non user-friendly learning environments. Participant testimony on this subject centered mostly on the quality of the technology available and instructor willingness to utilize it in order to connect with students over the course content.

Theme 3: Awareness of Student Perspective and Experience

Participants also described a concern and awareness of the student perspective as a pillar of what they felt defined successful online teaching and course design practices. Participants

took steps to develop empathic relationships with students and to understand the contemporary student condition and how it affects student wellbeing and performance. The Covid-19 Pandemic and the lasting effects it has had on students and the learning environment was oftentimes the context cited by participants when discussing their adoption and usage of course design tactics.

As a result of developing an understanding of their students' perspectives and conditions, many participants felt they were able to consider student needs throughout the semester and make informed decisions in online teaching and course design, including grading and late work policies, scaffolding of assignments, and communication practices.

Research Question 3: How do faculty define a successful online course?

Participants described taking specific steps to learn about their students' wellbeing and feelings about their experience in participants' online courses. These specific steps, such as informal, anonymous pre-semester and mid-semester surveys, are an important ingredient in the recipe for a successful online course, according to the participants. Participants said that taking these specific steps to check on their students' feelings and learning conditions allowed participants to curate an online course better suited for their students' needs, improving their students' experiences and outcomes, and thus improving the chances of their online courses succeeding.

P1's empathic online course teaching and design. P1 stressed the need for an online instructor to recognize who their online students are, and to meet them where they are as learners and individuals. Discovering the student expectations and the reasons for why they might choose an online course, should also play a role in an online instructor's choices with teaching practices and course design. P1explained that they felt the course must meet the needs of the diverse student demographic that chooses to learn online. "One of the key selling points [of an online

course] is flexibility. You have to understand that you're going to have folks in your class that work nine-to-five jobs." So what does that mean? It means "really being intentional with understanding who the demographic in the class is, how much they would need to hear from you," said P1.

P1 also stressed that it's important to consider how a 300-level course, for example, might be different from a 100-level course, or how a course with 100 students will require different teaching and design considerations than a course with 25 students. These are important aspects to consider from the beginning in order to understand and anticipate student needs.

P1 went on to provide a hypothetical scenario with an online course that is predominantly made up of freshmen. P1 said:

> I need to be in more constant communication. You're going to get not just the weekly announcement on Canvas, you're also going to get a direct email to let you know to log into Canvas, because some students, they won't even log into Canvas, but hopefully they see their email.

Other aspects of course design, like the course's schedule of due dates, are important in terms of avoiding the creation of unnecessary anxiety in students. P1 elaborated:

> In the first week or two there shouldn't be major, nonnegotiable due dates for assignments...because students are still getting used to everything and trying to figure things out. So you need to have that flexibility, you need to understand when to place an assessment...but it can't be too late in that they're cramming seven weeks worth of information to take an exam that, is already for many of them, is going to bring out a certain amount of anxiety.

Creating a consistent workflow and regular course assignments is another way to have an online course design that recognizes student needs. “You don't want to assign things like, this week is due on Wednesday, next week is due on Thursday. Have a rhythm for your students, so that they can schedule and they can plan.” P1 also said that even within that consistent rhythm of course work, it’s important to remain flexible to student needs. “Even with your due dates and things, you have to have that flexibility, because this is an online class, so if you're very rigid, it's not serving the students whose top priority is flexibility.”

P2’s empathic online course teaching and design. P2 took concrete steps to get to know their students on many levels, engaging them on their emotional wellbeing and inviting feedback on course activities. Striving to acknowledge the whole student, P2’s communication efforts were humane and considerate of where the students were, especially in a post-Covid-19 learning environment. P2 described their strategies:

> They would fill out a survey for me, like a pre-course survey, so I knew who they were. You know, I got a sense of how many languages were spoken among the group. And then I'd like to share that back to them. Did you know in this class we speak eight languages? How great is that? Did you know that in this class, half of you all have the same favorite TV show right now?

The pre-course survey P2 distributed also asked students about their access to reliable internet and other tools necessary to succeed in an online course, as they felt addressing issues of equity was also important and part of the goal to understand their students’ experiences and perspectives. P2 said their efforts led to significant, genuine connections that contributed to what felt like success. They received positive feedback from students on their course, as P2 described:

> The student evaluations that I got repeatedly said that the thing that they appreciated most was they weren't aware, so to speak, that an online course could feel so personal and they felt like they had a connection with me and with their classmates. To me, that was the most meaningful.

P2 also referred to their office hours as "student hours" to help emphasize that that time is dedicated to *them* and their needs. "They didn't want to bother me. They kept hearing about grit and resilience. But you can only be resilient to a point, you have to ask other people to help you."

During the early days of the Covid-19 Pandemic, P2 connected with students by creating opportunities for extra credit in which the task was to practice self-care or share something with the class that makes them happy. P2 modeled the gesture by posting a picture of their dog outside by their garden. "I built [it] in specifically early on in the course to help with the community building," P2 said. They were able to connect it to actual learning objectives of the course. P2 said:

> We talked about the importance in our profession of well being…I got all kinds of pictures that they shared of like their cats and their dogs and their besties and their favorite album and a book they were reading and everything. So they all got extra credit for it. But I felt like I got to know them a little bit and they felt okay being a little bit more vulnerable.

P2 relied on other strategies to make their students feel comfortable and drop their defenses. They would appear in camera or in videos in a comfortable setting that allowed students to see P2's "human side," for example, cuddled up on the couch with their dog.

P2's efforts were so impactful that students even trusted them with their concerns about other courses they were taking. During a live class meeting in Zoom, P2 could sense students

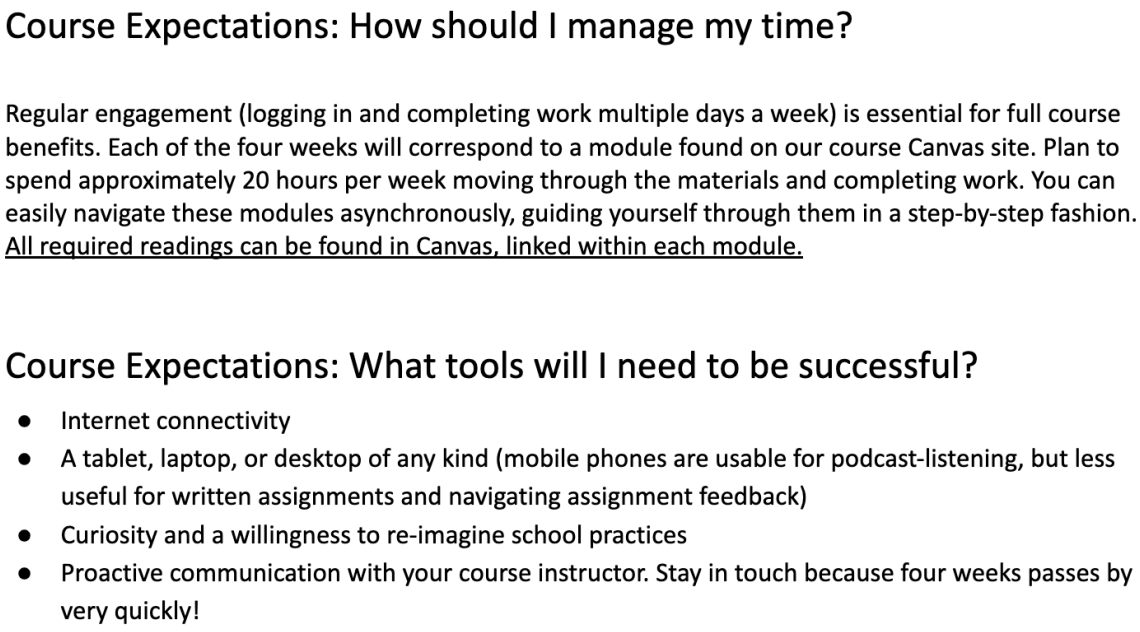
were troubled by something. P2 inquired, asking them what was going on. They were distraught about two other online asynchronous courses and the lack of feedback they were getting from the faculty. P2 related the story:

> They said, 'The faculty won't respond to us at all, ever, even when we ask for help.' And they were turning in papers and other things that were big, right? This was like six weeks into the course or something and they hadn't gotten a single thing returned. They were just turning stuff in. They had no idea how they were doing.

