
Team-based Online Course Development: A Case Study of Collaboration Models

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Abstract

It is generally accepted that teaching online is a different experience than teaching face-to-face, requiring new skills and techniques. To address some of the unique challenges related to teaching in the online environment, many institutions of higher education utilize a collaborative team-based approach to online course development bringing together faculty and a variety of instructional support staff. The purpose of this paper is to provide an overview of collaborative approaches to online course development and elaborate on one such program. The intended collaboration model for that program will be compared to the actual collaboration models of four teams participating in the program. The benefits and limitations of the modified collaboration models will be discussed in relation to the flexibility of the program and participants, ownership of the process, and communication among team members.

Collaboration Models for Online Course Development

As online courses and academic programs are becoming more commonplace at traditional higher education institutions, a growing number of faculty are being asked (or are asking) to teach online. It is generally accepted that teaching online is a different experience than teaching face-to-face, requiring new skills and techniques. Research suggests that faculty may struggle with learning the necessary technology skills (e.g., Giannoni & Tesone, 2003; Institute for Higher Education Policy, 2000; National Education Association, 2000), adapting their pedagogic strategies for the online environment (e.g., Palloff & Pratt, 2001; White, 2000; Wolf, 2003), adjusting to the more learner-centered focus inherent in online courses (e.g., Jolliffe, Ritter, & Stevens, 2001; Palloff & Praff, 2001; Shearer, 2003), conceptualizing their course for the new environment (e.g. Kang, 2001), and finding the increased time required to develop their online course (e.g., Bonk, 2001; National Education Association, 2000). To address these unique challenges related to teaching in the online environment, many institutions utilize a collaborative team-based approach to online course development bringing together faculty and a variety of instructional support staff.

Caplan (2004) argues that, "Online course development is a complex endeavor, and it is not reasonable to believe that a high caliber online course of instruction can be created by just one or two people. Quality courseware production requires a highly organized, concerted effort from many players" (p. 186). Ellis and Phelps (2000) emphasize that "Online delivery challenges

traditional notions of academics working in isolation and instead brings together teams of people each with unique skills, into a course design and development team” (p. 1). Kearsley (2000) adds, “Although it is possible for individual teachers to create entire courses on their own, this requires a tremendous time investment and willingness to learn about many aspects of instructional design and software implementation. Most faculty would prefer to focus on the content aspects of a course and leave the rest to others” (p. 99).

Although team-based course development is commonplace at single-mode institutions focusing exclusively on online education such as the Open University, faculty at dual-mode (i.e., traditional) institutions have traditionally had the freedom and responsibility to design and develop courses autonomously. Thus, participating in collaborative course development is a significant departure from how many faculty members approach course design and development. Nonetheless, collaborative approaches to online course development have been implemented at many traditional (dual-mode) institutions and have been documented in numerous descriptive reports (e.g., Care & Scanlan, 2001; Chapman & Nicolet, 2003; Ellis & Phelps, 2000; Hartman, Dziuban, & Moskal, 2000; Hawkes & Coldeway, 2002; Luck, 2001; Meyen, Tangen, & Lian, 1999; Plummer, Nichols, & Nelson, 2001; Smith & Gunderson, 2000; Stevens, Dobrovolny, Kent, & Shulman, 2001; White, 2000; Youngman, Gotcher, Vafa, Dinsmore, & Gouher, 2000). Some of these collaborative approaches will be explained in more detail below.

Collaborative Approaches to Online Course Development

The program being examined in the current study was modeled after an award-winning faculty development program at the University of Central Florida. Taking the form of a non-credit course for faculty entitled, *Interactive Distributed Learning for Technology-Mediated Course Delivery*, the program "models how to teach online using a combination of seminars, labs, consultations, and web-based instruction" (University of Central Florida, 2004). Like the program described in this study, the program at University of Central Florida utilizes a cohort-based approach and brings together a range of support staff including assessment experts, instructional designers, digital media designers, librarians, software engineers, and programmers. Faculty members participate in the course as students, allowing them to experience the online environment from the student's perspective. Other faculty who have previously participated in the program and have experience teaching online give presentations and share their experience with the faculty members enrolled in the course. While working with the various support staff members, faculty members develop their online course as their “homework” for the course (Hartman, Dziuban, & Moskal, 2000).

