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# Factors that Deter Faculty from Participating in Distance Education

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## Introduction

"Technological change is what many have said is the only constant in our work today" (Kubala, 2000). As technology changes, our need to adapt to these changes increases. Information technology is not just contained within the world wide web, computers or the Internet – it is integrated into all aspects of our lives (Green, 1999; Gayle, et. al, 1999). Technology has now linked lives together more intimately than we could have ever imagined. People are now working and interacting online with each other from around the world, even when they may not be familiar with each other's cultural backgrounds (Ehrmann, 1999). The pressing need for workers with these skills has fueled an increasing enrollment of adult students across the country who are returning to college to update their skills and knowledge base in order to secure higher paying jobs that are technology based (Drucker, 1994).

While higher education has attempted to react to economic demands by providing more skilled workers, it is questionable if institutions of higher learning have addressed the impact these external demands have had upon the internal center of the university - the faculty. Many facets of faculty's roles have changed as a result of technology (Strain, 1987; Gunawardena, 1992; Baldwin, 1998).

The development of distance education technologies has created conditions that require faculty to adapt to a new way of teaching and communicating with their students. Special means must be devised for assigning, guiding, and evaluating students' work. Distance education requires not only that faculty learn how to use new technologies, it also requires a paradigm shift in how educators orchestrate the act of learning (Dillon and Walsh, 1992; Hassenplug and Harnish, 1998).

However, this division of labor does not mean that faculty can completely rely upon instructional technologists to deliver their courses. On the contrary, faculty should be able to identify and recognize technologies' strengths and weaknesses and select the most appropriate delivery mechanism for a particular lesson (Gunawardena, 1992). More important, than just learning how to use the technology appropriately, faculty need to learn how to personalize their instruction, regardless of the technology they use, and incorporate student involvement activities into their instruction. Faculty who integrate more student involvement or collaborative learning in their distance education courses also find the use of this pedagogy improves their classroom teaching as well (Dillon and Walsh, 1992; Wolcott, 1993)

Despite all the positive assertions made about the impact that distance learning has upon classroom teaching, some faculty remain skeptical and can be overwhelmed by the knowledge and technical

expertise required to deliver courses via a distance. When Carr (2001) interviewed a faculty member at Columbia University about his decision to transform his courses to a distance education medium he cited the different techniques he had to master. He spoke about how he missed the face-to-face contact with his students and the control he had over the flow of material which he presented in his classes. As he began to teach his course on line he learned that many students don't learn in a linear fashion, so he had to design his course in such a manner that allowed them to gain access to content in a way that made sense to them.

Wolcott (1993) notes that it is particularly challenging for college faculty to focus on instructional activities, as most faculty are more likely to be trained in content areas rather than in curriculum and lesson planning. It is also a somewhat foreign practice for most faculty to plan interactive strategies in advance of course delivery as they are accustomed to relying upon verbal cues and the spontaneity of classroom discussion to serve as a catalyst for interaction. Some faculty miss the flexibility of the classroom.

Another factor which may deter faculty's desire to participate in distance education may be the administrative structure of the distance education program at their college. Although the literature suggests a "systems approach" as one method of designing distance education courses (course designers, instructional designers and graphic designers who work with faculty), not all colleges and universities engage in this method of distance education design and delivery. Some institutions that place distance education at the periphery of their missions, may not engage in a systems approach as they consider the resources it requires to be too costly (Dillon and Walsh, 1992; Olcott & Wright, 1995). Institutions such as these may expect their faculty to develop distance education courses on their own time with very few institutional resources. Thus, the factors of faculty's preferred teaching and learning style they have developed over time, institutional resources, administrative configuration of a distance education program and the technical expertise all pose challenges to faculty's participation in distance education.

## **Objectives**

This article seeks to provide the reader with an analysis of faculty's responses to factors that were identified as inhibitors to their participation in distance education. The authors also present a comparison of responses given by different groups of faculty and division chairs and discuss ways in which colleges and universities could respond to their concerns. While the literature provides data from studies which have been conducted at research universities, this study is unique in that it focuses on factors that affect community college faculty's participation in distance education.

