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International Conference on Online Learning



# Why Do Our Online Students Stay?

Jinyuan (David) Tao, MA  
Dan Lim, PhD



FLORIDA HOSPITAL  
COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES

Mary Bruder, MA

EMBANET ★ COMPASS  
KNOWLEDGE GROUP



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## About Us

- FHCHS
- Embanet-Compass
- Health Care Education
- RN-BSN Online Program
- Online BS in Radiography
- Online BS in Sonography





## Our Model

- Synchronous component
- Customer service
- Retention service
- Over support
- Caring quality instructors
- Responsive supervision





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## Our Distance Students

- Full-time working professionals
- Health care background
- Variety of computer literacy





# Our Retention Data

- Current Retention Rate: 94%
- The past 5 years rate: between 92% and 100%
- Compare with other schools

[Link](#)





# Literatures

- Retention has been indicated as one of the greatest weakness in online education (O'Brien, 2002).
- Course completion and program retention rates are generally lower than face-to-face counterparts (Carr, 2000).



# Literatures

- Age was found to have a significant unique affect on dropout with older students more likely to dropout (Patterson & McFadden, 2009)
- Issues of isolation, disconnectedness, technological problems can be the factors to higher dropout rate (Willging & Johnson, 2009)
- Lack of self-direction and management, and eventual decrease in motivation levels are also factors (Ludwig-Hardman & Dunlap, 2003).



# Our Strategies

- Partnership with Embanet  
- Compass Knowledge  
Group
- Student – KP – Team –  
Embanet - CKG

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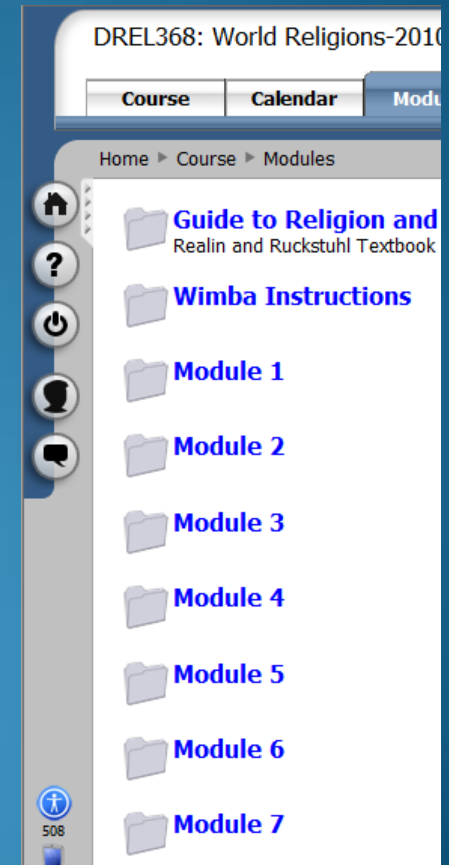
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# Effective Course Design

- 7 weeks or 14 weeks
- Offer all courses, three terms per year
- Templates: consistent look
- Lead instructor Vs Sectional adjuncts
- Student teams: 15 students maximum
- Asynchronous Vs synchronous

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# Detailed Communication Plan

Phone Calls, Email, and Letters to:

- New Students – Learning Preparedness Assessment
- Inactive Students
- Returning Students





# Detailed Communication Plan

Internal Team Meetings to  
report on:

- Successes
- Challenges
- Metrics
- Issues





# Detailed Communication Plan

Consistent Communication  
with the college:

- Face to Face
- Phone Calls
- Emails

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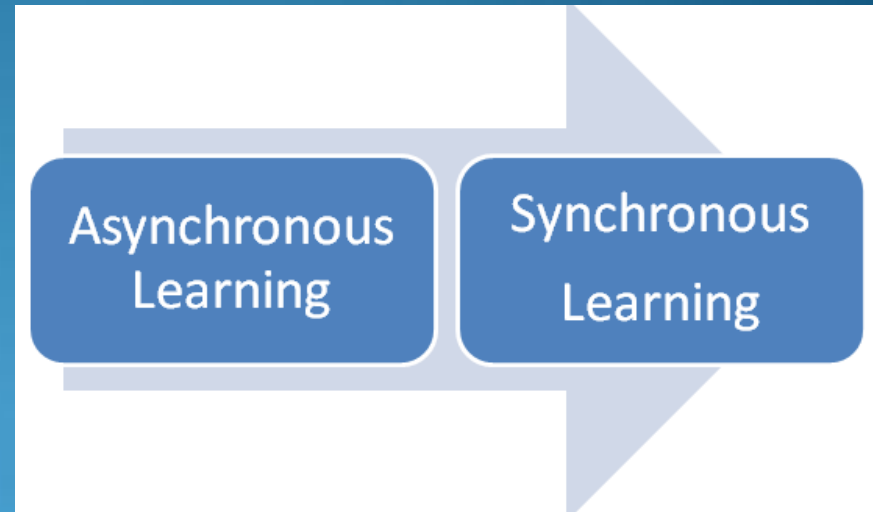


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# Maintain at least one synchronous component