Among the collaborative approaches described in the literature, the project approach detailed by Chapman and Nicolet (2003) also resembles the approach used in the program being examined in the current study. They describe a project approach to online course development that “employs such tools as project charters, module templates, and a structured progress reporting system” (p. 1). In this model, a project leader coordinates the efforts of an instructional development team that should include at least the following roles: project leader, faculty member, instructional designer, graphic designer, and multimedia specialist. A project charter is created to identify the goals and objectives for the project, clarify team member's roles, and outline the project's timeline. Status reports are then issued regularly by the project leader and sent to all stakeholders. Course development

templates and documented processes and procedures provide consistency throughout the course development process and allow team members to complete tasks efficiently and effectively. Chapman and Nicolet argue that a more structured approach can “leverage instructional technology expertise while providing faculty with appropriate assistance and collaboration in developing their courses” (p. 1).

In another study focused on the development of distance learning courses, Care and Scanlan (2001) interviewed a sample of faculty, support staff and administrators at an institution to gain an understanding of how courses are developed. Based on these interviews, they identified two administrative/collaboration models for course development: 1) the parallel-linear model, and 2) the interdisciplinary team model. The parallel-linear model (see Figure 1), “included two parallel structures working simultaneously” (p. 5). The authors note that “although this model provided the opportunity for frequent exchanges among the participants, the interaction was limited to any two individuals meeting together at one time” (p. 5). Because all participants in this model did not come together to discuss the development of the course, Care and Scanlon suggest that this model is inadequate. The authors argue that the interdisciplinary team model, where the team met on a regular basis and learned from one another, is a more successful approach to course development. “The strength of this model was that team members learned from one another, broadened their knowledge base, and appreciated the strengths which the other members brought to the table” (p. 6).

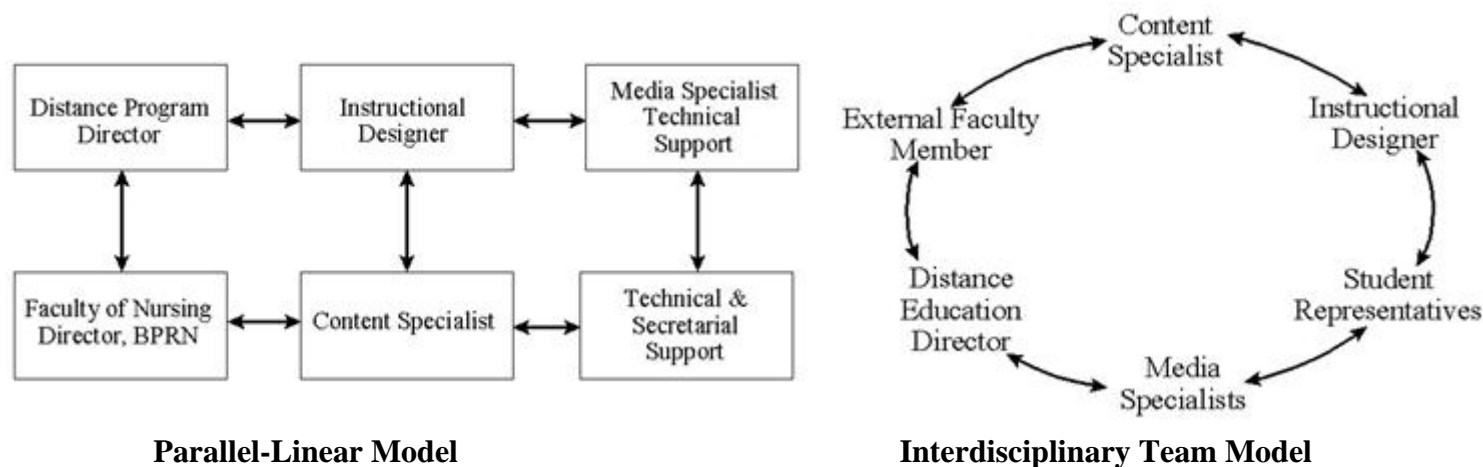


Figure 1: Collaboration models for collaborative course development

Care, W. D., & Scanlan, J. M. (2001). Planning and managing the development of courses for distance delivery: Results from a qualitative study. *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*, 4(2). Retrieved August 4, 2003, from <http://westga.edu/~distance/ojdl/summer42/care42.html>

Although specific roles in collaborative approaches vary, they can be grouped into five general categories: (1) project management, (2) subject matter expert/author, (3) instructional design, (4) technical support/production, and (5) other. Table 1 provides a listing of specific roles that are reported in various descriptions of collaborative course development. Interestingly, most reports do not mention the involvement of library/information resource specialists; however, their participation can be a key in making the necessary resources available to both faculty and students (Institute for Higher Education Policy, 2000; Riedel, 2002). It is also possible that other individuals (such as library specialists) are being consulted on projects, but are not considered part of the course development team.

