RE-CONCEPTUALIZING PRESENCE:
EXAMINING THE WORK OF TEACHING ONLINE

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ABSTRACT

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A decade of research utilizing the Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework has unveiled the priority of *teaching presence* in effective models of online education. The data for this finding are significant, as is the momentum of the CoI in suggesting theoretical and practical implications for implementing contemporary online education. However, questions remain regarding the CoI's proposed 3-dimensions of teaching presence. For example, CoI research to date has for the most part overlooked how online faculty envision their teaching. This study explores these perspectives providing additional conceptual work related to the nature of online teaching presence. These data suggest broadening the definition of the first dimension, *design and organization*, to include four sets of priorities evident in online course design. Confirming prior research, these interviews also argue for envisioning the CoI's proposed final two dimensions of teaching presence as a single dimension entitled *directed facilitation*, allowing for a broader combination of roles adopted by online teachers. Finally, the literature on teaching provides a guide for expanding the initial dimensions of teaching presence to include *teacher preferences*, that is, the variation evidenced in differing educational priorities, pedagogical styles, and even the personalities of online teachers. Two external influences, *institutional conditions* and *disciplinary contexts*, although not identified as dimensions, give shape to how these re-conceptualized dimensions of teaching presence are portrayed online.

DEDICATION

For her tireless devotion and encouragement through these years of work and study, I dedicate this dissertation to my loving wife, Rhinda. The degree accompanying these pages is certainly as much yours as it is mine. With a full heart I declare my love and my gratitude to you.

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KEY TO SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

≈	approximately
CAT	classroom assessment techniques
CoI	Community of Inquiry
ICT	information and communication technology
IT	information technology
LMS	Learning Management System
LON-CAPA	LearningOnline Network with Computer-Assisted Personalized Approach
OED	Oxford English Dictionary
TA	teaching assistant
U.K.	United Kingdom

Chapter 1 – Introduction

From Convention to Innovation: A Brief History

The birth of computer-mediated distance education in the 1970s and exponential growth over the past two decades has to a large degree followed trajectories initiated from its earliest days. This was, in part, a consequence of the specific vocabulary chosen to frame its uses. Cast within the mold of certain preformed ideas on correspondence education, computer-mediated learning adopted descriptors such as *distance learning* and the *virtual classroom* to situate itself among more traditional approaches to teaching and learning. In the spirit of James O'Donnell (2000), it seems early educational experimenters were relying on portrayals of "the old medium for a way to think about the new" (42).

Conversely, scholarship on the nature and work of teaching and learning within traditional educational environments over this same period provides a counterpoint to these depictions. For example, authors such as Kenneth Eble (1976) sought to redefine a teacher's *presence* in the classroom in ways that moved beyond mere physical proximity, claiming that *distance* might exist or even develop between teacher and student though they spend a semester together in the same time and space. Eble noted how gifted or imaginative teachers seek to "overcome the limitations that confine learning to a designated space … that set a fixed period of time at fixed intervals as the norm for learning" (29). It is somewhat ironic that even as educators like Eble were seeking to extend the imagination of what it means to teach and to learn beyond the potential limitations of traditional signifiers, emerging forms of online teaching and learning were seeking to hang their wares on the same old educational hooks.

Early representations of online distance education adopted prevalent social constructivist pedagogies of the day, following Vygotsky's (1978) connection of authentic learning with the development of learning communities. Thus, early approaches within these emerging digital spaces took replication as their starting point rather than exploring other adaptive possibilities. Priority was given to replicating face-to-face learning, leading to the development of new technologies such as chat rooms and discussion forums (c.f. Bernard et al., 2004; Paloff & Pratt, 2001). It is only within the past decade or so that enough history has seemingly been forged within these new educational environments to begin to give way to a growing chorus of critical voices, educators who are considering their uses of and vision for technologically-mediated teaching and learning. And so, what had become an increasingly familiar set of melodies related to the conventions of online distance learning, are today being recomposed against the counterpoints of probing ideological questions and the rapid development of new technologies.