## **Background of Study**

This study analyzed the degree to which a set of thirty factors may have inhibited faculty's participation in distance education. The sample of this study included division chairs and faculty at a community college in the Southeastern part of the United States whose teaching loads consisted of (1) distance education courses and classroom courses; (2) solely distance courses; (3) solely classroom courses. The college included five campuses and when the survey was conducted in the fall of 2001, the total student headcount consisted of 39,138. All division chairs (fifteen) and faculty (five-hundred and seventy-two) were surveyed. Thirteen division chairs and one hundred and sixty seven faculty replied, 116 were faculty who taught only traditional classroom courses, 51 faculty taught distance and classroom courses and 7 faculty taught only distance education courses.

The community college where this study was conducted offered courses via distance education using four methods: (1) written correspondence courses through the use of the United States Postal Service; (2) Blackboard via the internet; (3) tele-courses; (4) audio visual courses. Tele-courses are delivered through the seven cable television systems currently available in the state where the community college operates. The audio-visual courses are provided through an a-synchronous learning network.

Blackboard 5 is a comprehensive and flexible e-Learning software platform that delivers a course management system, and, with a Level Two or Level Three license, a customizable institution-wide portal and online communities. In addition, a Level Three license includes advanced integration tools and APIs to seamlessly integrate Blackboard 5 with existing institution systems (<http://www.blackboard.com/>). This community college has offered courses via distance for twenty-three years and has a separate office that is responsible for the delivery of these courses. The dean and associate dean of information technology work with the academic division chairs from each of the community college campuses in securing faculty to teach these courses.

Community college faculty and division chairs across the five campuses were asked to rate on a five point Likert scale the degree to which these factors affected their decision of whether or not to participate in distance education. Faculty were identified by their chosen mode of course delivery: five hundred faculty taught only traditional classroom courses; seven faculty taught only distance courses and sixty-five faculty taught distance courses and traditional classroom courses.

## **Design and Methodology**

Survey methodology was deemed the most appropriate means of data collection for this study as it is meant to serve as a foundation for future data collection at other community colleges. During the fall of 2001 five hundred and seventy-two faculty and fifteen division chairs at this community college received cover letters that provided an overview of the study and a copy of the survey. One hundred and eighty-eight faculty responded, of whom one hundred and sixteen faculty taught only classroom courses; seven taught distance courses and sixty-five faculty taught classroom and distance courses. Eight of the thirteen division chairs who responded to this survey had taught a distance course.

The survey was based upon Betts' (1998) instrument. The first section of both surveys addressed demographic questions. Additional questions focused upon faculty support, rewards, and the changing role of the faculty member in distance education and how faculty and division chairs perceived distance education as relating to the community college mission. Data analysis included both qualitative (short answer questions), and quantitative (means, standard deviations, frequency distributions and percentages).

Faculty were divided into three categories by the means which they used to deliver their classes: (1) "distance-only faculty" refers to faculty who only taught courses via distance education (i.e., via the internet, correspondence, CD rom or a combination of all three delivery systems); (2) "multiple delivery faculty" refers to those faculty who taught traditional classroom courses and distance courses and (3) "classroom faculty" who taught only traditional classroom courses. All "classroom faculty", "combination-delivery faculty" and division chairs were given a list of thirty factors which they were asked to rate on a five point Likert scale (1 strongly disagree; 2 disagree; 3 neutral; 4 agree and 5 strongly agree) the extent to which these factors inhibited or would inhibit their participation in distance education. Results to these questions were measured in the means of responses from faculty and division chairs. Means averaging between 1.0 and 2.0 were cited as strongly disagreeing; means averaging between 2.0 and 3.0 were noted as disagreeing; means averaging between 3.0 and 4.0 were considered to be neutral; means averaging between 4.0 and 5.0 were noted as agreeing and means greater than 5.0 were noted as strongly agreeing.

## **Faculty Characteristics**

The divisions in which the 116 "classroom faculty", who responded to the survey, taught included a range of seven disciplines from liberal arts to the sciences and social sciences; the 51 multiple delivery faculty, who responded to the survey taught across five disciplines and the "distance-only faculty" who responded reflected three disciplines. The thirteen division chairs who responded to the survey represented six disciplines (see table 1).

