Global Indigenous Cultures and Healing Plants

M6: Evaluation Plan

Southern New Hampshire University

IDT 650 Learning Design III

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Introduction

Global Indigenous Cultures and Healing Plants is a hybrid course that explores the

cultures and traditional healing practices of global indigenous cultures. The learning goals of this

course state that a student will research, explain, and apply knowledge by contrasting, and

comparing traditional healing practices and plants used by indigenous societies. The course is

delivered and facilitated through an online learning management system such as Blackboard

Learning Management and is comprised of reading and video assignments, formative self-

assessments through journaling, bi-weekly formative quizzes, and a final summative assessment

in the form of an in-depth research paper. A key element of the learning design is the bi-weekly

experiential class visit to traditional healing practitioners, during which the students use sensory

learning and reflective journaling about the experience.

This course is designed to be offered within a university setting, and the target learners

are both male and female adults, ages eighteen and up, from globally diverse ethnic and cultural

backgrounds. These students are proficient in both written and spoken English and have

demonstrated proficiency with computer technology and research methods, and completed

prerequisite coursework in biology, botany, anthropology, and Ethnobotany. The students are all

prepared with the scaffolding needed to support learning about indigenous cultures and their

traditional plant use in healing practices.

Key Stakeholders

The stakeholders are the University of Hawaii President, the President of the University

of Hawaii's Koleamoku College, the University Advisor on Hawaiian Affairs, the chancellor of

the University of Hawaii at Koleamoku, and the University of Hawaii Board of Regents.

Project team members involved are the head of the Ethnobotany Department at Hawaii's Koleamoku College, a subject matter expert on Native Hawaiian culture from the University Advisor on Hawaiian Affairs office, a staff member from the Ethnobotany department, a subject matter expert from Blackboard Learning Management Systems, and two University of Hawaii staff instructional designers.

Evaluation

Before the course is officially launched, a pilot course will be offered in order to identify and remedy any problem areas. The evaluation will be accomplished through student's success in formative assessments, reflective journal writing, discussion forums, quizzes and a final research paper. Any areas of the course in which most students scored low are an indication of a problem area. In order to further address potential problem areas, a course evaluation will be offered as part of the pilot course. This evaluation will identify areas that need improvement before the course is launched as part of the curriculum in the college's Ethnobotany program. The course pilot test needs to be in place before August 2016 so that feedback for changes and improvements in the course materials can be implemented in time to prepare the course within an online learning management system for the fall term, and to schedule field trip visits. A timeline will be established to ensure that the course pilot course, evaluation, course changes, and implementation will be launched in a timely manner before the fall term. This course evaluation (with possible improvements) will be offered again at the end of the first term that the course has been offered as part of the curriculum.

Primary areas to be evaluated in the course survey are: course design and organization, (including activities, assignments and tests) and student expectations and experience. Questions will address students' opinions about:

- Students' former learning about the subject
- Motivation for taking the course
- Whether the course increased their knowledge and understanding of the subject.
- Clarity of course objectives and expectations within syllabus.
- Course organization and the relevance of activities, assignments and assessments to course goals.
- Usefulness of online discussions
- The effectiveness of the delivery format and navigation.
- Access of online materials.
- The amount of time spent per week spent on coursework.
- Course activities that most enhanced learning.
- Course activities that were least helpful to learning.

An open field will be provided for any additional suggestions, comments, or ideas students may have for improving the course. Secondary areas of evaluation are questions that focus on instructor performance. Since this evaluation is initially intended to be the last step of the course design process, questions about the instructor are meant to be used as formative feedback used to form initial expectations for the role of course instructor. According to CoreNet Global (2016), the facilitator's role should be much more than a lecturer, "The facilitator regards his or her own identity as a flexible resource for the group. The facilitator acts as advisor, coach, counselor and one with experience in the field. The facilitator is able to express his or her own feelings and beliefs that are not seen as judgments or the only way to think." Questions that focus on the instructor's role will be crafted from the following areas:

- Instructor knowledge about the subject.
- The instructor's availability for questions and additional feedback.
- The timeliness, quality, and helpfulness of instructor feedback on discussion forums.
- The timeliness, quality, and helpfulness of instructor feedback on graded assignments.

