Editing Distance Education Materials

Distance education materials take a learner-centred approach rather than the traditionally content-centred approach of textbooks. The key is the student. Learners need to become involved and motivated by the materials and to take ownership of the skills and knowledge that they acquire. This has several implications for the editing of distance education materials.

Author
Swales, Christine

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Printed materials remain an important component of most distance education courses. Two-way technology-based communication is now an essential feature of distance education delivery. Email, internet chat, and internet videoconferencing are the most cost-effective modes of communication. All courses should incorporate opportunities for synchronous (real-time) communications. There has been a recent re-emergence of videoconferencing in distance education implementation due to the development of inexpensive voice over internet protocol (VOIP). Cameras and editing equipment can be expensive. In addition, the infrastructure at each site and the links between sites can be costly. Require a great deal of planning and preparation. Distance education is defined as: institution-based, formal education where the learning group is separated, and where interactive telecommunications systems are used to connect learners, resources, and instructors.

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