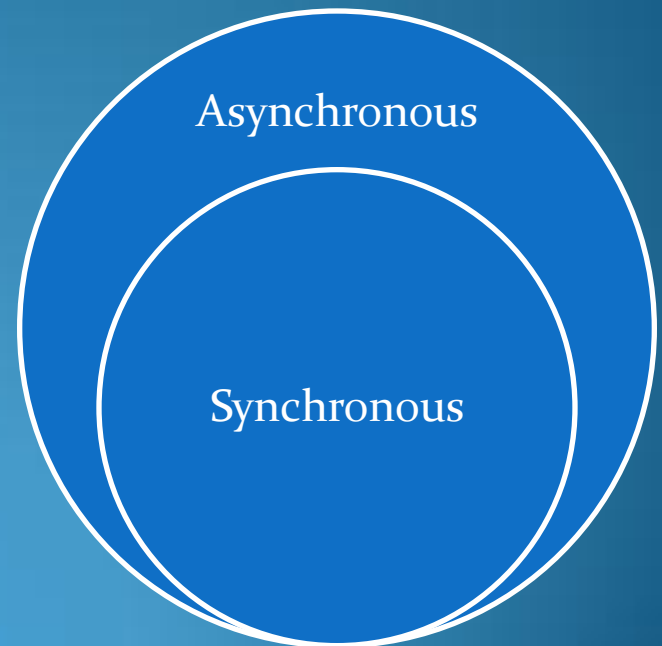
- Ensure real time feedback
- Mandatory weekly chat time
- **Shift:** use asynchronous to supplement synchronous





# Right Mix of Synchronous and Asynchronous

- Using asynchronous components to supplement synchronous portion
- Discussion boards, blog, wiki to supplement real-time chats





# Make it flexible for the working professionals

- Open course a week earlier
- Students pick their own chat schedule and stick with it
- Allow flexibility to switch if reason is provided

# 5

Student Team Picker

Teams	Members	Openings
<input type="checkbox"/> Abrahamson TH 7_00 PM	12	4
<input type="checkbox"/> Appel_ Tu 10_00 PM	15	1
<input type="checkbox"/> Burton WED 10_00 AM	15	1
<input type="checkbox"/> Johannassen TH 8_30 PM	10	6
<input type="checkbox"/> Lay Tues 7PM	15	1
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ricketts WED 9_00 PM	16	0
<input type="checkbox"/> Zdravko WED 10_00 PM	14	2

Submit



# Robust Faculty Support

- Train faculty to teach online
- Lead instructor Vs. Section Adjuncts
- Ratio of one Section Adjunct to fifteen students
- Clear Guidelines





# Robust Student Support

- Learning Preparedness Assessment completed with 100% of students
- Detailed communication with EC, Enrollment Advisor, Distance Student Manager
- Respond to students within 24 hours
- Make registration easy
- Track students and check in with them regularly





## Increase Social Presence

- More faculty moving to video conferencing tool
- Some are using Cameras during Wimba chat

Increased social presence



Increased feeling of being connected



Increased student satisfaction



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## Things We can Improve...

- Moving from regular chat room to video conferencing tool

Wimba

Wimba Instructor View

Launch New Content Reports Schedule Settings Delete

▼ Live Classrooms

David_Tao Tues 8PM	●	i
David_Tao Tues 8PM - 08/31/2010 20:00	●	
David_Tao Tues 8PM - 09/07/2010 20:00	●	
David_Tao Tues 8PM - 09/14/2010 20:00	●	
David_Tao Wed 8PM	●	i
Farrell Mon 8PM	●	i
Gomberg Thur 8PM	●	i
Gomberg Tues 9PM	●	i
Jones Wed 9PM	●	i
Mills_Foster Wed 10AM	●	i

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# Things We can Improve...

- Backup plan if technology fail.





## Things We can Improve...

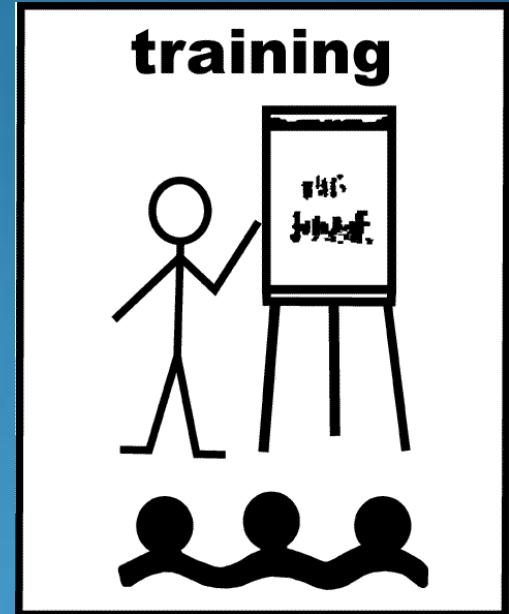
- Authenticity of students work





# Things We can Improve...

- Rigorous, mandatory faculty training





## Discussions

- Live examples
- What strategies are you using at your institution to maintain a good retention rate?
- Any lesson learned?





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## Contact us

[David.Tao@fhchs.edu](mailto:David.Tao@fhchs.edu)

[Dan.Lim@fhchs.edu](mailto:Dan.Lim@fhchs.edu)

[MBruder@compassknowledge.com](mailto:MBruder@compassknowledge.com)