

ASQ Section 1401 Greater El Paso

January 2021 General Meeting

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(Online) Education @UTEP: We've taken the pandemic leap, where do we land?

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Pre- Pandemic Instructional Foundation

- Center for Instructional Design
 - Teaching Online Academy
 - Teaching Hybrid Academy
- UTEP Connect's fully online degree programs
- Technology Support/Blackboard Central
 - Blackboard Institute

March 2020

- Monitoring the Johns Hopkins COVID-19 webmap
 - Creating phased plans for leaving campus
- Delayed Spring Break an additional week
- Pulled together various teams to:
 - Support faculty transition to remote teaching
 - Inform students of what to expect

Institutional Challenges

- Not all colleges are engaged in online programs or regular delivery of online courses.
- Online courses largely scheduled based on preference of instructor.
- Faculty without preparation for or experience with teaching online and/or without having used the learning management system.
- *Institutional culture did not promote student-center strategic course delivery or pedagogical attentiveness.*



Chaos in the transition

- How to ensure a somewhat consistent **student experience**
RESPONSES
 - Wrote basic tutorials when questions arose
 - Developed extensive guidelines
 - Created a course template
- How to **communicate** with students who weren't in the same room
RESPONSES
 - Accessibility
 - Provided technology resources
 - Emphasized asynchronous delivery and then a mix of synchronous and asynchronous
 - Organization
 - Provided language that could be copied and pasted into messages
- How to teach in ways that created **meaningful interactions**
RESPONSES
 - Provided a variety of workshops, webinars
 - Drew on experienced faculty



Good in the chaos

- Everyone was talking about teaching
- Pushed many out of their comfort zone
- Opportunity to experience working and learning in different ways
- Emergent leaders

Where will we
land?

What forms of
higher education
are possible
now?

1. We look exactly like we did before March 2020.
2. We return to pre-pandemic practices and add a few tweaks here and there based on what faculty learned and liked.
3. We take a systematic approach to evaluating what we have learned and take advantage of this singular opportunity to truly improve higher education.

How do we achieve this?



Focus on learner

- Courses need to be designed to meet clearly articulated learning objectives and each student should have the opportunity to attain a high degree of understanding and meet those learning objectives.
- Teaching methods need to be updated.
 - Avoid park and bark: If students can fold laundry at the same time, shouldn't be live.



Feedback from students

- Programs and individual faculty should collect feedback periodically to gauge quality of course and levels of learning.
- Feedback should be thoughtfully considered, and courses should be adapted as possible so that learning goals are achieved.



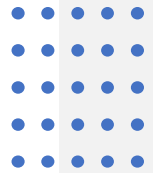
Agile delivery

- Courses should be delivered in the ways that serve students best: on-campus or at the work site, in-person or online, live or self-paced, in small groups or with large organizations, short or day-long sessions.
- Campus leaders should identify an ideal mix that considers innovation, flexible pathways, and balance.



Responsive curriculum and partnerships

- Academic programs should “read the reports” about industry and community needs as well as actively seek input from the community on what’s trending and what has become less relevant.
- Universities should develop stronger partnerships outside the university to co-educate students.



Infrastructure based on support for students & faculty

- Campuses should provide resources that students and faculty need to be successful.
- Communication must be clear and frequent with instructions on next steps.



Prediction: Mild disruptions

- Online programs may grow, particularly at the graduate level
 - Some predict more competition in the online program area, but my team predicts that competition may take 5+ years to materialize. Putting a course online is not the same as putting a program online.
- UTEP Students will want more online options, but they will still want an on-campus experience. Other campuses with a strong residential experience will return to “relative normal.” Must be strategic and intentional.
- Student support services will improve with more options for serving students remotely.

Successful Mild Disruption Requires

- **Leadership:** purposeful stated direction at all levels
- **Collaboration & flexibility:** conversations and adaptations
- **Continuity & predictability:** for students and faculty
- **Resources:** time, expertise, infrastructure