The experience caused P2 to pause and wonder how often students experience something like that in their courses.

Working in tandem with their efforts to connect with their students' experiences and needs, P2 also took concrete steps to communicate their expectations from students, as demonstrated in the syllabus excerpt in the figure below. This excerpt was part of P2's syllabus assignment submission in the FDP.

Figure 14 *P2's Syllabus Assignment Submission Excerpt*



Course Expectations: How should I manage my time?

Regular engagement (logging in and completing work multiple days a week) is essential for full course benefits. Each of the four weeks will correspond to a module found on our course Canvas site. Plan to spend approximately 20 hours per week moving through the materials and completing work. You can easily navigate these modules asynchronously, guiding yourself through them in a step-by-step fashion. All required readings can be found in Canvas, linked within each module.

Course Expectations: What tools will I need to be successful?

- Internet connectivity
- A tablet, laptop, or desktop of any kind (mobile phones are usable for podcast-listening, but less useful for written assignments and navigating assignment feedback)
- Curiosity and a willingness to re-imagine school practices
- Proactive communication with your course instructor. Stay in touch because four weeks passes by very quickly!

P3's empathic online course teaching and design. P3 also practiced awareness of the student perspective and condition developing policies that demonstrated flexibility with deadlines and recognizing certain student work habits. P3 felt that disciplined students tended to have better time-management skills, and the ones that don't, fall behind on assignments. "You should accept late assignments, but provide a penalty system…but still provide a second chance for people to submit late."

P3 also scaffolded assignments in a manner so that students were also doing work towards the course's larger, final assessment. P3 explained, "I designed a series of assignments that lead to the final project. Each assignment, I give them some feedback. At the end of the semester they know that all they need to do is put together these five assignments." P3 said this course design significantly cut down on students panicking at the end of the semester because they had been working towards the project, bit-by-bit throughout the semester.

P4's empathic online course teaching and design. P4 expresses empathy by recognizing that students have diverse needs. "I think people learn in different ways, and I'm being very cognizant of that." P4 explained that they taught and designed their courses while keeping in mind that some people prefer visual materials while others might prefer engaging conversations. "I know it's online," P4 said, "But make it more hands on and practical."

P4 extended this thoughtfulness to their communication practices with students as well. They felt like they saw mixed results from communicating strictly through Canvas' email tool, and so P4 took the time to check-in with students and asked how they typically see their emails. Students reported different experiences. Some receive Canvas emails, and some do not, and some have to log into Canvas; it depends on how the student has set their notification preferences in Canvas.

Another example of communication with students that P4 offered up was a group presentation project rubric from their own online course. Besides communicating clear expectations on the assignment, P4 also said the rubric "was helpful on my end for grading and ensuring active engagement from group members." The rubric is provided in the table below.

Table 5

P4 Online Course Group Presentation Project Rubric

Group Presentation			
	Target	**Acquiring**	**Needs Improvement**
Introduction and overview of nonprofit - 3 points	Group members introduced and overview of nonprofit is provided (3 points)	Minor omissions which will not affect audience understanding of nonprofit (2 points)	Major omission of pertinent information or lack of group introductions (0-1 points)
Purpose of logic model and response to the prompt (fundraising strategies, donor communications, leadership, and board management, etc.) - 12 points	Information collected reflects accurate understanding of nonprofit structure, and clear understanding of purpose of logic model (10-12 points)	Provided insightful response but was off-topic and/or neglected to answer all parts of the prompt (5-9 points)	Did not address the prompt clearly and/or was off-topic, and/or failed to address all parts of the prompt. (0-4 points)
Relevance to course material - 4 points	Provided relevance to course material (can include readings, guest speakers, lectures, discussions) and cited sources appropriately (3-4 points)	Provided relevance to course material but lacked in some areas; cited some, but not all sources (2 points)	Did not provide relevance to course material and/or did not cite sources appropriately (0-1 points)
Group engagement - 3 points	Clear understanding of how each group member was involved and/or participated (3 points)	Not a clear understanding of how group members participated (2 points)	Some group members did not participate at all (0 -1 points)
Overall presentation - 3 points	Presentation is professional, comprehensive and provides clear understanding of logic models (3 points)	Presentation is good but could have been more professional, comprehensive and clear (2 points)	Presentation is not professional, comprehensive or clear (0-1 points)

P5's empathic online course teaching and design. Exercising awareness of student questions and providing regular instructor presence and guidance is how P5 responds to student

needs. P5 uses weekly check-in videos in Kaltura to address student questions and share out with the class regarding issues that students have emailed P5 about. “Maybe other students are having similar questions, so I'm trying to touch on those points during the video or the weekly check in…I've gotten feedback that the videos, the check-in videos are helpful,” P5 said.

Similar to other participants, P5 explained that they share self-care practices as part of their online teaching, sending out resources and articles on self-care methods. In part, P5 has done this to come across as approachable and accessible, explaining, “I guess I just try to be as genuine and, like, real as I can be.” In sending these resources, P5 was also taking the time to acknowledge “how stressful life is, and how difficult school can be, just encouraging them to remember to take a few deep breaths, or, you know, find some things that help them out.”

P5 also described remaining flexible with due dates and allowing extensions when warranted. “I don't mind extensions and things of that nature, because I know life, because in my professional world, sometimes we need an extension,” P5 said. Students are allowed one extension without penalty in P5’s class.

The Focus group and empathic online course teaching and design. The student’s need to feel seen was a topic that participants expanded upon together. P2 and P3 engaged in this conversation predominantly, riffing on the idea of the instructor acknowledging their students’ perspectives and making themself accessible to students.

> P2: They wanted to feel seen, valued, and heard. They wanted to know that what they found important, whether that's concerning or exciting in their lives, that their instructors felt was important, too.

> P3: I agree with P2. Instructors should be within the reach of the student, and you should create a feeling that the student would not feel intimidated or like, I'd say, afraid of reaching out for help.

P3 explained further that they feel that online students, specifically asynchronous online course students, think "there's nobody there to support them. So having a sense of being supported, it's important."

P1 and P2 also touched further on online course designing that considers the needs of the students. P1 explained that it's not just the demographic (freshman students, working parents, etc.) that should be considered, but also events and holidays throughout the years should impact how we organize course deadlines and manage online courses. Engagement will ebb and flow with holidays and life events. "Knowing those flows helps you design better," said P1.

Echoing P3's scaffolding and alignment concerns, P2 discussed the importance of connecting assignments throughout the semester. P2 said:

> Instead of thinking about one big assignment that's due. I connect the other things they've already done, and then it's more about them curating the work they've already done to create something that is sort of like a meaningful product or something they can apply in a real-world setting.

However, P2 also acknowledged the complexity and mixed results that can come with reaching out to students and responding to their perceived needs. Sometimes, more reaching out and response to students is required. P2 said:

> Some things have worked for me one year, and they didn't work the next, you know. So for years I incorporated that kind of mid-semester check in, or just before mid-semester, where I would just put out a two question anonymous survey to the group each time and

see what's one thing that's working for you and supporting you? And what's one thing that's challenging you?

Research Question 3 Conclusion

Participants defined a successful online course as one in which the instructor is reaching out to the students to engage them on their perspectives, their experiences, and their concerns. In some cases, this can rise to the level of encouraging and participating in acts of self-care with students. Participants noted results from such strategies, including re-engaged students, new levels of trust and bonds forged, and students benefiting from instructor and course design flexibility.

