

PUBLICATION BRIEF

COLLEGE of EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT TYLER

Shifting From a Face-to-Face to an Online Educational Leadership Program: A Case Study

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Summary:

As educational leaders and teachers of aspiring educational leaders, we encourage our students to embrace the process of change, and we assume they will promote this concept in their schools. The change process is stressed because technology has drastically changed the means, methods and approaches by which we communicate. Some educational leadership programs are having this critical discussion in hopes of altering the way they deliver their services while others are resisting what they consider a fundamental change to educational leadership preparation. This phenomenon caused us to begin a dialogue to initiate changes in our educational leadership preparation program. The intent of this case study is to compare the changes from face-to face to an online experience and to contribute to the dialogue within the profession concerning changes in the preparation of educational leaders.

Data was collected to compare the last face-to-face group of students (2008-2009) to the first online group of students (2009-2010). Specifically, semester credit hours generated, semester credit hour capacity/efficiency, revenue generated and performance on the state certification examination were compared.

With minimal marketing of the program, the Department experienced a 250% increase in semester credit hour generation. The semester credit hours generated per class, which demonstrates the efficiency and cost effectiveness of each class, also increased from 33 to 91. The online program increased revenue generated by the program by \$107, 633 or 34%. Finally, comparisons between the face-to-face and online group of students on the state mandated Texas Examination of Educator Standards (TExES) indicated comparable performance on the scale score and passing rates.

Challenges to programs of higher education have always existed. Questions about rigor, decreasing resources, and competition outside the traditional university system provide the impetus to examine educational leadership preparation. The impact of technology may be perceived as positive or negative, but exploring the impact of innovation on the practice of leadership development programs offers the opportunity to revisit the core beliefs of a program and align any changes or adjustments with these core beliefs. Whatever makes the student successful, in practice and program completion, should be the primary intent of the innovation.

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