

Module 5: Design (P3: Development)



This document contains the content from the interactive instructional unit for the module.

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Introduction

The third phases of ISD process is **development**. This is where you actually create what you have been planning. In this instructional unit, we will consider two issues that should be considered during development of a course or unit -- Organization and Navigation. However, you should be aware that is a cursory discussion on one aspect of development and by no means exhaustive. Many additional issues that should be considered are outlined in your texts. Additional issues can be found via

research.

Objectives

Unit Objectives:

- Identify strategies to ensure effective organization of an online or mobile developed learning unit.
- Identify strategies to ensure easy navigation of an online or mobile developed learning unit.

By the end of this unit, what would you like to learn? Write your personal objectives.

Personal Objectives:

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Organization

In traditional classroom-based education, students are presented with assignments coordinated to lecture materials. The instructor distributes required activities as appropriate and can answer student concerns/questions in the classroom environment.

When distributed in the distance education environment, learners may be exposed to an entire semester's worth of materials all at once. As such, they must be provided with clear, concise instructions regarding navigation within a CourseSite and organization of the materials.

When developing components, be sure to provide students with:

- An overview and/or an orientation of the entire Course site.
- A clear explanation about how the course materials are organized.
- A list of priorities, deadlines, and responsibilities.

This is, most often, the same type of information included in a syllabus. Providing this extra organizational information can prevent students from feeling "lost" or "overwhelmed" by the materials, as disorientation can significantly limit instructional outcomes. (Oliver, Herrington, Omari, 1996)

Transitions

Since the instructor is not physically present during the distance education learning process, it is important to explain exactly WHAT materials are provided and WHY they are important in the scheme of the course. Indicating relationships between materials helps students develop bridges, see associations, and recognize the relevance of content elements. Without this, instructors run the risk of presenting fragmented information "that appears to the user as a series of discrete rather than coherent information elements," (Oliver, Herrington, Omari, 1996).

How can you provide transitions? By providing:

- Clear explanations describing what each file is, what programs are necessary to access it, and how the file fits in with the overall goals of the lesson.
- Comprehensive descriptions with each assignment indicating the relevance to the classroom-based course component and corresponding materials.
- Placement cues directing students to the "next" related assignment, reading, or course document.

This does not mean that each step and learning activity needs to be spelled out for the student. While this may be appropriate for some content-based exercises, advanced concept integration is better served when students are gently directed to a goal. In such cases, "it is more appropriate to guide the students towards expected end-results and let them organize their learning on their own," (Duchastel, 1997).

Other Considerations

After your unit, workshop, or course content is developed, review the materials before permitting student access. Evaluate the material to ensure the content, opportunity for participation and feedback, and appropriate guidance is included. These guidelines, based on Dick and Carey's Instructional Systems Design, can be used.

1. Is there appropriate motivation established to insure student attention to the material and assignments?
2. Is the necessary content provided for all course components?
3. Is the presentation sequence of the content accurate and clearly indicated to guide students through the material?
4. Is all the required information available to the student in some format?
5. Do ample practice exercises exist for students to achieve appropriate rehearsal, processing, and knowledge acquisition of the content?
6. Are there adequate opportunities for instructor and classmate feedback included in the materials?
7. Are appropriate tests, activities, and evaluation tools provided to assess student progress?
8. Are sufficient follow-through activities provided to maintain learning and motivation over time?

9. Is the student presented with clear paths, navigational guidance, and transition information to direct them through the course material and components?
10. Are supplemental handouts, such as outlines or checklists available to the student to facilitate transfer of learning provided?

Answering "YES" to all these questions insures that students are presented with well-organized, instructionally sound, and engaging course material. However, since "courseware alone rarely constitutes the full learning environment," (Schneider, 1994), it is imperative to support students by creating a positive online educational experience.

This information was adapted from the Blackboard site for instructors.

Summary

You should now be able to:

- Identify strategies to ensure effective organization of an online or mobile developed learning unit.
- Identify strategies to ensure easy navigation of an online or mobile developed learning unit.



Have you also met your learning objectives?

Personal Objectives:

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