Theme 4: The Content of the FDP

The content of the FDP itself was another common theme discussed by the participants. Most of this data took the form of student feedback on their experiences in the course, content and instruction that was particularly useful, or content and instruction that the participants felt was missing and should be considered in future iterations of faculty development programs. For example, some participants noted the increasing need for guidance on utilizing and navigating student usage of artificial intelligence tools, like ChatGPT. Participants also noted other needs, such as instruction dedicated to various levels of experience with technology and teaching online, as well as instruction that takes specific course subjects into account.

As noted in Theme 2, participants expressed some confusion over the asynchronous, non-cohort delivery of the FDP, which they felt resulted in interactions in the discussions forums with peers and the FDP instructor that did not feel timely. However, participants noted the discussion forums were a source of useful input from other FDP participants despite the untimely interactions.

Research Question 4: How do faculty describe their needs for pedagogical instruction versus their needs for technological instruction in order to teach online successfully?

P1's perceived needs for pedagogical versus technological instruction. P1 felt that the biggest concern for faculty is most likely knowing how to use the technology. P1's solution was to provide very basic level instruction. P1 said, "I do think there needs to be even more basic intro level class for professors that have never, ever taught an online class and don't use Canvas at all." P1 also identified technology as presenting the biggest learning curve for faculty learning to teach online, and that the pedagogical aspects of online teaching and course design are easier to grasp. P1 explained:

> I think that might be what intimidates people the most because it's not hard to learn the pedagogy, you learn why you have to do certain things. And some of it is common sense...But people get intimidated by, well, I don't know if I'll be able to teach effectively, if I don't know how to use the technology myself.

Our expectations of students in terms of asking them to create videos versus just relying on text-based submissions was another topic of pedagogy that P1 saw a need to explore more. P1 said:

> Some students will say, 'Well, I'm not the best talker,' or 'I don't feel comfortable.' Well, there's a lot of people that can't write, but we force them to write and write discussion posts, so let's even it out a little bit. That's going to be the next huge pedagogy question.

Artificial intelligence tools like ChatGPT weighed heavily on P1's considerations for further instruction as well, both in pedagogically and technologically speaking. "How do you teach when your students are cheating? That's a class and a whole other conversation in and of itself,"

P1 said. In the meantime, P1 has already revised assignments in order to work around the possibility of students leaning on AI inappropriately. “It’s one of the reasons why I started doing the podcast assignment in smaller classes, even going back to Zoom oral exams, because of that,” P1 explained.

Zeroing in on specific assignments in the FDP, P1 identified the syllabus assignment, which required participants to submit their own syllabus that followed the FDP guidance and evidence-based practices in the course, as a beneficial exercise that was even useful in collaborating with faculty that teach in other subject areas. “I'm working with an actual colleague at PMUU, and although we're different disciplines, I'm able to use the tools that I learned to evaluate a foreign language syllabus…I know what to look for, what to do with these things.” In the example below from P1’s own online course syllabus, Figure 15, we see P1 communicating to students the exceptional nature of the online course experience, a statement that could apply broadly across disciplines.

Figure 15 *Excerpt from P1 syllabus*

Online Learning Considerations

Many students take an online class because they believe it will be “easy” but survey responses from students who have taken an online class described the experience as “harder than expected.” This is due to the unique nature of the online environment. It is important to keep up with the class content (readings & videos) as well as the discussion and assignments. Check the course schedule regularly to familiarize yourself with the work and due dates.

P1 also felt that the instruction in the FDP benefited from the recent research it cited, that it allowed P1 to understand the reasoning behind specific strategies. P1 said:

> I love the use of the most recent research in it to explain why we do things, and not just why do this because it's best practice, but why is it best practice? How is it shown to be best practice? Those things, how things were reinforced.

P2's perceived needs for pedagogical versus technological instruction. P2, in keeping with their empathic teaching and course design nature, found value in the FDP course content that covered issues of accessibility and multiple means of content representation. The principles covered in the FDP lessons on Universal Design for Learning were highlights for P2. P2 said:

> There were clear enough parameters that a learner could understand the expectations, but with enough flexibility to say, 'Oh, I can choose A or B, or I can choose maybe assessment A or assessment B. I also began building in more choices, so to speak. Almost like 'choose your own adventure.'

P2 also found moments in the FDP to be beneficial that prompted them to consider their own choices in online teaching and course design. "It provided a really great reflective piece of what is working for me here and why is it working?"

P3's perceived needs for pedagogical versus technological instruction. P3 found the lesson on creating a welcome video to be inspiring in terms of their own teaching practices. It was the first item from the FDP that P3 recalled being the most useful. On creating a welcome video, P3 said, "I never thought about doing that before."

Like P2, P3 appreciated the moments in the FDP that afforded them time to reflect on their own course design choices. For example, the discussion board assignments served this purpose for P3. They said, "It does let me reflect on some of the ways that I construct my assignments. It makes you think hard, like what you have done, in what way you can improve and also share your experience."

When asked about shortcomings in the FDP, the participant said that the course could benefit from content and assignments that are tailored more to specific disciplines.

P4's perceived needs for pedagogical versus technological instruction. P4 also found value in the principles of Universal Design for Learning as they were presented in the FDP. The discussion forums were also a useful source of insight from other faculty members with a range of experience teaching and designing online courses. "I found that fun, to engage with other faculty members I would have never crossed paths with otherwise, you know. I think it was kind of a cool way to meet people."

However, P4 grew frustrated with an assignment that required learners to create and submit a course welcome video. P4 didn't have a course or a syllabus to reference as inspiration for the welcome video, and so the assignment felt the assignment wouldn't be useful. "I just did not want to create this fake video. And I didn't have a syllabus yet. That's what held me back." P4 felt the video should be optional so that it doesn't become a barrier to persisting through the rest of the course content.

P4 also suggested that the FDP be designed to consider the needs of learners that have absolutely no experience teaching online or using tools in Canvas. "You have people on the opposite end of the spectrum that have never done this…But you're expected to go ahead and create this course, create your syllabus and know what to do with modules," P4 said.

Like P1, P4 also identified a growing need for there to be instruction and guidance on the use of Artificial Intelligence. P4 said:

> AI and ChatGBT, and all of the stuff that plays into it. I have no idea what to do about that. And I know that's not just an online teaching issue. I know that's an in-person teaching issue as well.

P5's perceived needs for pedagogical versus technological instruction. P5 only completed two of the approximately four modules worth of content in the FDP, but in that space, they did find the discussion boards to be instructive and beneficial for much of the same reason as the other participants. It was useful to hear from other faculty.

P5 found the quizzes in the FDP and being graded in general to be a source of stress. P5 explained, "It just took me back to being a student. It's like, why am I being graded on this? I just want to learn this material. And so it added stress." The non-cohort delivery of the FDP also didn't help P5 persist through the course. "I kind of forgot to go back to it. There was nothing reminding me to, Hey, go back to that."

When asked about other guidance that might be needed that was not provided in the FDP, P5 said:

> I don't know what I don't know, so I don't know where to incorporate it. I don't know if anything is missing. I don't know what's out there. I don't know how to utilize it. I don't know how to incorporate it.

P5 stressed the importance of technology being worth the investment, that its value in the classroom be worth the time and energy it would take to learn it. Continued support was another component of their consideration of learning new technology, pointing out that utilization of new technology would require guidance off and on during its implementation and ongoing usage.

Focus Group's perceived needs for pedagogical versus technological instruction. Conversation among participants regarding needs for pedagogical instruction versus technological instruction built upon previously expressed concerns during individual interviews. Echoing P3's desire for content that caters to specific subject matter, P1 touched on issues of specific disciplines and also modality concerns. P1 said:

> I don't know how this could be done in one course, but more of an acknowledgement that things aren't one-size-fit-all, just like was mentioned by my colleague, within different disciplines. Some of these things aren't going to work the same, depending on the material that you're teaching, and even the modality. [The FDP] is just for people that are designing asynchronous courses. And then, if you're teaching in the foreign languages, or you're teaching in engineering, or you're teaching history, psychology, it might be different. It might not be one-size-fits-all.

