

Use Content that Fits and Works in the e-Learning Environment

Imagine walking into a traditional classroom and being handed 16-weeks' worth of PowerPoint presentations (created by the textbook publisher), 16 pages of bulleted text for each chapter (also created by the publisher), and 18 sealed envelopes that contain the course exams. The teacher then walks out of the room. This is how some faculty want to teach online, but this does not make an online course.

Content must be designed to the audience. It must meet their learning preferences and andragogical needs. This means text-based, with meaningful graphics and images supporting the text message, audio lectures, video lecture, support video, interactive presentations, and consistent course structure, and coupled with instructor interaction and engagement.



Figure 1. Content goes well beyond the written word. Today, it involves multimedia, instructor to student interactions, social interaction, blogs, wikis, and more.

Consider this. Fifteen years ago, faculty were concerned about being replaced by their online courses. Content that involved “their experience and expertise” as subject matter experts was critical to their debate. Instructional designers struggle in each course to get the instructor’s voice. If all we need is publisher materials and readings from the text, why do we need you? Answer: You are the subject matter expert and you bring the content to life and ensure the response to the content meets the course objectives. **YOU TEACH. YOU GUIDE. YOU FACILITATE.**

Find the content or develop the content that meets the department learning outcomes, mix it up (variation), be engaged (presence) with it, and be interactive with the student’s application of it. You are the teacher, guide, and facilitator.