More recently, Michael Moore (1991, 1993, 2007) opened the door to envisioning the idea of *distance* between the teacher and student as a *transactional space* of psychological and communicative connection or disconnection rather than a description of physical proximity. In essence, Moore's theory of transactional distance calls into question the ways in which we have traditionally understood the uses of new Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in computer-mediated education. Since Moore's first publications, calls for the re-crafting of a theory or theories of online learning have remained relatively steady (cf., Benbunan-Fitch, Hiltz, & Harasim, 2005; Hill, Wiley, Nelson, & Han, 2003; Saba, 2003). What is instructive in these developments is the realization that early signifiers such as *distance learning* or *the virtual*

classroom have become increasingly insufficient in adequately describing what is believed to be the nature of these educational phenomena and their potential uses.

Today increasing numbers are making the claim that new ICT do indeed enhance an "Eblean" kind of *presence* in and around a vast and growing array of educational resources and experiences online. Moreover, these ideas are significantly influencing how educators are coming to envision their work in and around these digital spaces. Turning again to O'Donnell's (2000) thoughts on the evolution of new media, perhaps such signs indicate that online education is just beginning to come of age, as educators are beginning to move beyond the confines of early representations, "exploiting the new medium artfully in its own right" (42).

The Coming of Age of the "CoI"

Just over a decade ago, Randy Garrison, Terry Anderson, and Walter Archer (2000) authored a working theory of online learning organized around a threefold depiction of *presence* within new digital learning environments called the Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework (see Figure 1). The CoI framework broke ground in what has quickly become a formidable body of research carrying considerable momentum into contemporary discussions on the nature and purposes of online education. This work continues to generate interest among researchers related to the significance and interplay of three kinds of presence within online educational environments, namely, *social, cognitive*, and *teaching presences* (e.g., Akyol & Garrison, 2008; Arbaugh, 2008; D.R. Garrison, Cleveland-Innes, & Fung, 2010).

The CoI framework is organized around collaborative constructivist models of teaching and learning, adhering to the educational philosophy of John Dewey (1897) who sought to fuse

Figure 1. Community of Inquiry
(Retreived from http://communitiesofinquiry.com/)

the individual development of students within the context of community in the educational experience. The CoI is a process model which provides a theory of online learning conceptualized to identify how a learning community might be constructed in effective ways in computer-mediated environments. Thus, the three elements in the CoI framework are viewed as multifaceted and interdependent, overlapping each other in significant ways (cf. D.R. Garrison & Archer, 2007; Swan, Garrison, & Richardson, 2009).

The priority of teaching presence

Before describing the significance of teaching presence in the CoI framework, it is important to identify how Garrison, et al. (2000) define the other elements in their framework.

The authors note their original supposition that *cognitive presence* was the element they believed was the "most basic to success in higher education" (89). Thus they defined cognitive presence as the capacity of participants within a community of inquiry "to construct meaning through sustained communication" (89). The authors define *social presence* as "the ability of participants … to project their personal characteristics … thereby presenting themselves to the other participants as 'real people'" (89). They note that the primary importance of both social and teaching presence was to support the development of cognitive presence within a community of learners.

Recently, Garrison, Anderson, et al. (2010) unveiled a summary article highlighting the findings from the first decade of research exploring these elements of presence outlined in the CoI framework. The authors note the somewhat surprising, primary finding from among this growing body of research, namely, the significance of *teaching presence* in online education. Using transcript analysis to examine online threaded discussions, researchers have studied these three proposed elements of online presence, amassing a growing body of evidence as to the importance of teaching presence in effective models of online education. Most often, studies examined each presence individually though more recently studies have sought to understand the relationship of two or more of these elements of presence in online learning (cf., Akyol & Garrison, 2008; Swan, et al., 2009).