P3 raised the issue of the non-cohort delivery, and made the specific suggestion that a six-month cycle might be more effective. P1 agreed, saying, "I do agree with my colleagues that if it was in a cohort setting, it would be more impactful."

P1 also explained that while it was useful to be introduced to online course quality review rubrics, they didn't need the extensive history provided on the development of the rubric. "It's good to know it, but there was a lot of background information about Quality Matters…how it was created. Okay, that's interesting, but that's not gonna help me."

Research Question 4 Conclusion

Participants described needs that were met and not met by the FDP regarding both pedagogical instruction and technological instruction. The need for more guidance for faculty with less experience or no experience in online teaching and course design was identified by participants. It was said that basic instruction on using Canvas would be a useful addition. Similarly, participants expressed concerns with the "one-size-fits-all" approach of the FDP, as it didn't consider the different needs according to disciplines being taught or modalities outside of asynchronous online learning. Concerns with Artificial Intelligence were also expressed by

participants, as they also indicated instruction and guidance on the use of such technologies would be beneficial.

Conclusion

Four themes emerged during the analysis of participant interviews and the focus group. These themes were identified and explored through the lens of the relevant research questions with which the themes aligned.

The first theme, Participant Motivations and Alignment with Department Online Program Considerations, spoke to the participants' common motivations for seeking out the FDP for guidance in online teaching and course design. Two central elements comprised participants' motivation for seeing out the FDP: a personal, professional desire for development in online teaching and course design in order to serve their interests in teaching and designing successful online courses, and a motivation inspired by what they saw as their departments' goals to develop and deliver successful online programs. This theme was explored through the lens of Research Questions 1 and 3, both with which the theme demonstrated alignment.

The second theme, Engagement and the Use of Technology as Barometers of Success, proved to provide a more adventurous process in data analysis and was by far the most robust theme to emerge. Originally, I had treated engagement as a barometer of success and use of technology as a barometer of success as two separate themes; however, as I continued my analysis and threaded a narrative through the documentation of each participants' data, it became impossible to separate the two because they were so codependent and complementary of each other. The utilization of specific technologies and how it was utilized facilitated the engagement, and so separating the two would do a disservice to the reader because it would require them to do the unnecessary work of making those connections on their own. The theme was explored

through the lens of Research Questions 2, 3, and 3A, all with which the theme showed alignment.

The third theme, Awareness of Student Perspective and Experience, represented the participants' reliance on strategies to develop empathic understandings of their students' perspectives and experiences in order to choose online teaching and course design practices that better suited their students' needs. In many cases, participants would consider their students' needs and experiences and adjust teaching and course design practices accordingly in real time or on the fly. This showed an extreme amount of care in participants and demonstrated their investment in their students' support and successes. This theme also revealed itself to be representative of one of the more crucial impacts on participants' choices and development in online teaching and course design, in many ways more so than the FDP - a sort of learning by doing that echoes Situated Learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991). This theme was explored through the lens of Research Question 3.

The fourth and final theme, The Content of the FDP, centered on participants' perceptions regarding specific content and instruction in the FDP itself. This theme also included participants' testimonies on what they wished the FDP had done differently or where they felt the FDP ignored their needs. Lastly, participants also touched on what the imagined to be more pressing needs as the online learning landscape has evolved since their participation in the FDP.

In the next chapter, I will examine the data through the lens of the study's theoretical framework, which as explained in Chapter 3, serves as guidance for the study's research and knowledge building process. I will then explore the implications of the findings and any recommendations that can be gleaned from the knowledge building process. Finally, I will identify any limitations as a result of my research design and implementation.

Chapter 5: Discussion

In the fifth and final chapter, I will appraise the data through the lens of this case study's theoretical framework which guided the development of the study's research and data gathering process. After a thorough examination of the findings through the theoretical framework, I will discuss the implications and recommendations. I will conclude this chapter with a section devoted to assessing my study's limitations.

Through within-case and cross-case analysis, four themes emerged from the interviews and other data provided by the study's five participants. Those themes are identified as follows:

Theme 1: Participant Motivations and Alignment with Department Online Program Considerations

Theme 2: Engagement and the Use of Technology as Barometers of Success

Theme 3: Awareness of Student Perspective and Experience

Theme 4: The Content of the FDP

The four themes intersected often, demonstrating the findings alignments with the concepts of the TPACK Model (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). The participants' pedagogical knowledge and development, technological knowledge and development, and content knowledge and development all existed independently while also overlapping. Participants also exhibited "acts of social co-participation" as theorized in Situated Learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991), in which participants described engaging in a community of learners in the FDP as well as with their own students in their own online course as part of their development as online teachers and course designers.

Conceptual Implications

During the data gathering and analysis phases of my research, my conceptual framework evolved as my understanding of the different contexts evolved, expanded, and contracted. The revised conceptual framework is below in Figure 17. The most obvious impacts were inspired by the participants' perceptions surrounding their students' experiences, both in terms of participants' online courses and their overall condition as current university students. This is represented by "Student Experience and Condition," which was a source of input and instruction for the participants and myself as the participants provided their testimonies and I engaged the participants on these perceptions.

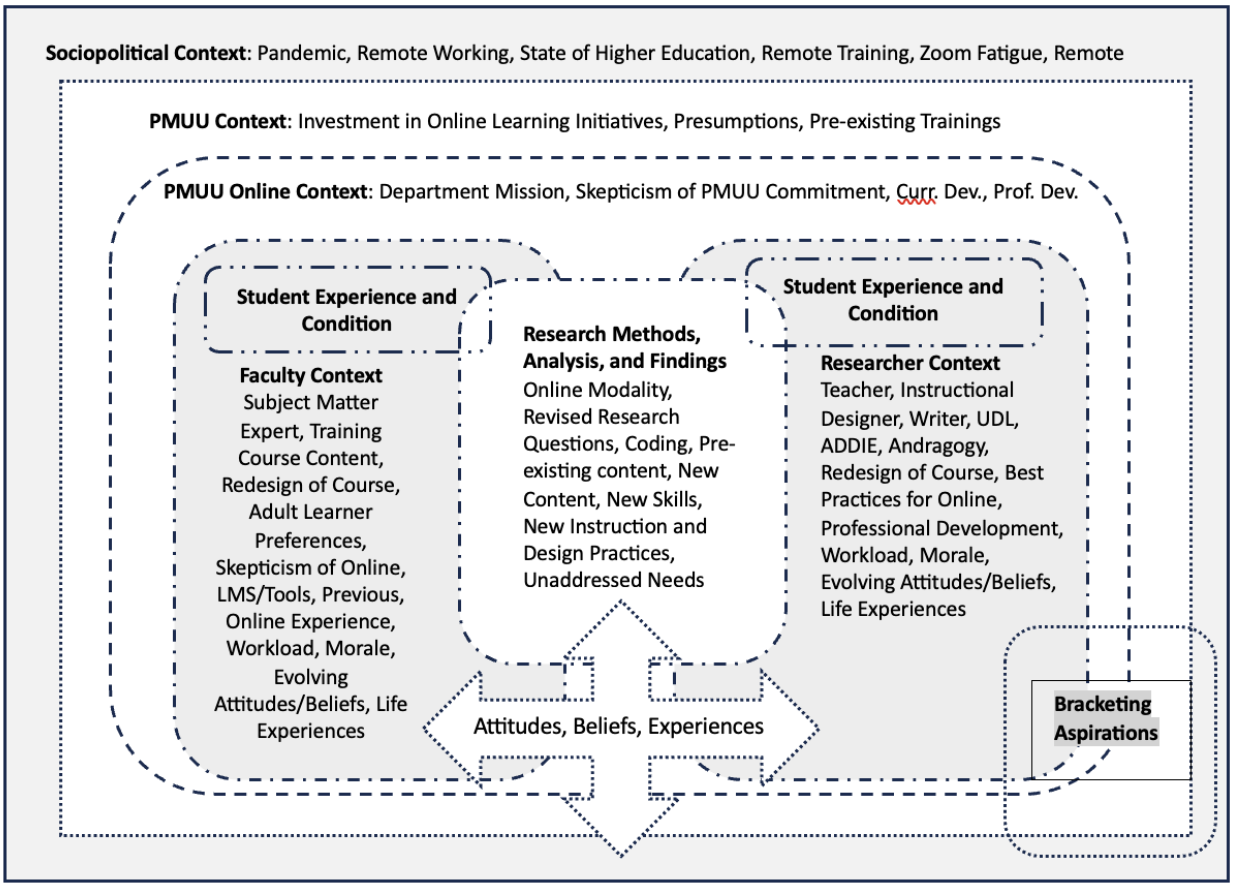
Another significant revision, my inclusion of "Revised Research Methods" and "Coding" in the "Research Methods, Analysis, and Findings" context, is meant to acknowledge the revisions made to the study's research questions after submission of the prospectus and the ongoing nature of the development of the data coding.