**Table 1. Divisions in which Classroom Faculty Respondents Teach**

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Liberal Arts Division</b>	<b>Math, Science &amp; Engineering Division</b>	<b>Business and Technologies Division</b>	<b>Social Sciences Division</b>	<b>Health Technologies Division</b>	<b>Visual &amp; Performing Arts</b>	<b>Nursing</b>
Classroom Faculty	32%	24%	16.5%	11.2%	8%	6%	2%
Multiple Delivery Faculty	35%	18%	39%	0%	6%	0%	0%
Distance-only faculty	43%	14%	43%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Division Chairs	15%	31%	23%	15.5%	0%	8%	7%

### **Faculty Appointment Status**

The vast majority of faculty were hired on a contract basis ( 85% percent of "classroom faculty", 84% of "combination-delivery faculty" and 100% of "distance-only faculty"). Only a small percentage had received tenure (11% of "combination- delivery faculty" and 5% of "classroom faculty."

### **Faculty Courseloads**

"Combination-delivery faculty" who taught both distance and classroom courses appear to have a heavier teaching load than did their colleagues who only taught classroom courses or those who taught only distance courses. However, any faculty member who teaches via distance education at this community college has to contend with "rolling admission" (a policy which allows students to be admitted to their classes at any point during a semester). Division chairs were required to teach one course each academic year which can be taught either in a traditional classroom setting or via distance. The reader should note a limitation of this study, i.e., courseload was calculated by the number of different courses faculty taught, not by the number of sections (see table 2).

**Table 2. Course Loads by Faculty Type**

<b>Faculty Group</b>	<b>Average Number of Classroom Courses Taught</b>	<b>Average Number of Distance Courses Taught</b>
Classroom Faculty	4.35	0
Combination-Delivery Faculty	3.5	2.25

Distance-Only Faculty	3	0
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## Years of Experience in Distance Education

"Combination-delivery faculty" and "Distance-only faculty" had on average the same number of years experience in distance education (see table 3).

**Table 3. Years of Faculty Participation in Distance Education**

Faculty Group	Mean Number of Years Teaching via Distance Education	Over 10 Years of Experience Teaching Via Distance Education	6 to 9 Years of Experience Teaching Via Distance Education	2 to 5 Years of Experience Teaching Via Distance Education
Combination-Delivery Faculty	5 years	28%	17%	33%
Distance-Only Faculty	5 years	44%	28%	28%

## Faculty Training in Distance Education

As expected higher percentages of faculty who teach distance courses had received distance training than faculty who only taught classroom courses (see table 4).

**Table 4. Percentage of Faculty Who Have Received Distance Education Training and Their Interest in Further Training**

Faculty Group	Have Received Training	Interested in Further Distance Training
"Classroom Faculty"	16%	7%
"Combination-Delivery Faculty"	56%	31%
"Distance-Only Faculty"	43%	43%
Division Chairs	7%	23%

## Data Analysis

### Responses from "Distance-Only Faculty"

The range of means generated from "distance-only faculty" responses was 3.57 to 1.86. "Combination-delivery faculty" did not rate any factors above a 4.0, indicating none of the factors

inhibited their participation in distance education. "Distance-only faculty"’s responses to the following factors generated means below a 3.0 (indicating they disagreed or strongly disagreed that these factors would inhibit their participation in distance education): lack of release time (2.86); teaching a course in a synchronous environment (2.71); lack of support from departmental colleagues (2.43); lack of recognition and rewards (2.29); lack of royalties on copyrighted materials (2.29); teaching a course in an a-synchronous environment (2.17); concern about quality of courses (2.14); change in faculty role from a knowledge provider to a facilitator (2.0); lack of support from division chair (2.0); lack of merit pay (1.86); lack of professional prestige (1.86); a sense of a loss of control over the teaching and learning process (1.86) (see table 5-A).