Specifically, CoI research over this decade demonstrates the significance of *teaching presence* in relation to student learning outcomes (Arbaugh, 2008; Dennen, Darabi, & Smith, 2007), some claiming it is the factor most directly related to student learning (Akyol & Garrison,

2008; LaPointe & Reisetter, 2008; Paechter, Maier, & Macher, 2010). Studies also connect the significance of *teaching presence* to matters of student and faculty satisfaction, knowledge acquisition, and in establishing a sense of community in the learning process (Anderson, 2008; Dennen, et al., 2007; D.R. Garrison, Cleveland-Innes, et al., 2010; Luckin, 2008; Paechter, et al., 2010; Peltier, Schibrowsky, & Drago, 2007; P. Shea, Li, & Pickett, 2006). Finally, research reveals that teaching presence exhibits a causal influence on both social and cognitive presences (Peter Shea & Bidjerano, 2009), and that teaching presence is a significant factor in the progression of students through more advanced phases of cognition in the learning process (See D.R. Garrison & Archer, 2007). What is important for this study is the strong body of evidence supporting the priority of teaching presence in ongoing studies surrounding online education.

It is somewhat surprising, therefore, that despite the clear significance of teaching presence within the CoI research, social presence and cognitive presence have received the lion's share of attention by CoI researchers. Garrison (2011) wonders at this in his second edition of E-Learning in the 21st Century stating, "Considering the importance of teaching presence, it is a bit surprising that this is perhaps the least studied presence" (61). Moreover, it is equally surprising that the processes of *teaching presence* as outlined in the CoI have been almost exclusively studied via transcript analyses of online forums to the relative exclusion of teacher perspectives on the nature of teaching presence online (cf., D.R. Garrison, Anderson, et al., 2010; Ke, 2010).

This observation is especially significant in light of the growing literature on effectiveness in online education, which also identifies the importance of *teaching presence* in

these educational environments. Don Westerheijden, Bjorn Stensaker, and Maria Rosa (2007) suggest that the qualities defining performance standards or the ways in which educators define effectiveness (cf., Blackmur, 2007) are viewable through the diverse vantage points of various educational stakeholders. Evidence-based studies on effectiveness in online education have therefore examined several different measures connected to the perspectives of various educational stakeholders. This research has extended across measures of student learning, student and faculty perspectives, and measures of quality assurance, quality improvement, and/or capacity building in online education. And in each of these measures of effectiveness, the significance of the work of teaching in online education is clearly evident (cf., Ehlers, 2008; Gallien & Oomen-Early, 2008; Mannan, 2009; Zhao, Lei, Yan, Chun, & Tan, 2005).

With these observations in mind, it is noteworthy that teacher perspectives on the nature of teaching presence are conspicuously absent from this first decade of CoI research. Recently, Tannis Morgan (2011) in discussing the significance of her own study, suggested that CoI research to date has been limited in its scope, as it has not identified the ways in which faculty conceptualize the spaces of online teaching and learning. In addition, Peter Shea, Jason Vickers, and Suzanne Hayes (2010) outline four limitations of the CoI research that have constrained a more robust understanding of teaching presence. They specify that the proposed dimensions of teaching presence have underrepresented the work of teaching online, as has the framework's singular research focus of studying online communication evident in threaded discussions. They suggest that other teaching and learning processes evident in the online environment be targeted for study using the theoretical framework of the CoI.

So what is it that makes *teaching presence* such a significant feature in effective models of online education? Terry Anderson, Liam Rourke, Randy Garrison, and Walter Archer (2001) suggest that perhaps an answer to this question lies in the research surrounding their proposed three-fold depiction of teaching presence outlined within the CoI framework. In essence, they portray teaching presence as reflecting a combination of three dimensions, namely, *design and organization*, *facilitating discourse* (originally called "building understanding"), and the work of *direct instruction*. Garrison (2011) notes how these dimensions of presence have remained relatively stable over the first decade of research. However, significant exceptions to this perspective, such as those listed above, offer a different understanding. These variant perspectives appear to be gaining momentum among contemporary studies on the nature of teaching presence online. Moreover, they suggest that the proposed three dimensions of teaching presence may be insufficient descriptors of the work of teaching taking place in contemporary online environments.