Table 1

Team Member Roles in Collaborative Online Course Development

	Caplan (2004)	Chapman & Nicolet (2003)	Hartman, et al. (2000)	Luck (2001)	White (2000)	Youngman, et al. (2000)
<i>Project Management</i>	project manager	project leader	(not specified)	lead instructional designer	(not specified)	(instructional designer)
<i>Instructional Design</i>	instructional designer	instructional designer	instructional designers assessment experts	instructional designer instructional materials designer	instructional designer curriculum specialist	instructional designer
<i>Subject Matter Expert</i>	faculty member	faculty member	faculty member	faculty/course author	instructor	subject matter expert
<i>Technology Support/ Production</i>	IT expert HTML coder media developer graphic designer	graphic designer multimedia specialist	digital media designers software engineers programmers	technology specialist production specialist graphic designer	Web specialist (multimedia) HTML specialist educational technology	graphic designer instructional programmer media specialist web

					facilitator	developer
<i>Other</i>	copy editor		librarians		Web services librarian	
	administrative assistant					

It is not uncommon for team members to play multiple roles (Caplan, 2004; Xu & Morris, 2007). It is, however, critically important that all team members be clear on what their role(s) are, and have an understanding of the responsibilities and expectations for other team members (White, 2000). An instructional designer often serves as the project manager (e.g., Caplan, 2004; Luck, 2001; Youngman, et al., 2000) which typically requires additional responsibilities outside the realm of instructional design. Byun, Hallet, and Essex (2000) believe the faculty developer (i.e., instructional designer) should be responsible for organizing the course development process, including creating a realistic timeline and managing project teams. The faculty developer must also ensure that frequent and clear communication is happening between members of the project team and that everyone is kept up-to-date on the project's progress. There must also be appropriate collaboration between the instructor and others involved in the project, ensuring that the "instructor's teaching style, course goals, instructional objectives, and particular wishes [are driving] the development process, rather than making technology choices first and then trying to fit instructional strategies into these" (p. 58). Finally, since this may be a new venture for many instructors, the faculty development specialist should provide the instructor with opportunities to interact with other distance educators to alleviate any possible feelings of isolation.

Beyond the more administrative duties instructional designers often take on, they must also work closely with faculty to facilitate the design of activities and materials that are appropriate for the online environment. Chapman (2004) identifies several responsibilities of the instructional designer, including: "helps make the [faculty] aware of appropriate pedagogical strategies and options; helps to determine, create, and adapt instructional resources; provides advice on how best to present information" (p. 188). Instructional designers may also assist faculty in writing course objectives, sequencing learning activities, and obtaining copyright permissions (Chapman, 2004). White (2000) adds that "the collaborative relationship between the instructor and instructional designer provides a peer-mentorship role, fulfilling the need for just-in-time instructional development" (p. 59). Xu and Morris (2007) summarize the role of the project coordinator/instructional designer as including a managerial aspect (project manager), a social aspect (group facilitator), and a curricular aspect (instructional design expert).

The subject matter expert and course author is typically a faculty member who is well versed in the content being taught in the online course. With the additional support, "faculty are able to concentrate on course content and the design of learning activities and assessment" (Luck, 2001, p. 1). Although instructional designers will assist with issues of online pedagogy, Chapman (2004) adds that faculty must be responsible for "ensuring a pedagogical 'match' among the course objectives, content, exercises, examinations, and assignments" (p. 188).

A number of technology and support personnel may also be involved in collaborative course development teams. While it is

likely that media specialists and web developers will be creating multimedia and web elements, faculty may still need to develop some technical skills in order to implement and maintain the course. Meyen and his colleagues (1999) identify two possible instructional/technical development models. In the self-contained model, technical development and technical support are both provided by the same organization and are likely done “in-house.” An alternative model involves the organization consulting with an external organization and obtaining technical development from an outside source. Meyen and his colleagues (1999) emphasize that team members responsible for instructional aspects of the course must find a way to effectively communicate with those responsible for technical aspects, and develop a working relationship grounded in shared values.

