Chapter 1
Succeeding in Transnational Distance Learning

Robert Hogan
University of the South Pacific, Fiji

ABSTRACT

This chapter reviews issues universities must consider to be successful in Transnational Distance Learning (TDL), as well as challenges. New technology, finances, competition for students, and enrollment opportunities make now the right time for transnational distance learning. Businesses and nations need increased numbers of workers with skills needed in the international economy. Transnational distance learning is a profitable way to train such workers. It opens new markets by expanding university enrollment to students in Asian, American, European, and African nations, reducing the need for student visas. This chapter discusses the growth of online learning, and new global markets that are emerging. Opportunities include enhanced academic reputation, partnerships, added income, and a multicultural student body. The challenges include acceptance, accreditation, competition, culture, technology, tuition, and the establishment of a business model.

INTRODUCTION

Online learning has grown rapidly because it makes education more accessible to students and more cost effective for universities. The development of online learning, which began with local and on-campus students, has become a national phenomenon because it offers increased enrollment. Now universities are moving to the online evolutionary step—*Transnational Distance Learning (TDL)*. This chapter discusses how to decide whether TDL is or is not a realistic uni-versity goal for your university. Before reading further, you may wish to take the *Transnational Distance-Learning IQ Test* in the Appendix at the end of the last chapter. It sets the stage for the coming chapters.

Section 1 of this book presents the views of transnational distance learning by authors in, Indonesia, Africa, the Pacific islands, and the Caribbean. This section presents opportunities and issues such as program acceptance, competition, nationalism, accreditation, learning styles, and multiculturalism. The authors also address technological and student-support concerns.

Section 2 addresses transnational distance learning from the perspective of students and teachers. The students explain their transnational experiences. The teachers discus their methods, as well as any issues. Garmen discusses her pedagogy for teaching Arabic online to a global audience. Zuercher describes the challenges of teaching teachers in American Samoa, and Prescott describes a new eLearning development, *uncivil online student behavior*. Moon discusses how transnational learning is used as a tool to train teachers in developing countries, and Moore explains how transnational eLearning benefits engineering students.

Section 3 considers a variety of transnational distance learning issues for emerging nations. Aaron et al explain how MERLOT's open educational resources are becoming an important tool in education. Frank explains technological innovations that make teaching more effective and accessible in emerging countries.

Section 4, the last chapter, analyzes the key elements needed to plan for, implement, and manage a successful transnational distance-learning program from the view of practitioners—administrators, teachers, and support personnel. The chapter is written to be a practical handbook. It is not written by some curly haired, balding academic who says, "Yes, it works in practice, but does it work in theory?" The principles detailed in the final chapter do work in practice. We shall leave the theory for the next book.

In the beginning, distance learning was largely self-paced (Garrison, 2009); and Keegan (1996) defined it as "the separation of teacher and learner" (p. 8). This definition was appropriate for correspondence courses where students received and returned materials by mail. Radio and video courses were correspondence courses delivered electronically. These self-paced courses, which offer minimum interaction between the instructor and the students, are called O*pen and Distance Learning (ODL)*. Many ODL courses are little more than correspondence courses pasted on computer screens, and others are simply lectures delivered online. In ODL the pedagogy is teacher centered.

Online learning, which is a descendent of ODL, has evolved independently along a separate path. Online learning is generally highly interactive, facilitative, and student-based. The model focuses on problem-based learning. In online courses, students work individually and in online teams, interacting with each other and the instructor throughout the week. In contrast to correspondence courses, students receive prompt feedback on assignments.

The reason Keegan's definition of distance learning is no longer sufficient is because online learning removes the *D* from ODL. Unlike ODL online learning offers a virtual classroom that is nurturing and interactive—two characteristics that reduce the student-teacher distance. Online learning can even surpass personalize learning in ways that lecture courses seldom match. As Zynep Uyar, a student author in this text, wrote:

I might have been one of those students who completed their 5-year undergraduate degree without having spoken a single word in the large lecture classes. In my online class, I got to talk with my peers. I never had this opportunity in my traditional classes. Even though the distance class is long over, I still stay in contact with some of my classmates.

The distance-learning evolution has been so pervasive that the boundaries between face-to-face, blended, and online learning have blurred. Teachers now use Learning Management Systems (LMS) in traditional classrooms. Blended courses use a mix of face-to-face and online learning. The point at which face-to-face becomes blended is unclear, but most likely not important. The same is true for online learning, where most, but not all of the teaching may be online. These distinctions will be considerations in TDL where students are scattered across continents since face-to-face sessions may be more of a challenge to manage.

Related Content

Evaluating Student Perceptions of Using Blogs in an Online Course

Evelyn Gullettand Mamata Bhandar (2012). *Advancing Education with Information Communication Technologies: Facilitating New Trends* (pp. 257-267).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/evaluating-student-perceptions-using-blogs/61250

Education Networks: Expected Market- and Cost-Oriented Benefits

Svenja Hagenhoffand Michaela Knust (2004). *Distance Learning and University Effectiveness: Changing Educational Paradigms for Online Learning* (pp. 302-321).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/education-networks-expected-market-cost/8574

A Literature Review of Indexing and Searching Techniques Implementation in Educational Search Engines

Kamal El Guemmatand Sara Ouahabi (2018). *International Journal of Information and Communication Technology Education (pp. 72-83).*

www.irma-international.org/article/a-literature-review-of-indexing-and-searching-techniques-implementation-in-educational-search-engines/200989

A Critical Discourse Analysis of Students' Anonymous Online Postings

Dick Ng'ambi (2010). *ICTs for Modern Educational and Instructional Advancement: New Approaches to Teaching* (pp. 239-248).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/critical-discourse-analysis-students-anonymous/38403

Construction and Application of Korean-English-Japanese Multilingual Teaching Aid System Based on Knowledge Map

Li Zhe, Cheng Meng, Maesako Takanoriand Li Juan (2018). *International Journal of Distance Education Technologies (pp. 1-14).*

www.irma-international.org/article/construction-and-application-of-korean-english-japanese-multilingual-teaching-aid-system-based-on-knowledge-map/210664