Figure 2 illustrates one possible way of portraying the three proposed dimensions of teaching presence specified in the CoI framework as understood by this author. This depiction highlights the significance of design and organization as the environment out of which the other dimensions of teaching presence unfold. Although not all facilitation and direct instruction necessarily fall within the initial design processes, a teacher's organizational role seeks to mediate such impromptu connections. The final two dimensions, facilitating discourse and providing direct instruction, overlap in certain indistinguishable ways, perhaps leading to the conclusion of some that these aspects of the work of online teaching are better conceptualized as two sides of the same coin.

Figure 2. Dimensions of Teaching Presence

Anderson et al. (2001) provide the first comprehensive explanation of the dimensions of the CoI as they currently exist. They describe the first dimension entitled *design and organization* as the work of instructional design evidenced in the selection of learning objectives, course content, learning activities, and timeline. They also note the work of creation and integration of learning objects, though this creative aspect of the definition disappears in later refinements (cf., D. R. Garrison, 2011). These *design* activities are generally defined as occurring prior to the opening of an online course. A teacher's *organizational* work is described as the provision of guidelines or tips, and the modeling of certain online behaviors; and in this early paper, as occurring both prior to and during the educational experience online. However, in later iterations of this dimension, the work of *organization* is relegated to a teacher's design

decisions occurring during the educational transaction (D. R. Garrison, 2011). Potential implications of these subtle distinctions will be explored at greater length in the next chapter, which addresses faculty perceptions of online course design.

The second dimension, entitled *facilitating discourse* is described as relating to a teacher's support of the development of the learning community, including emphases on purposeful collaboration and reflection. Finally, the third dimension entitled *direct instruction*, includes the direction of social and cognitive processes and is described as the work of a teacher in providing intellectual and scholarly leadership, including the sharing of subject matter knowledge and the pedagogical expertise of the teacher. The authors go on to specify that direct instruction includes confirming understanding through assessment and explanatory feedback, diagnosing misconceptions, referring students to various resources, and managing technical questions related to teaching in an online environment (Anderson, et al., 2001). The aspects related to assessment are dropped in future iterations of this final dimension (D. R. Garrison, 2011), perhaps reflecting the practical reality of having focused the research exclusively on transcript analysis of threaded discussions.

A call for conceptual work

As noted previously, the authors of the CoI framework have called for greater attention to the element of *teaching presence* in their study of the CoI framework. Studies have also called for an expansion of research methods beyond transcription analysis including the perspectives of faculty who are designing and/or carrying out the teaching in these digital environments. Moreover, Garrison, Anderson, et al. (2010) note that despite the overwhelming

evidence purporting the priority of *teaching presence* in online education, questions remain as to the significance and veracity of its proposed dimensions. Addressing the CoI framework, they note the "conceptual lack of consensus as to the morphology of its [three] dimensions … [especially] across populations of students" (7).

Certainly, the authors' call for conceptual work related to understanding the nature of teaching presence across student differences is important. However, such differences seem to reflect but one additional layer of potential complexity associated with teaching presence in effective online programs. Thus, additional complexities such as the influence of various educational or cultural contexts, and differences in teacher perspectives or disciplinary priorities, stand as additional layers of complexity when considering the morphology of the dimensions of teaching presence.

This call for conceptual work related to the dimensions of teaching presence was first referenced by Randy Garrison and J.B. Arbaugh (2007) in response to the publication of research which suggested that the final two dimensions might be better conceptualized under one common heading, *directed facilitation* (P. Shea, et al., 2006). In this 2007 article, the authors also called for further study related to the need to test the framework across a broader array of educational disciplines. In addition, Garrison, Anderson, et al. (2010) call for an expansion of the research paradigm to extend beyond transcription analyses of online threaded discussions to other methods and aspects of online teaching. Thus they state that "transcript analysis … does not reveal all the complex variables of context, personality, discipline and timing that make up a unique educational transaction" (8).

