

## **Distance Education: Challenges, Strategies, Successes, and Pitfalls**

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## Distance Education: Challenges, Strategies, Successes, and Pitfalls

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The development and growth of distance education technology presents educators with the challenge of providing “tried and true” content in a new, innovative fashion. This is two-part presentation designed to share the challenges, useful strategies, successes and pitfalls of distance education. Many educators continue to battle the philosophical differences between on site and distance education, however students indicate that, given a choice, they will enroll in courses that are flexible and easily accessed. Distance education certainly satisfies those two criteria.

The technology does present some challenges which must be met to allow the full expression of the student-faculty interaction and the academic rigor found in the traditional classroom. Faculty must address security issues, maintenance of high academic standards, and effective communication simultaneously with maintaining a caring, engaging distance learning environment. The challenges are many, but so are the rewards. Students, especially those in rural areas, appreciate the opportunity to advance their education without traveling long distances and experiencing scheduling conflicts. They also enjoy their ability to control, to some degree, the pace of instruction.

Discussion topics will include challenges to communication and interaction in a distance environment, technical difficulties, and evaluation of student learning. Practical strategies focusing on enhanced acquisition and retention of learning will also be addressed.