Online learning: Perceptions from a South Texas Institution

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ABSTRACT

In an attempt to reach more students, many institutions of higher learning are shifting from traditional face-to-face course formats to hybrid or online course formats. While online course have the advantage of being able to reach diverse and far-flung students, they are do not come problem free. Problems may range from technology to the personality of the person enrolled in the course. Diverse students come with a variety of learning styles which are strongly impacted by culture. Two views of teaching styles have been identified. The first basically states that "good teaching is good teaching" and will work regardless of learning style or cultural background. The second posits that what works for a typical middle class white student may or may not work for less affluent and/or minority students. As many colleges and universities transition to on-line course offerings, course developers should as if student learning styles and/or culture should be taken into account when deciding what courses to offer online and how to design the content for online courses. This study begins the process by surveying business students at a minority institution to identify their preference for, and perceptions of, on-line courses.