

Improving Learning and Reducing Costs: New Models for Online Learning: EDUCAUSE review September/October 2003

This article by Carol A. Twigg, the Director of the Center for Academic Transformation, is an overview of 30 redesign projects funded by a 8.8 million grant from the Pew Charitable Trust managed by the Center. It describes six characteristics of the various redesign projects. These include the incorporation of computer-based learning resources, use of alternate staffing such as faculty, peer tutors, and on-line help and the targeting of multi-section large enrollment introductory courses. It also divides the projects into five course redesign models which vary in the amount of face-to-face faculty to student activities. The continuum ranges from the addition of out-of-class computer learning activities (supplemental model), to replacement of some class-meeting time with online, interactive activities (replacement model) to fully online classes. Two additional models were the emporium and the buffet model. These both provide students with alternate learning formats and more individual learning plans. However whereas the emporium model replaces in-class meetings with “learning resource center” on campus the buffet model offers students different pathways to meet course objectives.

The implication for instructional redesign at LCC is that two of the principles adopted by the instructional redesign taskforce were examined. All projects assessed learning outcomes and did a cost analysis (conclusion provided but not the actual data). Twenty of the thirty projects improved student learning while ten reported no change. The average cost saving was 40%. The article does not directly mention assessment of the quality of faculty work but does reference rearranging faculty work. It concludes that higher education needs to move from “individualized faculty practice to individualized student learning and standardized faculty practice”.