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Faculty developement in online instruction

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The rapid transformation of courses in higher education from the classroom to the internet has surpassed the ability to properly prepare faculty to competently teach online. Literature supports many differences between classroom and online courses, but faculty are often asked to teach online courses without any previous formal training in those differences or given strategies to successfully engage students online. As a strategy to address the gap in practice, a faculty needs assessment was completed by online faculty at a private nursing college that identified a need for education in online instruction pedagogy, best practices and resources. To provide the education needed, faculty requested the training be self-paced, easy to navigate, and provided in short sessions. Faculty also expressed the desire to receive credit for completion, so three hours of continuing education credits were provided. A series of three modules were created to provide faculty with training to teach online prior to beginning online instruction. The modules were interactive, allowing faculty to experience what students experience in an online course, and included homework assignments and reflection through online threaded discussion with peers. The modules provided education in online pedagogy, best practices, strategies for student engagement, and online resources for course development. Upon completion of all modules, faculty completed an evaluation that assessed how well objectives were met using a 1-5 Likert Scale and allowed additional comments. 31 out of 57 faculty completed the modules, with 22 completing the program evaluation. The results were positive in both numeric and narrative responses.

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