**Table 5-A. The Standard Deviations and Means of the Responses from "Distance-Only Faculty" to the Question, "To what Degree do these Factors Inhibit you from Participating in Distance Education."**

<b>Inhibiting Factors for "Distance-Only Faculty"</b>	<b>Means</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
Lack of monetary support (i.e. stipend)	3.57	1.27
Concern about faculty workload	3.57	1.27
Lack of salary increase	3.43	1.40
Lack of technological background	3.14	1.21
Lack of administrative, technical or clerical support	3.14	1.21
Lack of grants for materials and expenses	2.29	1.38
Concern about the quality of students who enroll in distance courses	2.14	1.35
A dislike for the collaborative nature of distance program design and delivery	3.0	1.29
Lack of credit toward promotion and tenure	3.0	1.53
Lack of distance education training provided by the college	3.0	1.15
Lack of release time	2.86	1.86
Teaching a course in a synchronous environment	2.71	2.06
Lack of support from departmental colleagues	2.43	1.40
Lack of recognition and rewards	2.29	1.38
Lack of royalties on copyrighted materials	2.29	1.38
Teaching a course in an a-synchronous environment	2.17	1.83
Concern about quality of courses	2.14	1.46

Change in faculty role from a knowledge provider to a facilitator	2.0	1.63
Lack of support from division chair	2.0	1.15
Lack of Merit Pay	1.86	.90
Lack of professional prestige	1.86	1.21
A sense of a loss of control over the teaching and learning process	1.86	1.46

### Responses from "Combination-Delivery faculty"

"Combination-delivery faculty", like their distance-only counterparts did not agree or strongly agree that any factors inhibited or strongly inhibited them from participating in distance education. In fact both distance- only and "combination-delivery faculty" reached disagreement that many of the same factors did not inhibit their participation in distance education. Factors which "combination-delivery faculty" found did not impact their participation in distance education and which generated means below a 3.0 included: Concern about the quality of students (2.9); lack of grants or materials for expenses (2.86); lack of merit pay (2.84); change in faculty role from a knowledge provider to a facilitator (2.80); lack of professional prestige (2.76); lack of royalties on copyrighted materials (2.76); A dislike for the collaborative nature of distance program design and delivery (2.67); a sense of a loss of control over the teaching and learning process (2.67); teaching in a distance course in a synchronous environment (2.61); teaching a distance course in an a-synchronous environment (2.58) (see table 5 – B).

**Table 5-B. The Standard Deviations and Means of the Responses from "Combination-Delivery Faculty" to the Question, "to What Degree do these Factors Inhibit you from Participating in Distance Education."**

<b>Inhibiting Factors for "Combination-Delivery Faculty"</b>	<b>Means</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
Concern about Faculty Workload	3.92	1.38
Lack of release time	3.59	1.60
Lack of salary increase	3.39	1.34
Lack of monetary support (i.e., stipend)	3.35	1.48
Lack of administrative, technical or clerical support	3.16	1.41
Lack of recognition or rewards	3.16	1.35
Lack of support from departmental colleagues	3.12	1.44
Lack of support from division chair	3.12	1.44

Lack of technological background	3.12	1.37
Lack of credit toward promotion or tenure	3.06	1.26
Lack of distance education training provided by the college	3.04	1.46
Concern about quality of courses	2.94	1.36
Concern about the quality of students	2.90	1.20
Lack of grants or materials for expenses	2.86	1.33
Lack of Merit Pay	2.84	1.55
Change in faculty role from a knowledge provider to a facilitator	2.80	1.31
Lack of professional prestige	2.76	1.42
Lack of royalties on copyrighted materials	2.76	1.49
A dislike for the collaborative nature of distance program design and delivery	2.67	1.21
A sense of a loss of control over the teaching and learning process	2.65	1.38
Teaching in a distance course in a synchronous environment	2.61	1.47
Teaching a distance course in an a-synchronous environment	2.58	1.37

### Responses from "Classroom Faculty"

Like their "combination-delivery faculty" colleagues, "classroom faculty" responses did not generate means above a 4.0, thus indicating that no factors strongly deterred their participation in distance education. Means of responses which were below a 3.0 included: lack of technological background (2.92); lack of credit toward promotion or tenure (2.74); lack of recognition or rewards (2.72); lack of support from departmental colleagues (2.66); a dislike for the collaborative nature of distance program design and delivery (2.66); change in faculty role from a knowledge provider to a facilitator (2.59); lack of professional prestige (2.58); lack of support from division chair (2.56); teaching a distance course in an a-synchronous environment (2.52); teaching in a distance course in a synchronous environment (2.35) (see table 5-C).

