COMMENTARY

The future of learning: Teaching industrial and organizational psychology in all modalities

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Higher education has been seeing a sharp increase in online learning for more than a decade (Allen & Seaman, 2017), allowing faculty to expand to various modalities (Fredericksen, 2017), and now the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated this transformation with the necessitation of virtual learning for the masses. This creates not only an opportunity for increased research in online learning but also an opportunity to apply the best practices in online learning that we already know. In recent years, institutions began incorporating hybrid and fully online courses. Allthough this evolution was slow and often met with skepticism (Dumford & Miller, 2018), it has become inevitable in the current pandemic climate. Educators have been unexpectedly forced into the world of virtual learning, and now, it doesn't appear that higher education is going to be able to return to its old "normal" anytime soon.

Educators may be planning to use traditional teaching methods that are intended for in-person courses (i.e., lecture; midterm/final exam assessments) in an online or hybrid format. However, these methods do not align with best practices that are encouraged for remote learners (Geri et al., 2017). The online mode can deliver some aspects of the course asynchronously (Watts, 2016), which means that students can engage and complete coursework at any time during a given instructional period such as a week. This mode has several advantages, including eliminating geographical and time barriers among the student, instructor, and institution. The online teaching modality may be particularly useful because students' lives have been disrupted by the pandemic in several ways, presenting unforeseen barriers to learning, which may include geographical constraints in that some students cannot live in dormitories and time constraints in that they may be facing multiple demands (e.g., childcare, eldercare, work demands). These benefits will likely open the avenue for significant increases of online course delivery.

In the focal article by Kath et al. (2021), the authors share several specific recommendations to incorporate knowledge from the field of Industrial-Organizational (I-O) psychology into the classroom. We would like to extend their discussion by sharing how their recommendations align with best practices in online education. Although we draw from our experiences while we were creating courses for a high-quality online I-O psychology master's program, we expect that these examples will easily translate for use in all types of modalities and both in undergraduate and graduate programs.

Development processes and activities

The first step in our online course development process includes working on a course snapshot, or blueprint in which overall and weekly course objectives are identified following Bloom's taxonomy

(Training & Development; Kath et al., 2021). Although faculty may already identify course objectives, to extend this further, each learning resource (e.g., scholarly article, podcast) as well as assessment (e.g., quiz, project) or exercise (e.g., discussion) should map onto each weekly objective or be removed. In addition, faculty should take the time to demonstrate the connection between the objectives and the course materials to students to explain the "why" behind learning, which will likely increase student buy in and increase follower behavior (Leadership; Kath et al., 2021).

For each topic, faculty can consider developing courses to include the following pieces to engage students: (a) learning resource (i.e., material to facilitate learning including readings, PowerPoint slides, short videos), (b) practice exercise (i.e., a nongraded immediate self-assessment that can include pairing key terms with definitions, multiple choice, fill in the blank), (c) interaction activity (i.e., an opportunity to connect with peers in the form of discussion posts, team projects), (d) application assessment (i.e., any assignment that explicitly allows direct application of course materials, such as the job analysis project), and (e) review (i.e., an assessment that allows a knowledge check of material, which can include a reflection question or multiple choice quiz). This framework can be adopted when teaching in person, in a hybrid learning environment, and in both undergraduate and graduate courses.

After the overview of the course has been mapped, instructors can move into the next phase of the course-development process and complete weekly content maps or storyboards (Shaver, 2017). The content map outlines in detail how the student will "experience" the course for that particular week. Faculty are encouraged to begin with an Introduction message, which sets the context for the weekly learning. In an online modality, this can be in the form of a recorded video, and faculty members who are teaching in person can prepare their thoughts ahead of time to share with students. Questions such as the following can be addressed. *What is the "big picture" we are trying to drive home? How does that fit into the narrative of the whole course? What skills will the students be gaining here? What should their approach to learning be this week to engage with the material?* This introduction can be tailored to match the characteristics of the faculty member because it continues to set the tone for "instructor presence." Some creative ways that this can be done is by having the instructor share big-picture concepts for the week through personal anecdotes in academia or their applied experience, memes, or through storytelling. For example, when teaching recruitment and selection, students can follow a fictional consultant that is going through the steps of the selection process for an organization. This big-picture exercise can set the stage for the detailed information to follow.