Data Collection

The method of data collection will be an online survey, and the data collection strategy for both primary and secondary aspects of the course will be Likert scale questions that translate into data point assignments for each question. One week before the last course module, students will be emailed a request to take the survey, along with a link to the survey, including a reminder that the collection data from the survey will be confidential and anonymous. The survey will be hosted at an internal portal, and access will require a password that will be active for ten days. Reminders to complete and return surveys will be emailed again to students on the last day of the course. The number of the total audience is expected to be a class size of around thirty, and the sample size is 100% of the total audience. The survey will be closed fourteen days after activation. Expectations are that 90% of the survey audience will respond.

Analysis

The course goals will have been met if the data shows that 90% of the respondents answer with a high average of satisfaction level to the primary area evaluation questions. This would be determined by assigning higher data point numbers on the Likert scale to answers that reflect a higher level of satisfaction. For example, an answer of "5" out of 1,2,3,4, or 5 to the question, "Rate your overall satisfaction to this course." would rate higher than a "1". Data from secondary evaluation questions will be determined in a similar way. This information will serve to inform the qualities that students find most effective in an instructor for this course.

Utilization of Data/Implementation

Within a week of the survey completion deadline, an analysis of the captured data, along with a report, will be presented by the project lead to the design team. After improvements are made to the course, a final report will be compiled and presented by the design team to the stakeholders. The University of Hawaii Board of Regents governs the design of new courses, so the course must first receive the Regents' approval before it is presented to the chancellor of the University of Hawaii at Koleamoku, the president of Koleamoku College, and the university president for final approval.

Course Changes

The design team will meet to determine needed course changes and begin work on implementing the changes. After all of the changes have been made, a final report documenting the results of the pilot course assessment, and the resulting course changes, will be compiled and presented to the key university stakeholders. When changes are finally approved, the course will be launched as part of the fall term curriculum for the Ethnobotany department.

Conclusion

Global Indigenous Cultures and Healing Plants is a new hybrid Ethnobotany course that will be offered at the University of Hawaii's Koleamoku College. It will be delivered and facilitated through an online learning management system such as Blackboard Learning Management and through class field trips. Key stakeholders are the University of Hawaii President, the President of the University of Hawaii's Koleamoku College, the University Advisor on Hawaiian Affairs, the Chancellor of the University of Hawaii at Koleamoku, and the University of Hawaii Board of Regents. The project team members are the head of the Ethnobotany Department at Hawaii's Koleamoku College, a subject matter expert on Native

Hawaiian culture from the University Advisor on Hawaiian Affairs Office, a staff member from

the Ethnobotany department, a subject matter expert from Blackboard Learning Management

Systems, and two University of Hawaii staff instructional designers.

In order to identify any problem areas in the course, a pilot course will be run before the

course is released. Evaluation within the course will be accomplished through student's success

in formative assessments, reflective journal writing, discussion forums, quizzes and a final

research paper. In order to identify problem areas, a course evaluation will be offered to students

at the end of the pilot course. The course pilot test needs to be in place before August 2016 so

that feedback for changes and improvements in the course materials can be implemented in time

for course preparation for the fall term. Primary areas to be evaluated in the course survey are:

course design and organization, (including activities, assignments and tests) and student

expectations and experience. Secondary areas of evaluation are questions that focus on the

instructor performance. Since this evaluation is initially intended to be the last step of the design

process, questions about the instructor are meant to be used as formative feedback utilized in

forming initial expectations for the role of course instructor.

The method of data collection will be an online survey, and the data collection strategy

for both primary and secondary aspects of the course will be Likert scale questions that translate

into data point assignments for each question. The number of the total audience is expected to be

a class size of around thirty, and the sample size is 100% of the total audience. The survey will

be closed fourteen days after activation at which time the survey should be complete.

Expectations are that 90% of the survey audience will respond. The course goals will have been

met if the data shows that 90% of the respondents answer to the primary area evaluation

questions with a high average of satisfaction. Data from secondary questions will be used as

formative feedback to develop instructor notes for the course. An analysis of the captured data along with a report will presented to the design team by the project lead within a week of the survey completion deadline. After improvements are made to the course, a final report will be compiled and presented to the key university stakeholders. When the course has been approved, it will be launched as part of the fall term curriculum for the Ethnobotany department.

<div align="center">Lessons Learned</div>

The most significant lesson learned from this process is that many details of course design and assessment are not always apparent from the start. Ongoing improvement is a reasonable expectation in most endeavors, and especially in course design, implementation and facilitation. The process of continuous improvement is a fluid one, so when new issues and details present themselves, flexibility is needed in adjusting expectations in all areas of the process.

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