**Table 5-C. The Standard Deviations and Means of the Responses from "Classroom faculty" to the Question, "To what Degree do these Factors Inhibit you from Participating in Distance Education."**

<b>Inhibiting Factors</b>	<b>Means</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
Concern about quality of courses	3.75	1.47
Concern about Faculty Workload	3.74	1.58
Lack of release time	3.54	1.51
Lack of Merit Pay	3.30	2.30
Lack of monetary support (i.e., stipend)	3.27	1.53
Lack of administrative, technical or clerical support	3.18	1.50
Lack of royalties on copyrighted materials	3.10	1.41
A sense of a loss of control over the teaching and learning process	3.09	1.55
Lack of grants or materials for expenses	3.03	1.43
Lack of salary increase	3.02	1.57
Lack of distance education training provided by the college	2.97	1.37
Concern about the quality of students	2.96	1.54
Lack of technological background	2.92	1.53
Lack of credit toward promotion or tenure	2.74	1.49
Lack of recognition or rewards	2.72	1.43
Lack of support from departmental colleagues	2.66	1.33
A dislike for the collaborative nature of distance program design and delivery	2.66	1.39
Change in faculty role from a knowledge provider to a facilitator	2.59	1.45
Lack of professional prestige	2.58	1.28
Lack of support from division chair	2.56	1.27

Teaching a distance course in an a-synchronous environment	2.52	1.45
Teaching in a distance course in a synchronous environment	2.35	1.37

### Responses from Division Chairs

Division chairs' responses, like those of combination delivery faculty did not generate any means above a 4.0 thus indicating that their decision to participate in distance education was not influenced by the factors listed in the survey. Responses which generated means below a 3.0 included: lack of distance education training provided by the college (2.85); lack of support from departmental colleagues (2.77); teaching in a distance course in a synchronous environment (2.77); lack of recognition or rewards (2.77); lack of support from division chair (2.69); concern about the quality of students (2.69); lack of professional prestige (2.62); a dislike for the collaborative nature of distance program design and delivery (2.54); a sense of a loss of control over the teaching and learning process (2.46); change in faculty role from a knowledge provider to a facilitator (2.46); teaching a distance course in an a-synchronous environment (2.38) (see table 5-D).

**Table 5-D. The Standard Deviations and Means of the Responses from Division Chairs to the Question, "To what Degree do these Factors Inhibit you from Participating in Distance Education."**

<b>Inhibiting Factors for Division Chairs</b>	<b>Means</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
Concern about Faculty Workload	3.92	1.33
Lack of release time	3.62	1.45
Lack of monetary support (i.e., stipend)	3.54	1.39
Lack of administrative, technical or clerical support	3.38	1.26
Lack of salary increase	3.15	1.46
Concern about quality of courses	3.15	1.41
Lack of grants or materials for expenses	3.08	1.50
Lack of royalties on copyrighted materials	3.00	1.29
Lack of technological background	3.00	1.22
Lack of credit toward promotion or tenure	3.00	1.29
Lack of Merit Pay	2.92	1.32
Lack of distance education training provided by the college	2.85	1.34
Lack of support from departmental colleagues	2.77	1.30

Teaching in a distance course in a synchronous environment	2.77	1.09
Lack of recognition or rewards	2.77	1.30
Lack of support from division chair	2.69	1.38
Concern about the quality of students	2.69	1.32
Lack of professional prestige	2.62	1.12
A dislike for the collaborative nature of distance program design and delivery	2.54	.97
A sense of a loss of control over the teaching and learning process	2.46	1.20
Change in faculty role from a knowledge provider to a facilitator	2.46	1.13
Teaching a distance course in an a-synchronous environment	2.38	.96

## Comparison of Responses

### Factors That Elicited a Neutral Response

"Distance-only faculty" responses revealed a neutrality about those factors which related to monetary rewards, with the exception of merit pay to which both "combination-delivery faculty" and "distance-only faculty" disagreed that it would inhibit their participation in distance education. Factors relating to their technical background, lack of training from the college, lack of clerical, administrative or technical support and the collaborative nature of distance education also elicited neutral responses from "combination-delivery faculty" and "distance-only faculty".

