

Class 1 - An Overview of K to 12 Online Teaching

iNACOL

1. Who is iNacol and what do the letters stand for? <http://www.inacol.org/>
 - iNacol is the International Association for K-12 Online Learning, an association devoted to organizing research, dialogue, and theories in the online learning community.
 - The letters originally stood for North American Council for Online Learning.
2. When was iNacol formed and why? <http://www.inacol.org/about/our-story/>
 - iNacol was formed in 2003 after the National School Board Association called for some organization of national online programs.
 - As separate programs were being formed across the nation, there was a need to share information and innovations to assist in making online education a better experience.
3. What is the mission of this organization? <http://www.inacol.org/our-work/>
 - The mission of iNacol is to “catalyze the transformation of K-12 education policy and practice to advance powerful, personalized, learner-centered experiences through competency-based, blended and online learning.” In other words, the organization exists to bring about informed shifts in education regarding online learning while focusing on students as individual learners.
4. What is competency-based learning?
<http://www.competencyworks.org/about/competency-education/>
 - Competency-based learning is a self-paced learning environment focused on mastery. The goal is to achieve the standards and skills outlined by the Common Core.

Distance Education Terminology

http://www.inacol.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/iNACOL_DefinitionsProject.pdf

1. Asynchronous Learning - Learning which takes place independent of a set meeting time.
2. Blended Learning (also used synonymously with the term "Hybrid Learning") - Learning which takes place partially in a physical classroom and partially in an online learning environment.
3. Brick and Mortar Schools - Physical buildings used for learning.
4. Course Management System (CMS) (also used synonymously with Learning Management System (LMS)) - An online system that supports classrooms in which students can take quizzes, submit assignments, and have discussions. Instructors can monitor and grade assignments as well as communicate with students.
5. Distance Education - Education that can support learning despite differences in physical distance and time.
6. Face-to-Face - When people meet in person.
7. Online Learning - Umbrella term for learning that takes place using the Internet.
8. Synchronous Learning - Learning which takes place dependent on a set meeting time.

Chapter 1: “History of Online and Blended Instruction in the United States”

<http://press.etc.cmu.edu/content/handbook-research-k-12-online-and-blended-learning-0>

1. Introduction

- Supplemental Online Classes
 - Supplemental online courses are classes that are offered in addition to regular schooling. They may be offered as professional development, remedial work, or an alternative course. While some states, including Florida, have become clear leaders in supplemental online classes, this form of online learning has become less popular over the last decade. The reasons for such a decrease typically include defunding of the state programs. In any case, supplemental online classes are highly regulated by state governments.
- Full-time Online School
 - Cyber schools offer a comprehensive education completely online. Pennsylvania has one of the largest online school enrollment in the country. State funding has been an issue with these private online charter schools, especially in regards to which district should receive a student’s funds. Because of this issue, cyber schools are highly regulated with enrollment caps and disbursement of funds. Online schools are also subject to state testing, which must be completed under observation.
- District-led Programs
 - District-led programs are a variety of programs that are used by individual school districts. The programs include supplemental, fully online, and blended learning programs. Because there are no mandated data collections for such programs, data is difficult to gain and interpret. However, the general theory is that the number of district-led programs is growing. These programs are often developed to compete with funding given to charter schools and to provide a range of options for students to individualize their education.
- Blended learning and fully blended schools
 - Hybrid schools are often charter schools. These schools either developed from fully-online or traditional schools to incorporate both face-to-face and online learning. Some of these schools may use online learning management systems in addition to traditional schools, but some schools operate without bell-schedules and full school days. Data collection is sometimes difficult for these schools depending on how they are run. Despite this, there is evidence that many schools are moving to some level of blended learning.

2. Key Policy Issues

- Online course requirements
 - Educational policy has been impacted by the prevalence of online learning. Some states are implementing a mandatory online class completion as a graduation requirement, possibly because of the increase

of online environments and technology proficiency in colleges and the workforce. States that have these requirements include Alabama, Florida, Michigan, and Virginia. Other states are beginning to launch similar requirements. These programs are often launched in stages instead of at once.

- Student achievement
 - Data is looked at for records and proof of student achievement in online schools. Achievement is assessed according to student outcomes and teacher proficiency. Just like traditional schools, there are positive and negative outcomes for student achievement. The main focus of research is being shifted towards contextualizing student achievement data instead of analyzing the data in isolation. Despite some failures, online schooling has been shown to do as well or better than traditional schools.
- Findings
 - When looking at the context of data, several factors can be analyzed. Students that may not complete high school graduation could use online learning as an alternative to obtaining a high school diploma. Teacher training can be looked at in relation to post-secondary, traditional grade school, and online grade school skills. Professional development can also increase teacher skills, particularly in the area of community building. Another finding states that data collection needs to be improved for online schools.
- Funding
 - Funding has been organized in several ways. Many of these methods include some level of public money where some or all of student funds follow the student instead of only to the district of residence. Calculating percentages can be done by course enrollment or by course achievement. Both of these methods are fairly new and can be further broken down using several methods. Funding goes towards operation of online school, software licenses, and staff compensation.

3. Conclusion

- Most online programs are moving from state-level to district-level due to a lack of funding on the state-level. With moneys now remaining within districts, schools are also organizing consortiums across districts to share knowledge and expertise in online learning. Online education is also being seen as a point of access for students with disabilities. The Common Core standards are also pushing for more common knowledge that influences programs. Free and paid resources are being developed that can be used almost anywhere as consortiums grow.

Infographic - "A Brief History of Online Learnig"

<http://www.straighterline.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/OnlineLearningInfographic2.jpg>

1. Written

- The first distance education is set in 1728. An organization in Boston used the postal service for education. In 1840, people in Great Britain could learn shorthand by using the postal service.
2. Radio
 - In 1922, Penn State utilized radio for students to take courses. Radio broadcasting licenses then expanded to over 200 post-secondary institutions by 1925. Distance education was adapted again when the telephone spread across the country. The University of Wisconsin began offering a statewide education program in 1965 using the telephone.
 3. Television
 - The radio and phone education programs were then joined by the television. In 1968, Stanford University developed a part-time program for engineering students. This era also included the creation of the ARPANET and the launch of deschooling theory, which included using computers for education.
 4. Online
 - As the Internet and computer technology developed, different programs and software were invented for education. Flexible options for adults was the focus in the late 70's and early 80's. The 90's brought the popularization of the Internet and soon came the first online schools.
 5. Modern
 - Set at 1995, online learning saw a dramatic increase in popularity. Coalitions and consortiums were formed. The turn of the century saw the development of online learning tools and systems. By 2003, most post-secondary schools had some online presence for their courses. With the rise in online courses, businesses and other organizations recognized the validity of the courses, and research backed this premise with data.