Considering new trajectories

A closer look at each of the three proposed dimensions of teaching presence raises additional questions. Thus, Garrison, Anderson, et al. (2010) define their first category of *design and organization* in ways reflecting more traditional understandings of instructional design. Certainly, instructional design reflects a vital component in the literature on teaching (cf., Bain, 2004; Stark & Lattuca, 1997) and as the CoI framework suggests, the work of instructional design certainly appears to be a critical component in the creation of effective teaching presence online. What is less clear in these definitions is how the work of online course design might differ from the work of design in more traditional, face-to-face classrooms. For example, educators continue to point to inherent complexities associated with the uses of multimedia and the exponential growth of available resources and new technologies via the Web (e.g., Aczel, Peake, & Hardy 2008; Anderson, 2008; G. Kress, 2008).

The rise of the Web and new ICT has generated an exponentially complex array of available resources and multi-modal formats within which to accomplish online education. Although many educators view this reality as a compelling feature of online learning (Anderson, 2008), it has nonetheless fed student expectations and institutional commitments to development that are at times difficult to manage (cf., Keller, 2008; Paechter, et al., 2010). Increasingly, colleges and universities of all sizes are employing specialists who assist faculty in the selection, design, and management of ICT and a host of multimedia for the purposes of enhancing student engagement and satisfaction.

Moreover, questions remain surrounding the highly textual nature of online course design, that is, the reality that faculty are frequently called upon to author resources or even extended prose in their online teaching. In the past, face-to-face teaching was envisioned as primarily a verbal endeavor delivered in a rich range of oratory, rhetorical, dialogical, and even performance-based skills (Eble, 1988; Vella, 2002; Verene, 2002). However, these functions ascribed to traditional teaching take on new meaning online (cf., D.R. Garrison & Anderson, 2003; D.R. Garrison, Anderson, et al., 2010). How might the increased responsibility of faculty writing online or the more recent work of composition in multi-modal formats fit within our understandings of online course design and the nature of faculty work in online educational environments?

Turning to Garrison, Anderson et al.'s (2010) remaining two dimensions, *facilitation of discourse* and *direct instruction*, these facets of online teaching appear particularly tied to the collaborative constructivist approach of the CoI framework. Although a case can certainly be made for addressing these features as separate dimensions of teaching presence, such a distinction fails to acknowledge other kinds of faculty work, such as guided study within self-directed models of online learning (Anderson, 2008). Such work could be conceived of as simultaneously discursive and directive, introducing examples of faculty work online which are not easily subsumed under the proposed dimensions of *facilitating of discourse* or *direct instruction*.

Finally, it is difficult to conceive of these final two dimensions, *facilitating discourse* and *direct instruction*, as being used in comparable ways by all online faculty. In other words, how

might differences such as teacher preferences or various educational philosophies or approaches to pedagogy influence the ways in which these dimensions are implemented online? It appears that much work remains in order to better understand the nature and implications of these dimensions of *teaching presence* in the development of effective online courses and programs of study.

Conceptualizing the nature of teaching presence requires attention to today's increasingly varied approaches to online education. Not only do emerging frameworks for online learning vary according to individualized understandings of their applications, they are also tied to particular paradigms of practice (Zhao, et al., 2005). These paradigms of practice reflect differences related to academic discipline, cost, administrative models, technological capabilities, and pedagogical ideology (Harroff & Valentine, 2006; LaPointe & Reisetter, 2008; McIntosh, 2005; Zhao, et al., 2005). Moreover, they reflect differences related to specific cultural paradigms of practice (Baggaley, 2007; Gulati, 2008; Zondiros, 2008).

Significant domains in the work of online education are emerging in today's digital landscapes. Certainly, one primary domain continues to represent the work of traditional university faculty incorporating online courses and programs of study within traditional disciplinary studies. However, new Open Educational Resources continue to gain momentum online, offering the possibility of increased human-to-computer interaction through automated approaches to online education (Anderson, 2008). These trends in contemporary online education must enter into our discussion regarding the ways in which we conceptualize the dimensions of teaching presence in these environments.