### Factors That Elicited Mixed Responses

"Distance-only faculty", "classroom faculty" and division chairs all disagreed that support from colleagues and chairs would impact their decision to participate in distance education, while "combination-delivery faculty" were neutral toward these sources of support. The factor of "lack of recognition" prompted similar responses from the four groups with "distance-only faculty", "classroom faculty" and division chairs all disagreeing that it would influence their participation in distance education. "Combination-delivery faculty" reacted in a neutral manner toward.

The lack of royalties on copyrighted materials; lack of grants or materials and lack of merit pay marked a contrast in responses between those faculty who taught distance courses and those who did not teach via distance. Both "combination-delivery faculty" and "distance-only faculty" disagreed that the absence of royalties, grants and merit pay would affect their participation while "classroom faculty" and division chairs were neutral toward the lack of such rewards. "Combination-delivery faculty", "distance-only faculty" and division chairs also disagreed that distance education made them feel as though they had lost control of the learning and teaching process, but "classroom faculty"

responses were neutral toward this factor. Distance-only faculty were the only group who disagreed that the quality of courses would affect their teaching via distance. All other faculty and division chairs responded neutrally the quality of distance courses affecting their participation. The factor, "concern about the quality of students" marked similar responses from division chairs and "distance-only faculty", both of whom disagreed that this factor would have any impact, while "combination-delivery faculty" and "classroom faculty" were both neutral toward this topic.

Reactions to the factor "lack of credit for promotion and tenure" revealed a difference amongst "combination-delivery faculty", chairs and "classroom faculty". "Combination-delivery faculty" and division chairs responded neutrally to this factor, but "classroom faculty" disagreed that this factor would have any impact on their decision to participate in distance education.

When means of responses were listed in descending order, the factor of "faculty workload" was ranked as the number one concern by "combination-delivery faculty" and division chairs and ranked as the second concern of distance-only and "classroom faculty". The factor that produced neutral responses, but was ranked second in the list of means by all survey respondents was "lack of release time." "Distance-only faculty's" reaction to this factor was neutral and in the list of means, they ranked it number ten.

### **Factors That Elicited Unison Responses of Disagreement**

Factors which all survey respondents disagreed would have any impact on their decision to teach via distance education included: lack of professional prestige; delivery method used; change in faculty role; lack of monetary support. All faculty and division chairs responses were neutral toward lack of salary increase, lack of technological background, lack of administrative, technical or clerical support; lack of training provided by the college. "Combination-delivery faculty", "classroom faculty" and division chairs all disagreed that the collaborative nature of distance education would prevent them from participating in this mode of education. "Distance-only faculty" was the only group who responded neutrally to this factor.

### **Analysis of Faculty Responses to Open-Ended Questions**

Open-ended questions were included in the survey to encourage faculty to freely express their attitudes toward distance education, and comment on their experiences of teaching at a distance and comment on distance. Questions that related to factors which inhibited faculty participation in distance education included "Would you prefer to engage in synchronous or a-synchronous course delivery?" "Would you consider teaching, co-teaching or designing a distance course, if not why not?" "What are your general comments about distance education?"

The analysis of the responses from these questions forms the following conclusions. "Classroom faculty" question, from a pedagogical context, the quality of student and faculty interaction, peer relationships that are formed, the role distance education serves within the administration of the college, and how it contributes or detracts from the school's relationship to the surrounding community (Clark, 1993; Newson, 1999). In addition to the impact distance learning has on relationships involving the faculty, the college and the student, "classroom faculty" also seek evidence of how technology has improved teaching and learning, as many view it as substituting their role as educators (Ehrmann, 1999; Beaudoin, 1990).