Collaborative approaches to the development of online courses involve several individuals (see Table 1) working together toward a common goal. While some of the roles on these teams are consistent across programs, the way these individuals collaborate varies extensively. The study reported here seeks to examine collaboration patterns among team members in a specific collaborative online program and examine the benefits and limitations of various collaboration models.

Overview of Research Design

To better understand a specific collaborative online course development program and document the collaboration models that were used by faculty as they developed an online course as part of a collaborative team, four faculty members and their teams who were participating in such a program were followed closely throughout the course development process. Data was also collected from other faculty and staff participants in order to elaborate on the faculty case studies and draw conclusions regarding the factors that impact the faculty experience in the collaborative online course development process.

A variety of data gathering techniques were employed including interviews, focus groups, observations, document analysis, questionnaires, and inventories. The four faculty members who were the focus of the case studies were interviewed twice, participated in a focus group session, and were observed during the initial week of the program and at other meetings throughout the program. All faculty participants were also asked to complete two questionnaires (one focused on their teaching philosophy and another focused on their experience in the program) and two inventories (Kolb’s Learning Style Inventory and Grasha’s Teaching Style Inventory). The variety of data collected was analyzed using the constant comparative method of qualitative data analysis to identify and refine categories of interest.

Context for the Study

The Jump Start Program

The faculty participating in this study were participants in Jump Start, a cohort-based program designed to offer instructional design and production support to faculty as they develop an online or hybrid course. Interested faculty must apply to the program and, if selected, faculty are expected to work in collaboration with a variety of support and production staff to fully develop an online course by the end of the program. Faculty in the summer cohort (participants of the research study) were given 67 days to

complete the development of their online course and received a \$5,000 stipend for completing the program.

The program itself got off to a quick start with a four-day intensive workshop that gives the program its name of Jump Start. The goal of Jump Start week is for faculty members to design (or re-design) their course, select one module or section to work on as a prototype, and develop all necessary content for that prototype module by the end of the fourth day. Faculty must also develop a work plan and set deadlines for the completion of their course within the allotted 67 days.

During these four days, much time was set aside for faculty members to work with their course development team. Each faculty member was assigned a staff member representing each of the following five roles:

1. an instructional designer (provides pedagogical support and guidance, and also plays the role of project manager)
2. an instructional technologist (helps determine possible technology options to support project objectives)
3. an information resource consultant (assists in locating and incorporating library and other resources)
4. a digital media services consultant (produces technical elements according to faculty specifications)
5. a copyright consultant (assists in obtaining copyright permissions and addresses intellectual property issues)

During the initial Jump Start week, various members of a faculty member's course development team met during allotted times. From the beginning, the instructional designer on each team served as the project manager and attempted to be at as many team meetings as possible. Nevertheless, since most staff members were assigned to multiple teams, there were often times when a faculty member was working with other team members in the absence of the instructional designer. The course development teams "jumped" right in and began working on the prototype module, which had to be designed by the end of the four-day workshop. During Jump Start week, each course development team also created a work plan and timeline for the remainder of the project.

During the first week, the teams worked together intensely, with the faculty member communicating directly with any and all team members. These intense collaborative opportunities are consistent with the interdisciplinary team model put forth by Care and Scanlon (2001). After the first week however, a new collaboration pattern should develop, with the instructional designer serving as the faculty member's direct point of contact for other team members (see Figure 2 below). This new model involves far less whole team collaboration and more dyadic communication. While it still has some elements of Care and Scanlon's (2001) interdisciplinary team model, it is much closer to their parallel-linear model where individuals are working independently and communicating through a single individual (in this case, the instructional designer) when necessary.

For some teams, the collaboration model depicted in Figure 2 was followed for the most part, however, many teams frequently deviated from the model, as is discussed below. Ultimately, it was the instructional designer's responsibility to keep all team members "in the loop" and manage the course development process.

