

Use of Computers in Instruction

Article 1

Liang, Xin & Kim Creasy (2004). Classroom assessment in web-based instructional environment: instructors' experience. *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation*, 9(7). Retrieved August 12, 2005 from <http://PAREonline.net/getvn.asp?v=9&n=7>

While a great deal has been written on the advantage and benefits of online teaching, little is known on how assessment is implemented in online classrooms to monitor and inform performance and progress. The purpose of this study was to investigate the dynamics of WebCT classroom assessment by analyzing the perceptions and experience of the instructors. Grounded theory method was employed to generate a "process theory". The study included 10 faculties who taught WebCT classes, and 216 students in the College of Education in an urban university in the Mid west. Interviews and classroom observations were undertaken on line. The findings indicated that, performance-based assessment, writing skills, interactive assessment and learner autonomy were major assessment aspects to inform teaching and enhance learning.

To summarize, the study emphasizes that assessment should be focused on helping students learn. Three issues were identified: 1) performance-based assessments were found to be prevalent to counteract and balance the issues of: physical absence, test security and student authenticity. 2) Instructors were more of facilitators than teachers in online classes. Without physically interaction with students, what instructors actually did was to provide learners with resources and information. And, 3) Instructors and learners relied heavily on writing communication and visual layout to carry out the task to assess learning and instructional effectiveness. An important issue was the recognition that social clues such as body language, physical appearance, voice, and other social interference instructors can evaluate student "performance more objectively.