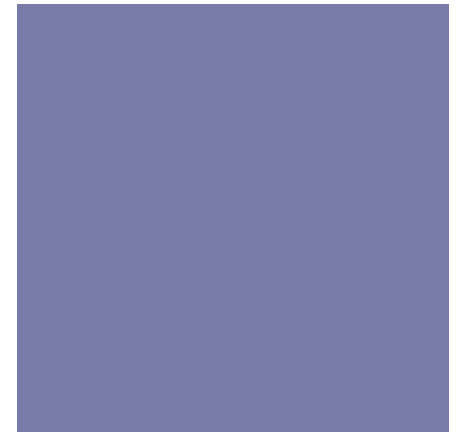




# Evaluating and Supporting Online Teachers

July 25, 2011





## The Comprehensive Center Network

By insisting on high achievement for all students, regardless of geography or life circumstance, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) has made the need for high quality technical assistance paramount for state education leaders. We are part of 16 regional comprehensive centers funded by the U.S. Department of Education activated to support education leaders in our states as they strive to meet the goals of ESEA and improve achievement outcomes for all students.

## The Regional P-12 Virtual Education Initiative

The NE/NYCCs are addressing P-12 Virtual Education opportunities and challenges in a three-pronged manner:

- Examining policies, initiatives, and practices within and outside the region to provide a context around the current state of virtual education
- Recently convened a regional summit to both facilitate and disseminate this information and to understand education leaders' highest priority information and policy needs and concerns around this topic
- Hosting a series of webinars for leaders to discuss strategies for expanding access to quality educational opportunities for diverse learners in their own states and in the region



## Webinar Agenda

The webinar focuses on the importance of online teacher evaluations in virtual education programs and the need for the development of comprehensive evaluation programs for all teachers inclusive of online teachers.

Today we will discuss:

- National value-added teacher evaluation models
- Quality K-12 online teaching practices and indicators
- Evaluation of online teachers
- Policy recommendations

Required USDOE Evaluation:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/VPFSPRP>



## About our Speaker

**Catherine Cavanaugh, Ph. D.**

Associate Professor of Educational  
Technology

University of Florida



# + Today's webinar

- National teacher evaluation models
- Quality K-12 online teaching
- Evaluating online teachers
- Policy recommendations
- Questions and discussion
- Resources for further information

# + National teacher evaluation models

- Many states are choosing or developing teacher evaluation models based on a value-added estimate of the teacher's contribution to student learning growth.
- Teacher evaluation models include teacher characteristics, contextual factors, student characteristics and student performance data.
- Teacher characteristics shown in research to influence teaching effectiveness include:
  - Teaching experience
  - The number of different courses a teacher is teaching

# + National teacher Evaluation Models

- These models simplify a complex process. They do not account for:
  - The broad range of learning and the varied roles of teachers in developing well-rounded learners
  - The precision of tests that measure learning incompletely
  - The non-random nature of student assignment to teachers
- “Expert observation, portfolio reviews, conversations with teachers, etc., are essential to making informed judgments about whether one teacher truly excels or whether another really needs support” (Braun, 2005)

# + Quality k-12 online teaching

- Quality teaching includes curriculum, materials, and practices.
- In many online programs, teachers do not develop or select the curriculum or materials, so effective practices, are the heart of quality online teaching.
- Research-based effective online teaching practices:
  1. Motivation: attention, relevance, confidence, satisfaction (Keller, Carpenter)
  2. Time on task spaced regularly (Cavanaugh & Liu)
  3. Feedback to guide learning (Marzano)
  4. 5 Cs (Repetto & Cavanaugh)

# + Research-based teaching practices

## 1

- Motivation: attention, relevance, confidence, satisfaction
- A 2011 study found that online course designs increase student attention to content and sense of relevance in learning; online teaching practices increase student confidence in their abilities and their satisfaction in a course.
- Experienced teachers (5+ years) made a significant difference in motivation.
- Especially motivating practices centered on communication.