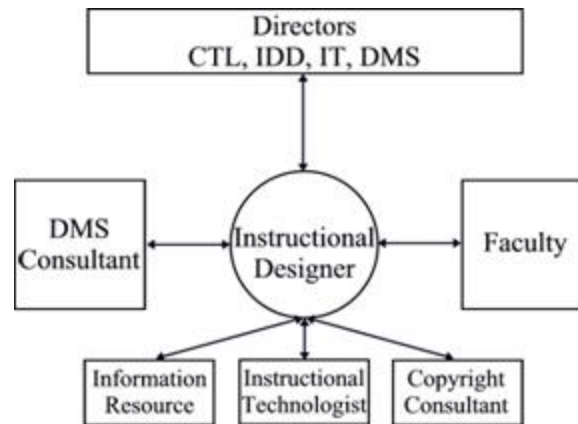


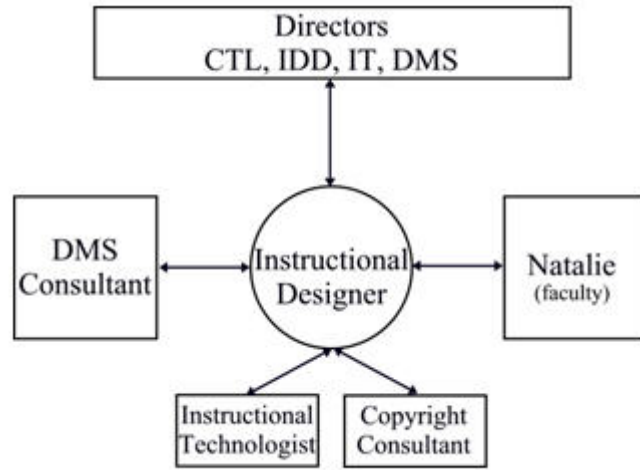
Figure 2. Collaboration model for Jump Start program.

(CTL=Center for Teaching and Learning, IDD=Instructional Design and Development, IT=Instructional Technology, DMS=Digital Media Services)

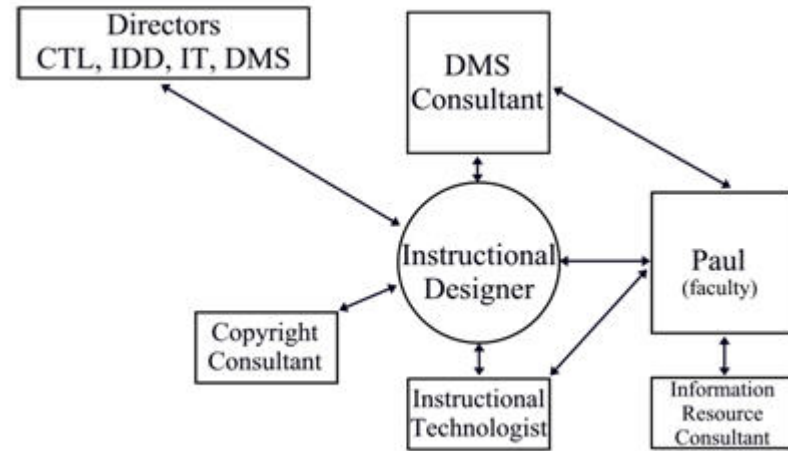
Findings & Discussion

The Collaboration Models

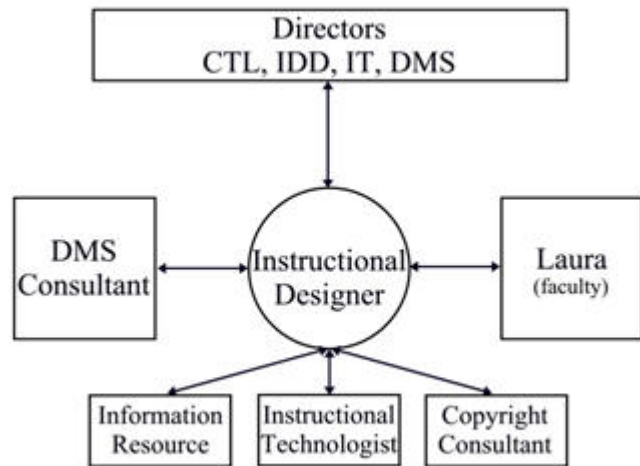
As stated above, four faculty members participating in the Jump Start program and their teams were followed closely through the course development process. Each team's collaboration patterns were tracked and mapped to create a visual depiction of each team's actual collaboration model (See Figure 3).