While the revision to the research questions was seemingly minor (RQ3A had originally been identified as the more distinct and separate RQ4), it was impactful as it prompted me to handle RQ3 and RQ3A as interrelated in some ways. Participants often spoke about their perceptions of successful online courses and unsuccessful online courses in terms of comparisons and contrasts. The revised RQ3A allowed for probes and prompts that were more conducive to a natural conversation.

The addition of "Coding" in the "Research Methods, Analysis, and Findings" context pays homage to the coding process, which evolved as I engaged with each of the study's participants, reflected on their testimonies, and then analyzed their testimonies. I found this process to be one of the more exciting and creative processes in the study that directly involved and was steered by the participants' inputs.

And finally, the addition of "State of Higher Education" in the Sociopolitical Context acknowledges the perceived crises in higher education regarding dropping enrollment, the rising cost of tuition, and current discussions about the value and relevancy of a higher education degree. These issues are touched on regularly in media and were also brought up by participants during the interviews and focus group meeting. As such, this element was added to the conceptual framework to acknowledge its place in the backdrop of this study.

Figure 17 *The Study's Final Conceptual Framework*

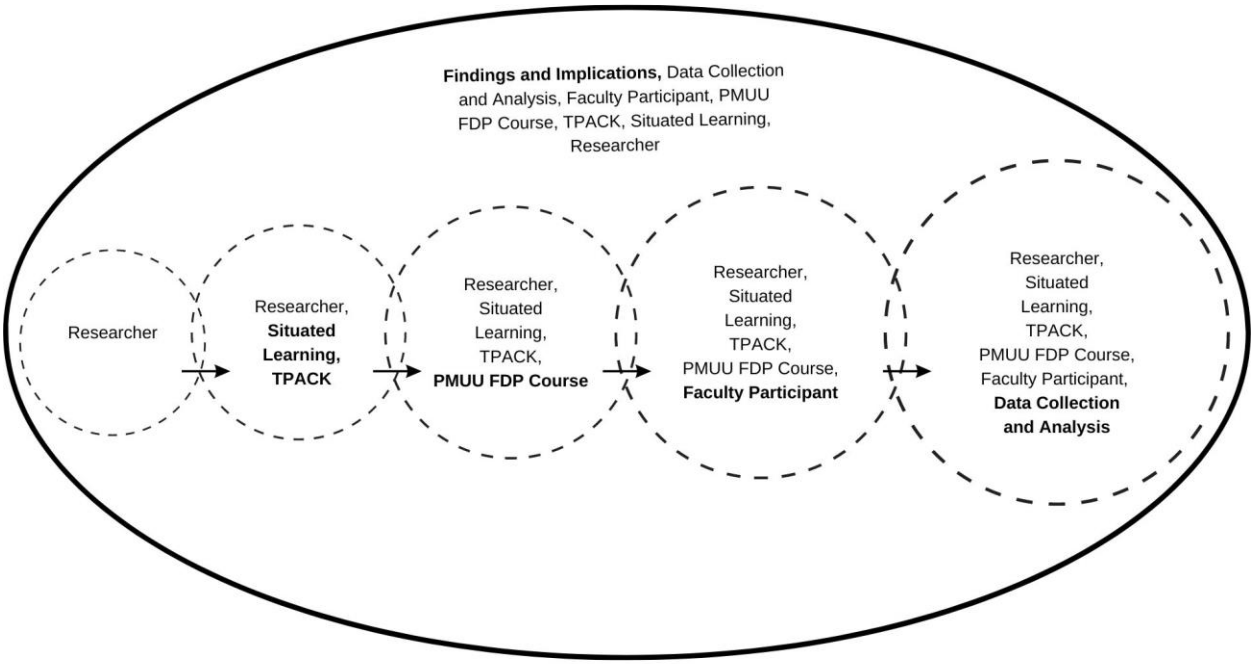


Theoretical Implications

My development of this study's theoretical framework took into account existing research and theory, such as The TPACK Model (Mishra & Koehler, 2006) and Situated

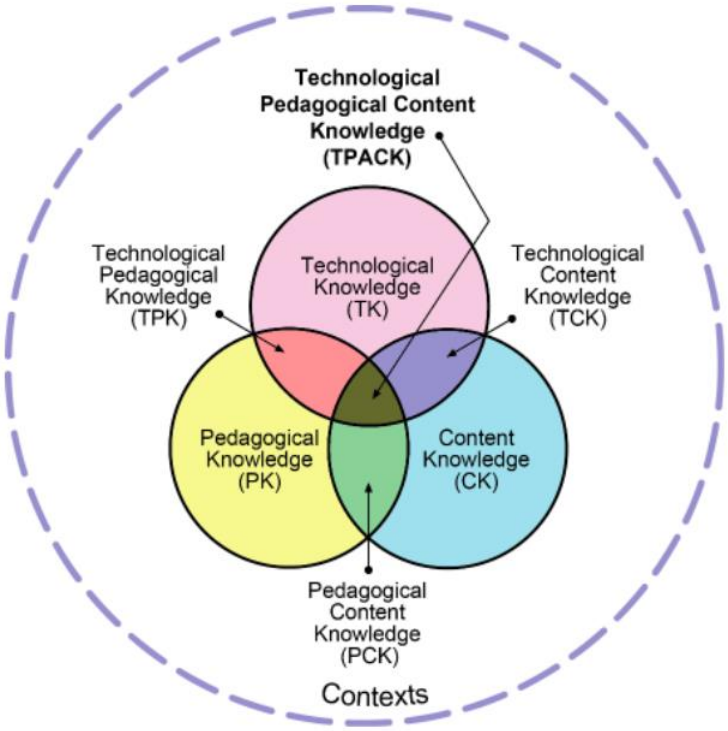
Learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991), but it also included my researcher positionality, the study participants, and the FDP venue and PMUU setting, as these were the factors that I found would impact my data collection and findings. The study's theoretical framework is illustrated in Figure 18 below.