Ninety-six percent of the "combination-delivery faculty" (47 faculty) who responded to this survey replied that they would continue to teach via distance education. Factors which "combination-delivery faculty" cited as inhibiting their teaching via distance education included the college's need to upgrade their servers, the unreliability of the technology used to transmit distance education, the students' demand for immediate responses and the labor intensive nature of designing distance education courses. Division chairs cited lack of time as the factor that interfered with their ability to teach

distance courses.

Of the "classroom faculty" who responded that they did not want to teach distance education courses, many cited lack of time as the reason why they would not participate. Others cited concerns about the quality of distance education courses. "I am a teacher and I don't feel that distance education is teaching." "I don't like distance education. It cheapens education! I will not be a talking head!" "I am not interested in teaching students with students not physically present. I would worry about the identity and integrity of student work." "It's a trendy idea – like the computer training of the 80's." Some "classroom faculty" replied that their academic disciplines were not conducive to distance delivery. "I don't believe that you can teach English as a second language except in the classroom – not by distance teaching;" I teach drawing and design. I feel it's important to have a hands-on, one to one approach in these art studio classes." One faculty member expressed the need to have a faculty mentor assigned to her who could guide her through the process of converting her classroom course to a web-based format "I would like a faculty mentor who understands the health technology issues.... and could discuss the pros and cons of the different ways of doing a distance course."

Other "classroom faculty" cited the heavy workload of distance education as the reason why they have not become involved in this delivery method. "Any faculty member involved in distance education must spend endless hours being available to students, some of whom are night owls and expect you to be so too. No extra consideration, appreciation or remediation accords to "combination-delivery faculty". Their time is abused." A small percentage of faculty cited problems with technology used to deliver synchronous classes and how this impacted their decision not to pursue distance teaching. "There were numerous equipment failures. Even when it worked it was inadequate for teaching math. It was an enormous amount of additional unpaid work for me and yet there was a very high withdrawal rate." "Classroom faculty" also commented how distance education was inappropriate for the traditional age college student at the community college. "I was disappointed with the performance of most of my students and I was also concerned with cheating (students who do not do their own work)." One faculty member referenced the problems that he encountered due to the College's policy of rolling admissions which allows students to begin distance courses at any point during the year. "Students took too long to start the course. This produced difficulties including students trying to do too much in too little time at the end of enrollment."

"Classroom faculty" who had previously taught via distance cited many of the same reasons as did their colleagues for not participating, mainly the heavy workload involved in delivering distance courses, the lack of rewards and the absence of intellectual property rights. "I never felt that I was fairly compensated for all the additional work that distance education requires." "The preparation and workload are extremely demanding. The teacher is responsible for all aspects of the course plus technical and support areas." "Designing classes is very labor intensive and not properly remunerated at the community college where I presently teach. I receive no compensation for the time spent developing the distance course, yet I do not own the copyright to it." "Classroom faculty" also criticized the way in which a faculty load is calculated and a few said that if they taught distance courses, they would generate more teaching credits than they need and therefore would not be paid for them.

Some "classroom faculty" perceived only difficulties that could arise as a result of a non-synchronous environment. "I don't like the idea of a timed delay as with non-synchronous because I feel the lesson is not flowing well. Most definitely information could be lost or misinterpreted." "Personally I believe that in general, a lag time from student learning to asking questions to getting responses to a question can be a detriment to the learning curve."

Only one "combination-delivery faculty" member said that he no longer wants to participate in distance education, noting "I have given distance education a good long try and I don't like it." Some division chairs cited lack of time for training and teaching distance courses as the main reason they are not involved.

Chairs' experience was equally divided amongst 10 or more years of experience (15%), two to five years experience (15%) and one year (15%). When division chairs were posed the question if they had ever been asked to teach a distance course nine chairpersons replied that they had been asked and eight chair persons replied that they had taught a distance course. Nine division chairs indicated that they would like to teach a distance course in the future. When division chairs were asked if why they were not presently engaged in distance education most of them cited their administrative responsibilities as leaving them with very little time for teaching. Three division chairs did not participate in distance education for reasons relating to academic discipline, shortage of faculty in his department and lack of rewards. One division chair described his academic discipline of art and design as being "hands-on" and not applicable to distance education. Another division chair noted that he had to teach traditional classroom courses as there was a shortage of faculty in his discipline to teach via this mode. The third division chair commented that his distance math course generated more teaching credits for which the college would pay him.

