Introduction

Online course enrollment and instruction by faculty is becoming more common due to the requirements of colleges and universities to adapt to the needs of today’s graduate students that are juggling school, work, and home life. Colleges and universities have also cut costs by expediting the time it takes for a student to earn a degree which has made online courses viable option for graduate students who are typically working adults and some who have family obligations. Yet, when enrollment is the result of government orders due to a pandemic to comply with social distancing requirements, a student may be forced to adjust to new study schedules and unfamiliar methods of learning. The online environment if they are transitioning from being a campus student can be daunting, especially if the timeframe to complete the course has been shortened. For the faculty member it can be demanding as well since they are tasked to achieve course outcomes and deal with life circumstances that may influence timely assignment submission, ADA accommodations, student’s with learning gaps that have not had pre-requisite course work, and student’s retaking the course. The question of how the student, faculty member, library services, technical support, tutoring services, and student advising can collaborate to ensure a successful student experience remains to be addressed. In the following discussion these areas with examples of different student dilemmas will be assessed and solutions developed for use by faculty who work more readily with students.

Fostering independence in selecting learning materials in the learning management system allows students to connect with their learning style. Whether a multi-media presentation, an electronic book, and adaptive learning management system that assesses strengths and weaknesses results in setting the student on their learning path. It is imperative to guide the student without enabling them. This is so they can self-edit and learn in ways that will strengthen their skills in future careers without expecting the faculty member to solve a problem or complete an assignment for them. Holding the student to a standard results in elevating their critical thinking, organizational, communication, negotiation and time management skills. The following examples are based on faculty experiences with students in the online learning environment.

Figure 1. Managing Student Issues in Online Course

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| Student Issue | Faculty Response | Other departments/resources |
| Does not know where to find articles on businesses that use multivariate statistical techniques for assignment | The online library i. e. Ebsco, ProQuest, Business Source Premier | Library Services |
| Unable to download Tableau Software on Mac Computer for assignment | Use Microsoft Excel which is a Business Intelligence software  Provide tech support contact and where to find it for future assignments | Microsoft Office Resource tutorials  Technical Support |
| Student does not understand assignment instructions provided for data analysis using Tableau BI software and has gone to four departments learning services, tutoring services, the faculty supervisor, and back to the faculty member. | Develop rapport with the student so they will come to you first. Provide a tutorial that is visual and covers the steps in the assignment. Provide a link to a more comprehensive video than the one in the assignment. | Student responded that it was like the “heavens opened up” with the additional resources provided by the faculty member resulting in an A grade on the assignment |
| A student working remotely with children at home being home schooled due to COVID-19. Reports that s/he cannot concentrate with the chaos. | Allow student more time on assignment due to need to adjust. Agree on the rescheduled due date. | Contact student advising to provide coaching through the chaos and stress management suggestions |
| A student is a business owner in the commercial cleaning industry, is ESL requiring more time on assignments, and is homeschooling four children due to COVID-19 | Thank the student for clearly explaining dilemmas. Agree upon the extension. Consider gender role of caring for children in their culture | Remind student of tutoring services available and provide contact information for their convenience |
| A student is ADA and sends numerous emails copying student advisor about details of health issues requiring additional time in lieu of both the faculty member and student advisor awareness. Student advisor also sends separate emails to faculty member | Respond to the student using messenger feature vs. email to give a quicker response from the faculty member without copying the student advisor. Make the student aware of the office hours posted. | Inform the student advisor that you are complying with and aware of ADA and asks if the student has assignment questions to suggest they deal with the faculty directly. Make them aware of the offices hours that are posted. |
| Student submits assignment that does not meet assignment requirements and sends a flaming email to the faculty member threatening to escalate to the Dean after failing the assignment. | Ask the student if they read the specific feedback in the gradebook. Review the assignment for student’s concerns. Allow the student one pass to resubmit the assignment. Respond to student’s decision not to resubmit the assignment, yet you noticed that they performed well on other assignments. Encourage them not to make decisions in anger and think about it over the weekend. | Refer to student advisor after student refuses to resubmit and demands a better grade. |
| Student is retaking the course again with the same faculty member. The faculty member recalls the student had issues with similarity scores and had been referred several times for plagiarism violations resulting in failing the course the first time. | Use the teachable moment approach to addressing high similarity scores. Explain to student why their assignment similarity is high and make suggestions on how not to use direct quotes and to develop their own charts using Tableau. | Suggest to the student that they sign up for a writing center tutor at the onset of the course the second time around. |
| Student is struggling with a unit  in the adaptive learning platform and repeatedly fails the assessments. She also has run out of time to complete the project since the needed information was not found in the adaptive learning platform. | Ask the student if s/he has read the assignment instructions first before working in the adaptive learning platform. Point out the video link to how to perform a Chi-square calculation. Also remind the student of the live chat session now archive recording which covered the steps. This way they what resource links are in the assignment. | Share my screen and point out the resources in the assignment  for performing Chi-square calculations that the student overlooked. |

Faculty must track student issues, responses and other resources referred to ascertain and repeat effective approaches. The issues tack into account a student’s profile, circumstances, organizational and time management skills, how issues are communicated, other resources awareness, and their self-confidence. It is easy to get bogged down with day to day tasks of grading, checking messages, and emails. By all means also avoid expediency, addressing issues as they arise instead of prioritizing them. This reduces faculty stress, increases efficiency, and provides a greater opportunity to resolve the student issue.