# + Research-based teaching practices

## 2

- Time on task spaced regularly
- A 2009 study showed that students who spend more time in the online course environment have significantly higher performance.
- The time must be spaced regularly through the week.
- More frequent, shorter episodes helped in introductory courses, while less frequent, longer episodes helped in advanced courses.

# + Research-based teaching practices

## 3

### ■ Feedback to guide learning

■ The more frequent, detailed and personalized the feedback from teacher to student on assignments and assessments, the better students performed.

■ This effect is documented in studies of expertise-development in which coaching matters.

■ Online courses should include formative assessments and multiple channels for teacher-student interaction.

# + Research-based teaching practices

## 4

- 5 Cs: caring community, curriculum, control, connection, climate.
- Literature on student success shows that these characteristics improve students' chances of completing courses and staying in school.
- Online teachers can integrate them into their course designs and communications with students.

# + Evaluating online teaching

- Research-based online teaching practices are reflected to varying degrees in current K-12 online teaching standards.
- Each standards document is a guide and source for developing a comprehensive teacher evaluation system, after modification for the teaching role.
  - iNACOL Standards for Quality Online Teaching, 2008.
  - Sloan-C Quality Matters 6-12, 2010.
  - Roblyer & Wiencke RAIQ, 2004.
  - SREB virtual school teaching evaluation, 2006.

# + Evaluating online teaching

- Many virtual schools have developed teacher evaluation and observation rubrics.
- West Virginia VS,  
<http://publications.sreb.org/2009/TeacherEvaluationForm.pdf>
- Virtual teacher observation,  
[http://www.uwex.edu/disted/conference/Resource\\_library/handouts/05\\_1947H.pdf](http://www.uwex.edu/disted/conference/Resource_library/handouts/05_1947H.pdf)

# + Policy recommendations

- “Multiple measures provide a more complete and stable picture of teaching performance than can be obtained from measures based solely on scores on standardized tests,... combine measures of student achievement growth on tests with measures of teachers’ instructional behavior (such as those based on observations by principals or lead teachers) or with diverse measures of student outcomes” (Steele, Hamilton & Staker, 2010, p.23).

# + Policy recommendations

- Multiple measures of online teaching effectiveness:
  - Student performance data, such as completion rates, pass rates, success rates in subsequent courses, test scores
  - Observations of synchronous and asynchronous communication with students
  - Portfolio of teaching materials, strategies, assessments, action research efforts
  - Interviews or statements from current and past students about their experience

# + Policy recommendations

- Evaluations of *teachers* include evaluations of *teaching* within the broader context of the teacher's professional actions.
- Other relevant data may be activities for:
  - Improving student development, such as club and extracurricular activities
  - Supporting colleagues, such as mentoring, course reviews, and coaching
  - Leading the profession, such as involvement in organizations, conferences, publications

# + Policy recommendations

- Develop comprehensive data systems that offer a dynamic dashboard and data mining, along with the expertise to make meaningful reports from the data (Virtual School Clearinghouse, <http://www.vsclearinghouse.com/>)
- Offer robust professional development aimed at teaching improvement through reflective inquiry and skill development (Teacher Inquiry, <http://lastinger.education.ufl.edu/developinginquiry.html>)

# + Questions and discussion

- For questions after the webinar:
- Cathy Cavanaugh, University of Florida,  
[cathycavanaugh@coe.ufl.edu](mailto:cathycavanaugh@coe.ufl.edu)

# + Events in k-12 online education

- iNACOL webinars. <http://www.inacol.org/events/>
- Virtual School Symposium, Indianapolis, November. <http://www.virtualschoolsymposium.org/>
- Distance Teaching and Learning Conference, Madison, WI, August. <http://www.uwex.edu/disted/conference/>
- International Conference on Online Teaching and Learning, Sloan-C, November, Orlando. <http://sloanconsortium.org/aln>

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## Webinar Evaluation

The goal of the webinar was to focus on the importance of online teacher evaluations in virtual education programs and the need for the development of comprehensive evaluation programs for all teachers, inclusive of online teachers.

Please share your feedback on this event and let us know how else we can support your regional virtual education efforts!

- Please complete the required USDOE evaluation:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/VPFSPRP>