From Teaching to Teaching Presence

Before turning to a discussion on *teaching presence* in traditional educational settings, it is important to point out that the theoretical idea of *presence* has for the most part remained undefined in these studies. The authors of the CoI simply connect the idea of *presence* to what it is teachers do online. Although definitions of presence, such as those outlined in the Oxford English Dictionary (OED), most often associate the idea of *presence* with the physical "place or space in front of or around a person; the immediate vicinity of a person," additional meaning has been ascribed to this word from its earliest recoded uses. For instance, early religious uses of the *presence* of Deity have led to contemporary notions such as the "assembly" of a group of people or the representation of "a person's self or embodied personality." These definitions convey the idea that it is possible for a person to be present even when not seen, in essence, to reflect an idea of "influence" as specified in the OED's sixth definition. In this study, this broader understanding of *presence* as *influence* extends how *teaching presence* might be conceptualized beyond what it is teachers do to the varied ways teachers influence learners and the learning transaction. It is this very point that many researchers make within the literature on teaching, extending the idea of the *presence* or *influence* of a teacher beyond mere physical proximity.

At the start of this chapter, we examined how early conventions in computer-mediated teaching and learning established a vocabulary which continues to shape the ways in which educators envision online learning today. This is not to say that early trends or conventions of online learning are without value or unimportant to the ways in which educators envision the nature of *teaching presence* in these environments. Without question, online learning's

explosive albeit limited history as an educational environment is significant to any discussion regarding what it might mean to demonstrate presence as an online teacher.

However, these observations raise an important question, namely, "Should the replication of face-to-face teaching and learning be the driving factor in our uses of online education?" Some educators suggest that our uses of online education ought rather to reflect the potential outcomes of a careful examination of what these environments afford educationally (cf., Carroll & Kop, 2011; Laurillard, 2008). Thus, instead of asking, "How can we do online what we do in the classroom?" perhaps we might ask, "What lies behind successful teaching and learning, and how can we accomplish that online?" Recently, questions such as these have led educators to contemplate issues such as the gains and losses associated with the uses of multimedia in education. Thus, this study begins with a brief consideration of how beliefs about *teaching presence* in more traditional educational settings perhaps ought to influence our understandings of *teaching presence* in online environments.

Ken Bain (2004), in his acclaimed work examining what the best college teachers do in traditional educational settings, states that his goal was "to record not just what [exemplary teachers] do but also how they think, and most of all, to begin to conceptualize their practices" (4). This purpose reflects a central tenet in the approach to this study, one in which discussions on the nature and dimensions of *teaching presence* in online environments take as their starting point the scholarship on teaching generally. It may be that such commitments in the end create as many problems as they solve. Can we really extend the research on exemplary teaching in traditional environments to online education in productive ways? Which works do

we include, and to which do we give highest priority? Can we really make definitive statements on what it means to teach, or what it may mean to teach online?

The assumption in this work is that any re-conceptualization of the dimensions of teaching presence would benefit from attention to the literature on teaching generally. A thorough analysis of the literature on teaching certainly falls outside the scope of this research. However, representative works from this body of literature help to provide a set of categories or lenses through which to examine the work of teaching online. And what this literature suggests is summed up well by Stephen Brookfield (2006) who claims that, "skillful teaching is a highly variable process that changes depending on any number of factors" (17).

Thus, the literature on teaching addresses the work of teaching as a expansive set of potential tools which may be mastered by the teacher (Eble, 1988; Lang, 2008; McKeachie, 2002). In addition, these works very often specify differences emerging from an examination of the inner life of a teacher, noting how experience, motivation, growth, and identity can influence the qualities of teaching (Brookfield, 2006; Palmer, 1998; Weimer, 2010). In addition, teacher preferences, personalities, values, and educational ideals influence the nature of teaching (Davis, 1993; Nilson, 2010; Pratt & Associates, 2005). Bain (2004) states:

> The key to understanding the best teaching can be found not in particular practices or roles but in the attitudes of the teachers, in their faith in their students' abilities to achieve, in their willingness to take their own students seriously and to let them assume control of their own education, and in their commitment to let all policies and practices flow from central learning objectives and from a mutual respect and agreement between students and teachers. (78-79)

Finally, this literature suggests that an array of contexts influence the ways in which teaching is carried out, contexts such as professional orientation, discipline, and institutional, educational, and/or social cultures (Bruner, 1996; Schön, 1990; Showalter, 2003; Weimer, 2010).

