As online teaching continues to increase in popularity, so has the need for effective evaluation of online faculty. Most administrators are familiar and comfortable with conducting evaluations in a traditional classroom setting, but how do traditional evaluation methods transfer to an online setting? Can a traditional faculty evaluation tool, such as student evaluations, accurately measure effectiveness and quality of a faculty member in an online class? The quality of faculty and instruction are critical to the success of any program, and even more so in an online based program, therefore, having an effective evaluation method that functions to both evaluate and mentor those who teach in an online setting is vital to the success of the program.

In Developing a Comprehensive Faculty Evaluation System, Raoul Arreola focuses on the importance of measurement, evaluation, objectivity, and controlled subjectivity as the bedrock of evaluating and developing teaching abilities. (Arreola, 2007) As we strengthen online teaching performance it is critical that what we measure and how we evaluate is a valid indicator of performance and aligns with the organization of our course development, learning management system, and teaching expectations. (MarylandOnline, 2014) Building on an institution's existing method of evaluation to appropriately evaluate online instruction requires an understanding of what the evaluation tool is used for within an institution, online best practices, and an awareness of what measurements mean. (The Sloan Consortium, 2012)

Traditionally teaching evaluation includes student evaluations, direct observation, and a review of course materials. (Arreola, 2007) For online courses which are most commonly developed by subject matter experts and instructional designers, student evaluations of the course and instructor evaluations need to be separated.

For this session we will review the primary differences between online vs. traditional classroom instruction, as well as the best principles and practices in teaching and delivering online courses, which are important to understand when it comes to evaluating online faculty and instruction. The review of the points will include an extensive review of the literature. The exploration of best practices in evaluating online faculty will be from the perspective of a dean, chair, and online faculty member. Participants will gain an understanding of the need for an evaluation system dedicated to the online class and an awareness of how to transition existing evaluation systems so that continuity in evaluations and promotions can be maintained. Case studies, open discussions, and dialogue from participants will be encouraged.

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