The Usage of E-tutoring (e-learning) system at UNISA

Presented by Thuthu Mkhize
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Outline of Presentation

• Overview of the Integrated Tutor Model (ITM) at UNISA
• Stakeholders involved in the ITM
• Role of the lecturer
• Role of e-tutor in e-classroom
• Facilitation skills for effective e-tutoring
• Challenges experienced by UNISA
• Implementation of a student evaluation system
Introduction

• UNISA: 140 years in existence
• Correspondence Learning
  → Distance Learning (DL)
    → Open Distance Learning (ODL)
      → Open Distance e-learning (ODeL)
• Commitment to student support culminated in the ODeL model
• ODeL model provides a blended teaching and learning option to students
Introduction

• A manner of providing support to students
• Prepare students for computer-literacy demands of 21st century work environment
• Material reaches students directly with few physical resources
• New to Unisa → but here to stay
  – 2013 → NQF 5 → first year modules
  – 2014 → NQF 6 → second year modules
Integrated Tutor Model

- Face-to-Face Tutors
- e-Tutors
Overview of the Integrated Tutor Model at UNISA

- Face-to-face tutors
  - 15 hours of contact per semester
  - Provide guidance and facilitate learning process
  - Classes arranged by regional offices and attended by students

- e-Tutors
  - 75 hours of online contact per semester
  - Provide guidance and facilitate learning process
  - Available from February to May or July to October
Stakeholders Involved in the Integrated Tutor Model

• Lecturer: number of e-tutors depends on total number of students registered for the module per semester

• e-Tutor: allocated group of 200 students
Role of the Lecturer

• Provides a 15 week semester plan
• Clarifies uncertainties
• Monitors e-tutor sites for activity and subject content discussions
• Informs students of e-tutors: tutorial letters, SMSs, regional web sites, Facebook, emails
• Informs students of the role of e-tutors
Role of the e-Tutor in the e-Classroom

- Guidance
- Executes 15 week semester plan of lecturer
- Facilitates and constantly monitors learning process, pace of learning, responds to questions
- Must be active on sites
- Initiates discussions on aspects of syllabus
- Provides exercises to students
- e-Tutor must be active otherwise not paid or deactivated and replaced
Facilitation Skills for Effective e-Tutoring

• Constant motivation
• Facilitates student learning
• Content specialist
• Provides answers to student questions or direct student
Challenges Experienced by UNISA

- New model changes all the time
- Lack of access to internet
- e-Learning is bandwidth-intensive
- Academics not trained to provide instruction using e-teaching and e-learning technologies
- e-Learning needs facilitation and lecturers not active
- Students not active on sites, become lurkers instead of active participants
- Find ways to lure students to sites
Implementation of a Student Online Evaluation System (eVALUate)

• Currently provide students with 9 survey questions to ascertain needs of students
• Information provided will assist to improve current e-tutor system
• Information gleaned from students who respond
• Implement a student-centric e-tutor system
• Adopt a phased-in step-by-step approach to e-teaching and e-learning
Conclusion

• UNISA being an open distance e-learning institution implemented e-tutor e-teaching and e-learning model in an e-classroom
• e-Tutor involvement paramount to student success
• More active lecturer → e-tutor → students
• New, experiencing many challenges
• Model changing constantly
• Evaluating the needs and perceptions of the students to improve the implementation
Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.

Nelson Mandela