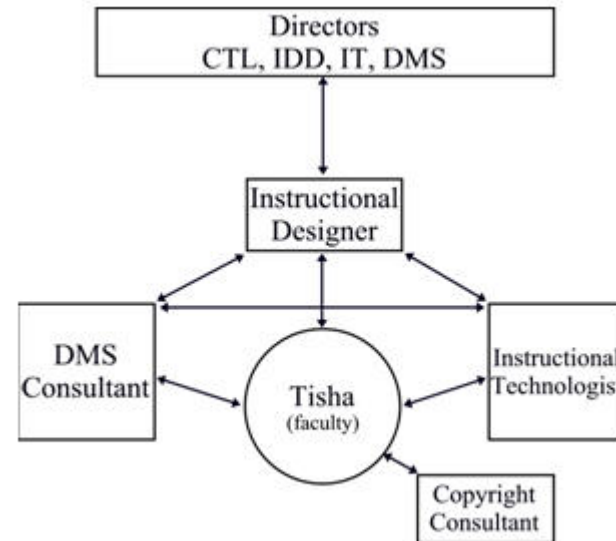
a) Collaboration model for Natalie



b) Collaboration model for Paul



c) Collaboration model for Laura



d) Collaboration model for Tisha

Figure 3: Collaboration models for faculty teams

(CTL=Center for Teaching and Learning, IDD=Instructional Design and Development, IT=Instructional Technology, DMS=Digital Media Services)

As can be seen by examining the collaboration models of the four faculty members and their teams, none of the teams followed the same collaboration patterns. Further, only one team followed the collaboration model intended for the program (Laura), though as elaborated on below, there was actually relatively little collaboration taking place among her team members. Although the Jump Start program has a well-defined collaboration model that participants are expected to follow, the diversity in the actual collaboration models indicates that there is room for some level of flexibility. And since all four faculty members did successfully develop their courses (though with varying levels of frustration and somewhat variable quality), perhaps some level of flexibility is acceptable or even necessary to ensure success.

Flexibility

While a well-defined collaboration model is important, some flexibility may be necessary to accommodate the range of other factors impacting the course development process. One demonstration of the flexibility of the program and staff was seen in Laura's experience. Laura misunderstood the format of the Jump Start program and the roles of her team members. She was expecting to spend her time focusing on the development of technology skills so she could develop her online course herself. She was quite surprised and frustrated to realize that relatively little time would be spent on technology skills. She expressed her frustration:

I just go back again to the fact that I really thought that it would be hands-on training. Like the first day would sort of be an overview of what we're trying to do and learning styles and the thinking on online course development. And then from there, the rest would be training in how to use the software.

Because her expectations did not match those of Jump Start, her team was forced to alter the Jump Start process to meet her needs and desires. Although she ultimately developed her online course, it was more "in spite of" the Jump Start program (as her instructional designer commented) than because of it.

While Laura's team still followed the Jump Start collaboration model when collaboration did occur, there was very little collaborating taking place. She primarily worked on her own to complete the course and did not take advantage of many of the resources available to her through the Jump Start program. She was focused on the technological aspects of the course, and although she received some technology training, her course development was limited by her own technology skills because she did not fully utilize the instructional technologist or digital media services consultant. Similarly, her course lacked possible instructional enhancements that could have been gained by working closely with the instructional designer and other team members who were well-versed in best practices in online education.

Although the flexibility was appreciated by Laura, in retrospect, her instructional designer was not convinced that completely

altering the Jump Start experience was the best way to proceed for Laura. It became clear that being flexible and making accommodations did not always lead to better results.

Just as too much flexibility can sometimes hinder or hurt the course development process, so too can a lack of flexibility. Tisha's team faced significant challenges throughout the course development process, but these difficulties were magnified when her instructional designer took another position within the department and went to working only part-time. Because Tisha's course was quite complex and required extensive communication among team members, the standard Jump Start collaboration model (see Figure 2) was strained by not having an instructional designer who was in the office or otherwise available everyday. To deal with this problem, Tisha began communicating directly with her DMS consultant and essentially became the central figure in her course development process (see Figure 3d). However, she was later reprimanded for not following the chain of command and bypassing her instructional designer which only created further tensions among team members. The team and program did not allow for flexibility in the collaboration pattern which could have, perhaps, eased some of the communication difficulties. In retrospect, one of the program directors admitted that they probably should have given more decision-making power to the instructional technologist, but they did not become aware of the problem until it was too late.