Figure 18 *This Study's Theoretical Framework*



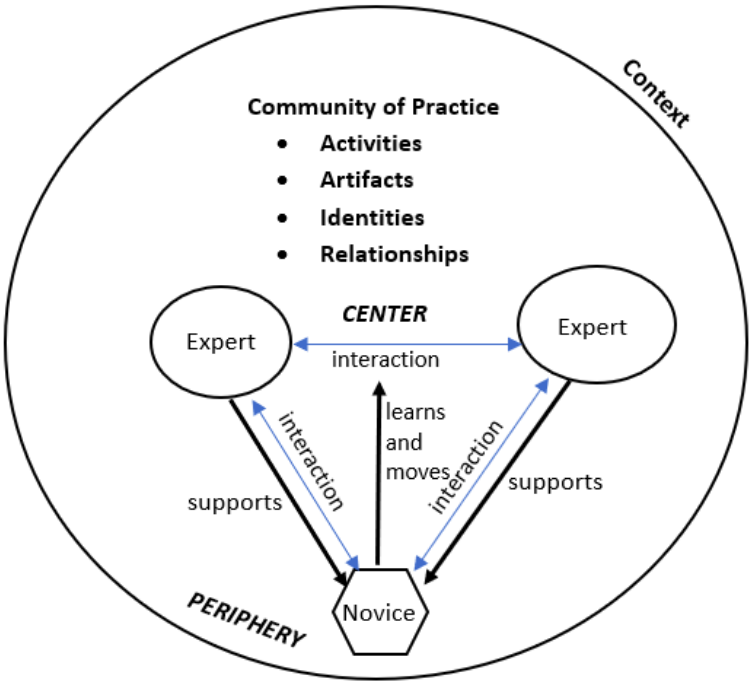
Because my research questions and study context approached the adoption and application of online teaching and course design knowledge and skills, which requires combined application of pedagogical and technological knowledge and skills, the TPACK Model provided theory on which to rely for further guidance. The TPACK Model highlights the intersections of technological content, pedagogical content, and content knowledge, and that these inputs occur simultaneously for the online educator. In Figure 19 below, the TPACK Model is illustrated.

Figure 19 *The TPACK Model (Koehler, 2011)*



Similarly, Situated Learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991) aligned with my research questions and the context of this study as this theory explains that learning and adoption of skills happens within a community of practice, in which learners are learning by doing. In this research, the participants had taken part in a community of practice consisting of both faculty learners in the FDP and as instructors working with their students in their own online courses. The participants collaborated with other faculty participants in the FDP and even their students to develop, apply, reflect, redevelop and reapply their knowledge and skills in online teaching and course design. In the figure below, Situated Learning is illustrated.

Figure 20 *Situated Learning* (Egbert & Roe, 2019)



In the sections that follow, I will explore the study findings within the context of the TPACK Model, Situated Learning, and the study's theoretical framework.

The TPACK Model

Of particular relevance to the TPACK Model was the data that emerged as Themes 2 and 4, as these themes represented testimony from participants involving their pedagogical strategies and intent behind their employment of technologies for the purposes of delivering a successful online course. As discussed earlier, I initially handled participants' use of engagement and use of technology as separate themes, but, as reinforced by the TPACK Model, I found that these elements were, as Britzley-Etzkorn interpret, "not mutually exclusive domains" (2018, p. 29), and so led to Theme 2: Engagement and the Use of Technology as Barometers of Success. As observed in Chapter 3, a common characteristic of participant testimony was that no matter how they engaged with their online students or inspired engagement among online students with each other, it was dependent on some level of utilization of technology.

In order to create an accessible environment, one that was easy for students to engage with, participants described using Canvas module, pages, and content editor tools consistently. Their pedagogical knowledge helped them understand the standards for organized content, that there shouldn't be too much content forced on a single page, to avoid cognitive overload, and to rely on sequential ordering of content. Their technical knowledge of Canvas's tools enabled them to organize their course content according to these pedagogical insights. P1 described the nonexample:

> I've seen other folks' Canvas pages that, I know if I was looking at as a student I would be intimidated. You don't need to put everything in one module. It looks like you have thirty things to do for the week. It just, yeah, psychologically, it just looks like I'm never going to get through this.

P2 recognized a need to redesign their approach to class discussions after students expressed exhaustion with the asynchronous Canvas discussions. P2 was able to pivot to synchronous discussions in order to address students' needs, and P2 was able to do so because of their familiarity with Zoom and its breakout room functions.

Feedback was an element of the online student experience that P3 identified as one of the most important. Experimenting with different kinds of feedback, P3 found the commenting feature to be a good facilitator of back and forth interaction with students on their specific work submissions. P3's awareness of this tool enabled them to leverage one of their strengths as an online instructor.

In an example of not being equipped with adequate pedagogical or technological knowledge, P4 shared the story of having to watch a professor demonstrate Excel functions in Zoom during entire classes, or talk to the class in Zoom without a lesson or slides for visual

representation. In this case, a lack of co-engagement with technological knowledge and pedagogical knowledge left the P4 disengaged and frustrated.

Input from participants on the instructional content of the FDP itself also echoed concepts of the TPACK Model. Participants indicated a need for the FDP to serve the needs of learners with different levels of technology know-how. P1, for example, touched on the pedagogical concepts of online teaching and course design being easy to grasp, but difficult to employ without adequate technical knowledge. P1 explained:

> I think that might be what intimidates people the most because it's not hard to learn the pedagogy, you learn why you have to do certain things. And some of it is common sense...But people get intimidated by, well, I don't know if I'll be able to teach effectively, if I don't know how to use the technology myself.

However, the third major element of the TPACK Model, the content knowledge, remained an elusive component, as participants agreed that faculty need development opportunities and resources that address their specific subject or disciplines. P1 said, "[I]f you're teaching in the foreign languages, or you're teaching in engineering, or you're teaching history, psychology, it might be different. It might not be one-size-fits-all." In other words, and in line with TPACK Model theory, the nature of content impacts what the pedagogy might be and what the technology might be or how it is utilized. More research is required into these relationships and how they might impact faculty development in online teaching and course design.

Situated Learning

Themes 1 and 3 demonstrated the findings' alignments with the concepts of Situated Learning. Data from the interviews indicated the benefits of engaging with the course content and fellow faculty members as a community of learners in the same environment in which

participants would be teaching. Similarly, participants described further developing their online teaching and course design knowledge and skills by receiving feedback from students on their needs and course experiences and then applying that feedback to their online teaching and course design strategies.

The FDP's delivery in the same learning management system, Canvas, as where participants were teaching their own online courses allowed them to experience a collaborative learning environment that mirrored the one in which they would be applying what they learned. The FDP content instructed on methods of engagement that participants then collaborated on applying together in the FDP. This environment allowed participants to feel more comfortable and equipped to apply these pedagogical strategies and use the same technology in their own online classes. P1, for example, explained that seeing the utilization of Kaltura for engagement purposes in the FDP allowed them to see the benefit of the tool while also becoming more comfortable using it. P1 said, "[W]hen I started using it myself in that role as a student, I said, 'this is so much easier than anything else so I'll just do this as a professor.'" P1 also referred to their adoption of group work assignments as being a learning process that involved both understanding the strategies behind the assignments themselves and what technology to use. "[The FDP course] talked about different ways that you can do that and the different tools that are available, and I've come up with new assignments," P1 said.

Ease of navigation and access to course content was another strategy of engagement that participants were able to experience through the FDP course itself, which in turn provided a model for participants to use Canvas in their own online courses. P2 explained, "This was a really nice model of how to create a clean, clear progression of learning activities. I was able to take that and apply that in my work and got great feedback from students."

Participants also discussed the benefits of using Canvas discussions in order to engage with peers. Participants shared their experiences using different discussion tools and used the Canvas discussion tool to do so. P4, explained:

> I'm not very comfortable with technology and things of that nature, so you know, people were talking about Flipgrid and things like that incorporating all this different kind of media and technology. I didn't know how to do that. So it was interesting to learn about.

Similar to the FDP, but perhaps even more dramatically, the participants' own online classrooms were clearly very significant sources of guidance and instruction on how to teach online and design online courses successfully. The participants' own online courses became important venues for collaborative learning on effective teaching practices as participants solicited feedback from students and also applied teaching and design strategies based on student feedback as the courses progressed through the semester. Participants employed responsive and reactive approaches to facilitation of their online courses so they could make fast, informed revisions in real time and address student needs as they learned from their students' experiences. Unlike the FDP, this learning occurred specifically in the context of the participants' respective disciplines in which they taught their online courses.

This collaborative learning environment between teacher and student, one in which the teacher solicits feedback on the students' online learning experiences as they experience it and then revises their online teaching and course design, requires further research. There is potential to research this collaborative learning relationship in the context of faculty development.