In the online course modality, faculty need to be very explicit and transparent regarding expectations because they do not have the luxury of articulating these out loud in a synchronous session. Each deliverable requires the instructor to clearly articulate the purpose, instructions or prompt, delivery mode, and deadline. These clear expectations can be adapted for all types of modalities to meet the needs of all types of learners. Given that verbal and immediate feedback look different in an online course, a detailed rubric that outlines the criteria and anchored ratings (e.g., exemplary, competent, needs improvement, and unsatisfactory) is often used to assess deliverables, which supports students with a strong performance orientation (Training & Development; Kath et al., 2021). The detailed grading rubric allows the instructor to communicate an evaluation of the work to the student and allows more time to provide individualized developmental feedback (Leadership; Kath et al., 2021). Faculty who teach in all modalities and all student levels are encouraged to adopt detailed rubrics to improve their accuracy in performance evaluations of student coursework. All of the learning materials, activities, and assessments that are provided in a course should ensure that students have *repeated* opportunities each week and throughout the semester for feedback and improvement (Training & Development). The larger number of deliverables for online courses allows students opportunities to compensate for a poor grade in any one assessment (Training & Development), which can also be considered for all modalities. Next, we dive into sharing more information about the online course experience and highlight alignment with best practices in I-O psychology.

Online course experience

One teaching best practice is to have students begin by introducing themselves to their instructor and their classmates. This is especially important in asynchronous online courses to create a foundation that will build learner-to-learner dialog and help facilitate community building (Boettcher & Conrad, 2016). We further enhance this by asking students to create videos; upload pictures; and share background information, professional work experience, their goals for the course, and other course-specific prompts (e.g., Have you hired anyone? What experience have you had as a producer or consumer of research?). This exercise serves multiple purposes, including highlighting student motivation and diverse backgrounds (Training & Development; Diversity & Inclusion; Kath et al., 2021). Instructors from all modalities are encouraged to adopt similar kinds of exercises to hone in on student motivation and bring to attention both surface and deep level characteristics of students.

Online programs often provide access to all types of students, including those with diverse professional backgrounds, such as individuals who recently graduated with little formal work experience or students with senior executive-level positions. To cater to the broad range of experience levels (Diversity & Inclusion), faculty may need to consider tailoring the course material to meet the needs of a wider population. For example, instructors may create discussion posts that ask students to reflect on the course material as it relates to their work or extracurricular experiences. In addition, to provide specific concrete examples, faculty may consider inviting or creating videos with professional alumni from their program that share experiences that are relevant to the topics that are being covered. Instructors from all modalities may consider using cumulative application-based team projects that students work on throughout the semester. This can be in the form of a consulting project, applied project (e.g., job analysis, validation project, training project), or a research proposal. This type of assignment allows the instructor to carefully consider the spacing and repetition of course material, introduce new concepts and skills, and provide the opportunity for students of diverse backgrounds to work closely on a common goal (Training & Development, Diversity & Inclusion, Groups & Teams). In these team projects, students can be encouraged to complete team contracts and final grades can include both individual and group components (Groups & Teams).

To further foster a diverse and inclusive learning environment, programs and instructors are encouraged to send out announcements that recognize, acknowledge, or outline actions in response to events that affect our students (e.g., Black Lives Matter, Pride Month) and encourage student participation in groups that serve underrepresented minorities (e.g., Blacks in I-O psychology). Dedicating time outside of the formal classroom environment is encouraged to provide opportunities to discuss various topics within I-O psychology, networking, recent events, and more (Diversity & Inclusion). To continuously be aware and overcome one's own biases, instructors are encouraged to engage with trainings and groups (e.g., the I-O coffee house) that are focused on participants' becoming antiracist (Diversity & Inclusion). These practices and experiences translate into the classroom and foster a more inclusive learning environment for all students.

Conclusion

This paper outlines specific ways that the recommended changes that are put forth by Kath et al. (2021) align with practices of online education and can be extended to all types of modalities and programs. We drew upon specific examples from our own experiences with developing a fully online master's program in I-O Psychology and described the exercises in ways that can be adopted when teaching undergraduate and graduate students in any mode. We hope that readers are able to walk away with specific insights to continue improving their learning environments. We call upon educators in the field to continuously think about making our profession accessible and effectively teaching I-O psychology in the world of our new "normal."

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