Determining how flexible to be and how much the intended collaboration model should be altered for a faculty member is a difficult decision. Certainly there were instances where some flexibility and alterations were necessary to make the program work for a faculty member, but there were also instances where too much flexibility might have been detrimental to the course development process. On the other hand, not being flexible and following the collaboration model too rigidly also presented challenges to the course development process.

Ownership of the Process

With the exception of Tisha's team, all teams preserved one key aspect of the Jump Start collaboration model by keeping the instructional designer at the center of the process. Having a centralized staff person serving as a "project manager" seems to be a critical factor for ensuring success of the collaborative process. While the instructional designer (or someone serving as the project manager) must maintain a central role in the collaborative process, it is also equally important that the faculty member maintain control of the course development process and ownership over the instructional decisions that are made.

Chapman and Nicolet (2003) emphasize that faculty culture is one of autonomy and that faculty members are used to having full control over the instructional process. As experienced instructors and content experts, faculty need to maintain some level of ownership throughout the collaborative course development process. This is especially important when there is a staff person in the center of the collaboration model, as there is in the Jump Start program. The importance of this factor can be seen by comparing Paul's experience with that of Tisha.

Paul viewed his team meetings as brainstorming sessions, where he and his team would share ideas and think about how they might apply to his course. During these meetings, Paul was often the quietest one in the group with his team members doing

most of the talking and Paul sitting quietly, appearing to process and ponder what was being discussed. Paul's approach was not surprising given his extremely high score on the abstract conceptualization scale of the Kolb Learning Style Inventory. However, to an outside observer, the staff members on the team sometimes seemed to be taking control of the course and it would not have been surprising if Paul had reported that he did not feel he had a prominent enough voice in the instructional decisions. But this was not the case. Paul indicated on the end of program questionnaire that he felt in control of instructional aspects of the course throughout the course process, and several times in interviews Paul expressed his comfort with the way his team functioned. So, where it may have seemed to an outside observer that the faculty member was sometimes not maintaining ownership of instructional decisions, the team members were attuned to Paul's preferences and collaborated with him in a way that was comfortable for him and ensured that he always maintained control of the instructional aspects of the course.

Tisha's position within her team was quite different than that of Paul's. Tisha was highly active during her team meetings and often led discussions. Tisha came in with numerous ideas about what her course would include and once she made a decision, she was quite persistent in ensuring that it was carried out to her specifications. She appeared to be very much in control of the instructional decisions related to her course. However, on the end of program questionnaire, Tisha was the only one (of the eleven participants who completed the questionnaire) to not agree with the statement, "Throughout the course development process, I felt in control of the instructional aspects of the course." In interviews, she shared many instances of situations where she had to fight to have her voice heard and have tasks completed as she had specified. So, where Tisha appeared to an outside observer to be very much in control of her course development process, she was actually struggling to maintain ownership of the instructional aspects of the course and felt she did not have a prominent enough place in the collaboration model.

There is no doubt that Tisha's lack of control caused frustration and anxiety for her, and made her course development process less efficient. On the contrary, what appeared to be a lack of control for Paul was actually a very comfortable and efficient collaborative environment with his team. As Tisha reminded, ultimately it is the faculty member's course and they are the ones who have to put their names on it. She is emphasizing the importance of faculty ownership over the instructional aspects of the course, especially when there are other staff people involved in the course development process.

Communication

While the collaboration patterns for each of team are depicted in Figure 3, the extent and types of communication among various team members is not represented. Yet, as in all collaborative activities, communication is an integrally important factor to consider. When asked what factors impact how smoothly a course development project runs, one of the DMS consultants responded:

I still think communication is the key part. ... It's making sure that [the instructional designer] stays on top of where the course is, what's going on, and making sure that everybody is on the same page.

When there is good communication among team members, it often becomes an invisible part of the collaborative process and is

not necessarily acknowledged or recognized by team members. It is when communication is a problem, however, that it becomes a central issue in the process.