This brief sampling of the literature on teaching argues for the inclusion of a much more comprehensive set of lenses in an examination of the nature of *teaching presence* online. In turning to the specific research design guiding this study, these works suggest—as did several of the CoI researchers already highlighted—that the dimensions of teaching presence be examined under the lenses of such influences. This dissertation research therefore seeks to explore the contours of online teaching presence alongside the nature of its proposed dimensions via this expanded set of perspectives on teaching. These foundational ideas concerning the nature of teaching in traditional environments will be engaged more fully in subsequent discussions of the research data.

Research Design

Background

My own work of teaching online and experience in designing models of online education internationally suggests that the theorized three-fold dimensions of teaching presence (design, facilitation and direction) proposed in the CoI framework (Anderson, et al., 2001; D.R. Garrison, et al., 2000) are insufficient representations of the varied work of educators in these digital spaces today. For example, the framework's constructivist, collaborative-based orientation seems to ignore other proven models of online education such as those leveraging the flexibility

of self-paced study (Anderson, 2008). Furthermore, the framework fails to distinguish between the diverse and complex unbundling of faculty roles evident today among increasing numbers of design teams devoted to managing the extensive requirements necessary to develop online content in multimodal formats (Aczel, et al., 2008; Santosh, 2008).

Thus, my own experiences as an online teacher, designer, and administrator bias my understanding of the work of online teaching and what it may mean to demonstrate *presence* online. For example, thinking back upon my own experiences as an online teacher, I am acutely aware of my own growth over eight years of work in educationally and culturally diverse online contexts. I recognize how my own understanding of presence has been shaped both from *outside influences*—in respect to the varied contexts in which I have worked—and from *inside influences*— those reflecting my own growth and development via both intentional and unintentional experiences.

Thus, I wonder as to the implications of these internal and external forces which seem to shape the understanding of online teachers, as well as the ways in which they demonstrate *presence* in these environments. How might we understand the influence of various contexts on the nature of teaching presence online? And what do we make of the mediated presence of a teacher's personality, disposition, or relationship with students in an online environment? Does a teacher's professional development and growth as an online teacher influence the nature of teaching presence? Certainly, the literature on effective online teaching would argue that a teacher's expanding professional knowledge of pedagogy, the uses of new ICT, and quality practice influence the ways in which a teacher is *present* online (cf., Ehlers, 2008; Mannan,

2009; Turvey, 2010). Thus, questions remain as to how these influences may affect the nature of teaching presence online.

Problem statement & research questions

Although numerous questions have been raised in the preceding paragraphs related to the complexities inherent in the work of teaching in online environments, at the core of many of these puzzles lays the problem of finding a way to conceptualize what appears to represent a growing array of possibilities of online teaching. It is theorized that given these complexities, the proposed three-fold dimensions of online teaching presence and their current definitions are insufficient descriptors of the ways in which faculty are envisioning their presence online today. This is especially pertinent given the steady rise of online programs and the growing numbers of teachers and students participating in these educational environments. According to the "Going the Distance: Online Education in the United States, 2011" report, **31%** of all enrollments in degree-granting, post-secondary institutions are online enrollments as of the fall 2010 semester (Allen & Seaman, 2011). Such numbers have profound implications for how teaching in higher education may evolve over the coming decade.