Practical Implications

The findings of this study, while not generalizable because of the study's qualitative nature, have practical implications that could be useful to online instructors, online program

administrators, instructional designers, and other stakeholders in online learning, designing and/or delivering online programs, courses, online faculty resources, and online teaching practices. The findings suggested such considerations as effective venue for faculty development, content of faculty development, and online program delivery.

The Significance of the Learning Management System

Findings, especially those associated with Theme 1, suggest designing and delivering faculty development in online teaching and course design in the same learning management system (LMS) as faculty will be teaching their online courses. Participants noted that experiencing a course in the same LMS was instructive on many levels. Participants perceived a greater understanding of the online student experience in the LMS after being learners in the online faculty development course. Participants also noted increased comfort and know-how with the various tools in the LMS or integrated with the LMS.

Discipline-Specific Faculty Development

Participants expressed frustration over the "one-size-fits-all" approach adopted by the FDP and requested online teaching and course design instruction and resources that take into account the different considerations of different disciplines and modalities. For example, an online faculty development course for a STEM course would have different needs than a history course. P3 indicated that discussion assignments weren't as productive assessments as quizzes because of the nature of their course content. Quizzes allowed for them to engage in a back and forth with the instructor about their answers to specific quiz questions. Considering this, faculty development content that aims to provide interactive and engaging assessment opportunities for more objective content might be more helpful to similarly situated instructor. Conversely, P1 indicated that discussions are a major component of their course, a course in which students are

wrestling with historical contexts and socio-political issues. As such, faculty development that centers around assessments designed for discourse and presentation of conceptual content might be more helpful to an instructor similarly situated as P1.

This feedback aligns with instructional design principles that emphasize learning objectives or outcomes as the determining factors for course design choices with assessments and instruction. However, more research is needed into the specific needs of instructors based on their disciplines and how their needs differ across disciplines.

Student-Faculty Collaborative Online Teaching and Course Design

While participants themselves didn't request a student-faculty collaborative approach to online teaching and course design, it was clear from participant interview testimony that student feedback had crucial impacts on participants' design and instruction of their online courses, so much so that some participants would even apply such feedback during an online course's live delivery. Participants reported many perceived successes with this approach to their online teaching and course design. It's worth considering the possibility of online students having more input, perhaps even collaborative roles, in the design and delivery of online courses and programs.

Instruction on Artificial Intelligence

Participants expressed a growing concern for the need for instruction and guidance on Artificial Intelligence in general, especially in terms of designing courses that take students' potential usages of AI into account. One participant said they had redesigned assignments so that students are submitting recordings of themselves instead of text. This demonstrates the urgency for support materials, policies, or faculty development opportunities that address these issues, especially as AI becomes more accessible and useful in media beyond just text.

Policy Implications

The findings also had implications for policy makers in higher education and online education in terms of choices with program design and delivery. Concerns with the development of online courses by one faculty member that would then be handed off to another instructor to teach was a more urgent concern in terms of intellectual property, course content and academic freedom, and sustainability of the model in general. Such an approach to program development and delivery could be susceptible to conflict and frustration among faculty that would like to teach their own content or have concerns about faculty teaching courses that they designed. Policy makers should consider practices with management of course content and materials that take into account intellectual property rights and flexibility for faculty to choose course content that is both relevant and effective through the lens of the teaching faculty.

Findings also suggest a cohort-delivery to online courses results in greater satisfaction among learners because of the timely feedback and greater sense of community that develops among learners moving through course content at the same time and pacing.

Limitations

Limitations in this study were due to factors associated with the setting, lack of compensation for participant time, my researcher bias and positionality, and the lack of generalizability as result of the study's reliance on qualitative methods. The limitations I perceived are briefly detailed in the sections below.

Context and Setting

The context and setting of the study are entangled with my professional occupation as an instructional designer. My investment in online learning implies biases that I wrestle with regularly. For my part, I tried to combat these threats by creating a questions matrix for the

interviews and the focus group meeting. While I stuck to the matrix rather faithfully across all interviews and the focus group meeting, I also wanted to allow the discussions to be unstructured enough to venture into areas of the topic I had not anticipated or identified. If interviews veered into unanticipated areas that I felt were beneficial to the research, I would improvise a probing question to encourage participants' explorations. After each interview, I reflected on my researcher positionality in a turquoise Moleskin journal.

Lack of Compensation

Participants were not compensated for the time and energy they invested in this study. Because participants are busy faculty, with a number of service responsibilities to their institution, and other responsibilities, it's possible that participants weren't able to collaborate with me as much on this research as they would have liked. Incentives or compensation might have better empowered the participants to collaborate with me further on the research, which in turn could have led to more data and improved triangulation.

Researcher Bias

My roles as a student researcher, instructional design lead, and creative writing instructor have always led to some internal conflicts about what I truly value as an educator. These internal conflicts change in nature and ebb and flow in severity. I've always believed in the potential of online learning, just like I've always believed in the potential of face-to-face learning; in my mind, the quality of both is dependent on who's doing the teaching and who's supporting the teacher and student.

During the past six months as I engaged in data collection and analysis, I developed a new sort of cynicism with online learning, one in which I felt more and more that online learning was becoming another poaching ground for technology companies masquerading as members of

the educational community. However, this perceived threat doesn't seem limited to the realm of online learning, it actually seems like more of a threat to higher education in general as administrators become more and more desperate in their quest for the magic bullet. But a magic bullet is a thing and good education doesn't rely on *things* nearly as much as it relies on talented, empowered people. As I reflected on these feelings throughout my data analysis process, I reminded myself that this research is meant to serve those talented people, and so I kept my focus on that mission in the context of my research questions.

Generalizability

This is a qualitative methods study concerned with the specific experiences of five participants of an online faculty development course. Qualitative findings are not generalizable, but they can be considered by those in similar situations or positions for guidance and input.

Conclusion

Faculty development for online teaching is becoming more and more commonplace and standardized across higher education institutions. For some faculty exploring online teaching, online teaching and course design can be an intimidating venture, one that requires flexible delivery and instruction that can satisfy a wide range of ability and needs. Faculty learning to teach online need multiple inputs of guidance, support and instruction in order to design and facilitate successful online courses.

This research's findings suggest that faculty desire more pedagogical and technological support in online teaching; however, faculty also need to be better enabled to engage with this support and take advantage of it. Faculty development in online teaching and course design must also cater more to the objectives and assessments of specific disciplines. In that sense, it might be

appropriate for specific programs to work with faculty, instructional designers, and students to design a more tailored version of faculty development in online teaching and course design.

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Appendix A

A Summary of the FDP

Course Description
Offers instructors insights into understanding different aspects of online course management, instructor presence, communication with students, time/work management, and accessibility. The course is designed for faculty that will teach an online course that has already been built.
Course Objectives
• Create an inviting online community; • Create a communication & feedback plan for your online course; • Gain skills to improve your time management teaching online; • Manage discussions and student engagement in an online course; • Gain skills to manage group work and collaboration in their online course; • Describe effective strategies for discouraging plagiarism.
Modules Content
• Welcome Module: Course Overview, Meet Your Instructors, Technology Support and Course Tech Requirements, Philosophy of the Course (UDL Principles), Quick Tip (Having students set goals), Discussion Assignment (Introduce Yourself) • Module 1 "Establishing a Virtual Community": Online Presence and Instructor Roles, Community Building, Humanizing Your Course, Creating a Course Welcome Video, Discussion Assignment (Creating Social Presence), Learning Check Quiz, Assignment (Create a Welcome Video) • Module 2 "Creating Course Policy and Workflow": Establishing and Communicating Course Policies, The Importance of Feedback and Instructor Presence, Instructor Time Management, Discussion Assignment (Communication Online), Learning Check Quiz, Assignment (Submit a Syllabus) • Module 3 "Ensuring Engagement Throughout the Course": Engagement, Universal Design for Learning, The Dreaded Discussion Board, Student-Moderated Discussions, Discussion Assignment (Engagement in an Online Course), Learning Check Quiz • Module 4 "Mitigating the Challenges of Online Teaching and Learning": E-Learning, Hyflex, Group Work, Preventing Plagiarism and Cheating, Quick Tip (Peer Review Projects), Issues of Equity in Synchronous Sessions, Assessing Course Quality, Discussion Assignment: Challenges to Online Learning, Learning Check Quiz • Module "Course Conclusion": Concluding Thoughts, Course Evaluation, Resources for Further Learning
Certificate Requirements
Participants must achieve a final score of 80% or higher to be awarded a badge.
Facilitator
PMUU Online Instructional Designer