Tisha's experience demonstrates the challenges that can arise when team members are not communicating well with one another. In the beginning, Tisha's team seemed to be communicating well, using a variety of methods of communication including email, face-to-face, phone, document exchange, etc. As the process progressed, however, the communication among team members broke down. Luck (2001) emphasized the importance of communication in the course development process and noted that it does not matter "*how* communication takes place, but rather that it *does* take place" (p. 4, emphasis in original). This was the problem Tisha's team faced toward the end – communication was often not taking place. There was an incident where the instructional designer lost some material Tisha had given her, but did not immediately communicate this to the rest of the group. Something that could have been a relatively minor problem with an easy solution turned into a much larger problem that caused frustration and resentment among team members. There were also times when Tisha was not communicating her questions and concerns to her team members because she felt that her time with her team was rushed and that she should not question the process or the reasons for doing certain things.

In addition to the instances where communication was not taking place, there were also frequent examples of miscommunications that resulted in confusion and additional work. A key example of this is in relation to a series of icons that DMS created for Tisha. She thought she was just inquiring about how many media points the development of such icons would cost, but there was some miscommunication and DMS created the icons and charged her the media points. Because Tisha had a media rich course and was budgeting her media points carefully, this situation caused a great deal of frustration for Tisha and her team members. There were also several instances where DMS felt that the revisions Tisha was requesting should have been more clearly communicated in the original content so that revisions would not be necessary. But Tisha also noted several instances where materials were not created to her specifications that were clearly documented in the original request. These types of miscommunications resulted in additional work and frustration for all team members, and contributed to the modification of the intended collaboration model.

Even with teams who faced challenges, like Laura's, if there is good communication among team members, the challenges can be addressed and overcome. Because Laura was upfront about her expectations for the program and communicated her preferred method for developing the course, her team members were able to work with her and accommodate her requests. Had Laura been forced to work within the standard Jump Start protocols, she would have likely had a negative reaction to the experience and would not have had her needs met.

Other research (e.g., White, 2000) has also recognized the communication challenges that can arise when individuals with varied backgrounds and areas of expertise must work together. It can sometimes be difficult to find a common language for faculty to express their needs and desires to more technologically-oriented individuals (e.g., DMS consultants). Similarly, it can be difficult for DMS consultants to translate very technical information into a language understood by non-technically oriented faculty members. The Jump Start staff recognized this potential obstacle and worked together to communicate with the faculty

member in a common language. Sometimes this required the instructional designer or instructional technologist to translate what the faculty member wanted to DMS or vice versa, but they were prepared for that. In Tisha's case, the instructional designer quickly realized that she had to rely more on the instructional technologist to help communicate Tisha's requests to the DMS consultant and vice versa. Because Tisha was creating more complex media elements than was typically done through Jump Start, the instructional technologist was instrumental in taking Tisha's requests and using the appropriate language to communicate her requests to the DMS consultants. However, this change in communication patterns also contributed to the modification of the intended collaboration model that ultimately ended up bypassing the instructional designer on many aspects of the course development process resulting in a less efficient and more frustrating course development experience.

Whenever you have more than one person working to complete a project, effective communication is critical to that project's success. This is especially true in collaborative course development experiences where several individuals with diverse skills and backgrounds are working together, often with minimal face-to-face contact.

Conclusions

This paper has provided an overview of several collaborative approaches to online course development and explained a specific collaborative online course development program (Jump Start). Specific attention has been paid to how team members collaborate with one another, and how the actual collaboration models of various teams may differ from the intended collaboration model of a program. After exploring the benefits and limitations of these altered collaboration models, the following recommendations can be made.

- Ensure that everyone on the team fully understands their own role and expectations as well as the roles and expectations of all members of the team.
- Ensure that everyone on the team has a clear understanding of the collaboration model and how communications should occur.
- Designate someone in the team as a "project manager" and ensure that individual has sufficient time to dedicate to the project.
- Allow for flexibility within the collaboration model, but think through the possible long-term effects of any modifications.
- Ensure that faculty have a prominent role in the collaboration model and maintain control of instructional decisions.
- Ensure that there is frequent and inclusive communication consistent with the collaboration model.

While this investigation of collaboration models is important in understanding the collaborative online course development process, there are obviously many other factors that impact the success of a collaborative approach to online course development. Other factors to be considered include general faculty characteristics, faculty's motivation, faculty's approach to instruction, team dynamics, resources and support available, etc. These areas need to be explored in more depth to fully understand the experiences of the faculty and team members when developing an online course collaboratively.

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[Back to the Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration Contents](#)