## **Summary**

Although faculty responses from this study reflect those of a wide spectrum of academic disciplines, the researcher cautions the readers to limit generalization of these findings to community colleges that are located in large metropolitan areas and have a small percentage of faculty who teach distance education courses.

The means generated from responses range from 3.92 to 1.86. The factor which posed the greatest concern to all faculty and division chairs regarding their participation in distance education was the workload that faculty incur as a result of participating in distance education. Faculty who taught only distance courses and division chairs perceived the lack of monetary support (i.e., stipend) to be a strong inhibitor toward their participation or their faculty's participation in distance education. To the contrary of their colleagues who taught only distance courses, "combination delivery faculty" and "classroom faculty" perceived "lack of release time" to be a greater inhibitor than the lack of stipends. Division chairs also perceived the lack of release time as a factor that might prevent their faculty from participating in distance education. "Classroom faculty" agreed with their colleagues that faculty workload and lack of release time could impede faculty's participation in distance education. However, "classroom faculty's" greatest concern was the quality of distance courses.

These findings could provide us with general conclusions indicating that those who are already participating in distance education are not as worried about lower quality courses. They feel that they can deliver a course that is equivalent in quality to ones offered in the traditional face-to-face format. However, faculty who already are teaching at a distance do understand the increased demands on their time and would like to be compensated fairly. Those who haven't taught at a distance have not experienced the increased time demands; therefore, they are not including that as a top inhibitor. Consequently, they are much more concerned with lower quality of courses. An interesting follow-up study would attempt to measure how this might change if some of the classroom faculty begin to teach via distance education.

All faculty and division chairs agreed that the following factors had the least significant impact upon their participation in distance education: the absence of the research role (which may have provided more time for participating in distance education); the course delivery mode; change to a facilitator role; lack of departmental support; lack of collegial support and fear that faculty would lose control over the teaching process.

## **Conclusions**

Culturally the Western world has become accustomed to, if not almost dependent upon, technology as a means of conducting its business, selling its stocks and communicating with professional colleagues and family with the use of technology, i.e., the internet, email, fax and phone. Technology has become

a way of life and it has now extended to the realm of higher education. One Merrill Lynch associate projected in the year 2000, that by 2003 internet courses administered by higher education institutions would generate \$7 billion annually (Shea, 2001). Thus, it would behoove higher education to address the areas that faculty perceive as deterring them from learning more about distance education and participating in it more fully.

One means of enabling faculty to overcome their reluctance to participate in distance education would be to provide them with opportunities where they could integrate elements of distance education in their classroom courses. Such a combination of delivery styles would allow faculty to engage in "face to face" interaction (which some strongly believe adds validity to learning) and would also allow them to learn how distance education could compliment their classroom experience. By using a combination of distance and classroom settings faculty would be able to gain experience in facilitation of learner to learner interaction, written reflective exercises which could be the subject of class discussions and group projects which stress reliance upon interaction with fellow learners and course content. Faculty may be more willing to engage in distance education if they are not forced to abandon a familiar teaching environment.

Faculty, like most professionals, may be reluctant to attempt new ventures, especially when they must continue their ongoing responsibilities and are not receiving any additional compensation for their new responsibilities. Thus, if a college wants to increase the number of faculty who teach distance courses, they should contemplate rewarding these faculty for the first time they are willing to teaching a distance course and they should be given release time for training. If they choose to continue teaching via distance education their loads should be equal to those of faculty who teach only classroom courses. Some colleges institute a policy of "rolling admissions" for their distance courses that allow learners to register for a course at any point in the semester. Thus, combination delivery faculty could ultimately have a higher FTE count in their courses and their loads could extend beyond the maximum overload limit.

In order to assure faculty that distance courses are legitimate and valid learning experiences, faculty should be given either release time or a stipend to develop distance courses. They should be directly involved in the selection of texts and readings, and the creation of assignments and interactive learning exercises. The faculty who develop these courses should ideally teach them, or be available to the faculty who teach them.

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