

Assessing Asynchronous Online Teaching

By Anne Zanzucchi

Merritt Writing Program, Co-Director

4 April 2013, 11am-12pm

Session Outcomes

- Review key activities associated with asynchronous learning
- Identify and prioritize criteria for asynchronous projects
- Begin to plan an activity and assessment method

Why this topic?

Asynchronous activities are “*the second most commonly used capability for online education,*” after email (Kearsley, 2000, p.30). In promoting a high level of reflective interaction, these activities can be “*a powerful tool for group communication and cooperative learning.*” (Rovai & Jordan, 2004, p. 2).

These kinds of references and more can be found on the [National Science Foundation's Information Technology bibliography](http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/seind02/c8/c8b.htm) at:

<http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/seind02/c8/c8b.htm>

History and Defining our Terms

One piece: standardized educational content



History and Defining our Terms

- The other piece: peer-based learning



Asynchronous tools

- Email
- Listservs
- Discussion boards
- Wikis
- Blogs
- Recorded webinars
- Archived lecture slides (plus audio/video)

Strengths & weaknesses of this model

- Strengths: just-in-time learning principles, diverse student access, interactive, content available anytime and anywhere
- Weaknesses: course development costs, instructor workload, technological infrastructure
- * Instructors often report feeling a lack of support for faculty development, particularly with assessing student projects

Longitudinal study: Penny & Murphy (2009)

- Evaluation of 50 standard rubrics of asynchronous activities in postsecondary contexts
- Identified four core categories as follows:
 - (a) cognitive (44.0%) {reasoning, reflection, argumentation}
 - (b) mechanical(19.0%) {language, mechanics, style}
 - (c) procedural/managerial(18.29%) {frequency, engagement}
 - (d) interactive(17.17%) {feedback, connections, responses}

Activity: Free-write

- Independently consider an online activity you would or have implemented that is asynchronous. Briefly describe.
 - Consider Penny & Murphy's emphasis on core skills (see below). Which ones will be emphasized in your activity? Briefly describe.
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Activity: With a partner

- With a partner, discuss the handout about stages of building a cohesive asynchronous online community
 - (a) What are the goals and stages of developing a cohesive and asynchronous online activity (in this case discussion boards)?
 - (b) Review the descriptions of stages with your partner. How might some of these statements become criteria for your example activities?

Some useful resources

- *Faculty focus*

<http://www.facultyfocus.com/topic/articles/asynchronous-learning-and-trends/>

- Sloan Foundation's *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*

http://sloanconsortium.org/publications/jaln_main

- Penny, L. & Murphy, E. (2009) [Rubrics for designing and evaluating online asynchronous discussions](#). *British journal of educational technology*. 40.5, 805-840.