Appendix B

Methods Matrix

Research Question	**Initial One-On-One Meeting (30 minutes): Interview Questions**	**Follow-Up Focus Group Meeting (30 minutes): Interview Questions**	**Validity Threats**	**Plan for Addressing Validity Threats**	**Rationale for Validity Threats Plan**
R1: *How do faculty describe the skills and knowledge they acquired through the online faculty development course?*	How would you describe your experiences in the FDP Course? What have you tried in your own online course successfully? *Probe:* How would you describe the source of your success? What sort of new technology are you using now and how do you feel about using technology to teach? *Probe:* How might you be better prepared to use technology?	Since taking the FDP course, what problems have you faced designing or teaching your own online course? *Probe:* What do you feel might have equipped you to prevent those problems? What components of the FDP course weren't helpful to your teaching? *Probe:* How might the course better meet your needs?	The second question here could be interpreted as an either love it or hate it kind of question. This could prevent our exploration of the different layers and complexities surrounding the preferences for online versus face-to-face.	It might be helpful to add some context for the question by addressing the complexities through some introductory language. However, it will be important that this doesn't just become a form of coaching. Perhaps, depending on participants' responses, a probe that encourages them to dig deeper into their response.	There are a lot of preconceived notions about these kinds of issues that can lead to an oversimplification, a sort of unwillingness to consider the alternative. It will be important to encourage deeper thinking without coming across as disagreeing.
R2: *In what ways do the acquired skills and knowledge influence how faculty designed and taught online courses?*	What sort of learning activities did you end up using for your own online course? *Probe:* How would you describe your experience facilitating these learning activities? *Probe:*How would you describe your student's experiences with the learning activities? How do you feel about the communication practices between you and your online students? Describe some of the successes you think you've had in your online course.	How has your online course changed since taking the FDP course? *Probe:* What do you feel contributed to those changes? What changes didn't end up working out for you? Describe any challenges you think you've had in creating your new online course. *Probe:* What do you feel contributed to those challenges? How do you feel you have overcome those challenges?	Because the interview partly centers around critical feedback, there might be some initial discomfort that prevents full disclosures and expression of opinions on the issues as we begin the session.	Set the tone and assure the participant that as a longtime workshopper and professional instructional designer, I value and thrive off of honest critical feedback and that honest feedback is crucial to impactful data gathering.	Establishing a comfortable atmosphere is going to be crucial. In some ways, this is personality driven. Relying on established relationships dynamics will help remind participants of our established trust and history of straightforward communication.

	Probe: What do you feel led to those successes?				
R3: *How do faculty define a successful online course?*	Define good online teaching. Define good online course design? Describe how a successful online course is designed.	Describe how a successful online course is designed. Describe how a successful online course is taught.	The participant might not understand the significance between teaching online and designing for online.	I might have to explain the significance. It will be important to keep it basic and not coach.	.
R3a: *How do faculty define an unsuccessful online course?*	Explain what makes an online course unsuccessful.	Describe the sort of teaching that leads to an unsuccessful online course. Describe what sort of course design choices lead to an unsuccessful online course.	The participant might feel uncomfortable discussing failures in the classroom.	Introduce the question in a hypothetical context. Do not require or influence participants to discuss their own specific experience. Allow the participant to explore the questions on their own and see where they go.	

R4: *How do faculty describe their needs for pedagogical instruction versus their needs for technological instruction in order to teach online successfully?*	Explain any remaining needs for more technology instruction in order to design and teach online successfully. Explain any remaining needs for more pedagogical instruction in order to design and teach online successfully.	What course design strategies do you feel technologically unequipped to try in your own online course? *Probe:* How might you be better equipped?			

Appendix C

RESEARCH PARTICIPANT INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM

STUDY TITLE: Exploring the Experiences and Outcomes of Faculty Learning To Teach Online

PMUU STUDENT INVESTIGATOR: Peyton Burgess

PMUU PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Dr. Robin Hurst, Associate Professor

ABOUT THIS CONSENT FORM

You are being invited to participate in a research study. **It is important that you carefully think about whether being in this study is right for you and your situation.**

This consent form is meant to assist you in thinking about whether or not you want to be in this study. **Please ask the student investigator to explain any information in this consent document that is not clear to you.** You may take home an unsigned copy of this consent form to think about or discuss with family or friends before making your decision.

Your participation is voluntary. You may decide not to participate in this study. If you do participate, you may withdraw from the study at any time. Your decision not to take part or to withdraw will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY AND KEY INFORMATION

Through the exploration of existing literature on faculty development for online teaching and interviews and focus groups with participants of a faculty development program for online teaching at a large public university, this study will explore what characteristics of such a program might have positive impacts on faculty's online teaching and, consequently, their students' experiences. Participants will take part in one individual interview that will last approximately 45 minutes and take place via zoom or in person depending on participant preference. All participants will then take part in one focus group meeting via Zoom and lasting approximately 1 hour. It is also my hope that in relying on qualitative methods and developing collaborative relationships with the participants through multiple interviews, the participants will be comfortable enough to share and discuss their own online course syllabi and course materials so we can further explore how participants perceive the impact of their application of the FDP program's teachings on their own online teaching and course design.

What will happen if I participate?

Your participation in this study will last up to 1 hour during two separate interview sessions via Zoom. Approximately 5 individuals will participate in this study.

WHAT RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS COULD I EXPERIENCE FROM BEING IN THE STUDY?

Some of the questions in this study will address issues of critical feedback, which may feel uncomfortable to address. You are allowed to refuse to answer any questions.

HOW WILL INFORMATION ABOUT ME BE PROTECTED

PMUU and the PMUU Health System have established secure research databases and computer systems to store information and to help with monitoring and oversight of research. Your information will be kept in password-protected Google Folders managed by the student investigator. These folders are only accessible to student investigator and principal investigator working on this study.

Identifiable information in these databases are not released outside PMUU unless stated in this consent or required by law. Although results of this research may be presented at meetings or in publications, identifiable personal information about participants will not be disclosed.

Personal information about you might be shared with or copied by authorized representatives from the following organizations for the purposes of managing, monitoring and overseeing this study:

Peyton Burgess, student investigator
Dr. Robin Hurst, principal investigator

Your data/samples will be protected in password protected Google Folders, but there is always a possibility that information could be accessed by individuals without authorization. There is no limit on the length of time we will store your information/samples.

WHOM SHOULD I CONTACT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE STUDY?

The investigator and study staff named below are the <u>best</u> person(s) to contact if you have any questions, complaints, or concerns about your participation in this research:

Peyton Burgess, contact info redacted

If you have general questions about your rights as a participant in this or any other research, or if you wish to discuss problems, concerns or questions, to obtain information, or to offer input about research, you may contact]

Do not sign this consent form unless you have had a chance to ask questions and have received satisfactory answers to all of your questions.

STATEMENT OF CONSENT

I have been provided with an opportunity to read this consent form carefully. All of the questions that I wish to raise concerning this study have been answered. By signing this consent form, I have not waived any of the legal rights or benefits to which I otherwise would be entitled. My signature indicates that I freely consent to participate in this research study. I will receive a copy of the consent form for my records.

_____

Adult Participant Name (Printed)

_____ _____

Adult Participant's Signature Date

_____ _____

Principal Investigator Signature Date