The problem can therefore be framed as a combination of three primary factors: the meteoric rise of formal online courses and programs being taught at the university level, the strategic importance of *teaching presence* in establishing effective online courses and programs, and the significant need for faculty to better understand what it may mean to demonstrate presence in such environments. The problem is expressed as follows:

Faculty expectations and preparations to teach online are complicated by a lack of consensus regarding the dimensions of teaching presence, especially given online learning's explosive demand and increasingly diverse models of online education.

This problem is significant for a growing number of faculty who are being asked or are choosing to take up the work of online teaching today. It is important that teachers enter into this work with realistic expectations and that administrative structures share these perspectives for the effective implementation of such programs. Thus, this research is chiefly conceptual in its orientation, though empirical analyses provide the means by which to engage this discussion.

The problem suggests one primary and one follow-up question undergirding this research and thus driving the interview protocol found in Appendix A. These are:

1. How do exemplary university faculty, coming from a wide range of personal and educational differences, conceptualize and demonstrate *presence* in their work of teaching online?
2. Do faculty perceptions of their *teaching presence* (or influence) in their work of teaching online correspond with the dimensions and ensuing definitions of teaching presence outlined in the Community of Inquiry framework?

Sampling strategy & methods

The population in this study is university faculty teaching online or in blended formats at doctorate-granting research universities. According to the Carnegie classification, the sample in this research came from a single, *very high research activity* doctorate-granting university in the

Purposes Strategy n=16

Discipline	Gender	Biglan	Required	Ed. Level	Type
1. Accounting	M	(H)	Yes	Undergrad	Both
2. Agriculture & Natural Resources	M	H	No	Grad	Online
Agriculture & Natural Resources	F	H	No	Grad	Online
3. Criminal Justice: Quant. Research	F	(H)	Yes	Grad	Online
4. Economics	M	S	No	Undergrad	Online
5. Education	F	S	No	Grad	Online
Education	M	S	No	Grad	Online
Education	M	S	No	Grad	Online
6. Geography	F	(H)	Yes	Undergrad	Online
7. Integrative Studies: **Arts**	F	S	Yes	Undergrad	Blended
8. Integrative Studies: **Biology**	M	H	Yes	Undergrad	Online
9. Integrative Studies: **Social Sciences**	F	S	Yes	Undergrad	Both
10. Medical Sciences	F	H	Yes	Grad	Blended
11. Photography	M	S	No	Undergrad	Online
12. Social Work	M	S	Yes	Grad	Blended
13. Statistics and Methods	F	(H)	Yes	Grad	Online
TOTALS:	**8M**	**8H**	**7No**	**7Undergrad**	**13Online**
TOTALS:	**8F**	**8S**	**9Yes**	**9Grad**	**5Blended**

Key:
H – Biglan's hard disciplines
(H) – hard subjects
S – Biglan's soft disciplines

Table 1. Research Sample by Variables

Midwest. A purposes sampling strategy best fit the exploratory nature of the research design for the dissertation, suggesting the pursuit of a wide range of differences across five variables. These variables included faculty gender, Anthony Biglan's (1973) classification schema of the disciplines, required and not-required courses, educational level taught, and online and/or blended approaches (see Table 1).

17 faculty were selected, of which 16 agreed to carry out intensive, qualitative interviews lasting from 60 – 90 minutes. These faculty represented 13 unique disciplines,

including 3 teaching in undergraduate Integrative Studies programs. Although these differences were not examined in a representative way, they provided a wide range of variation useful in presenting differences in faculty perspectives on *teaching presence* as well as providing a basis for future research in reference to such variables. Thus, the interviews were designed to map out the landscapes associated with the work of teaching online. Finally, selection of the sample was limited to only online or blended faculty recognized as exemplary via an AT&T awards selection process (n=14) or recognized as exemplary by at least five colleagues in the course of these interviews (n=2).

In addition to faculty interviews, research included an examination of course documents, faculty presentations of their work of online or blended teaching submitted to the AT&T awards selection process, and exploration of 8 of the 16 courses in the university course management system. A course and faculty information sheet, filled out by participants immediately prior to their interviews, provided other useful biographical and course related data. Finally, several follow-up e-mails with faculty provided answers to questions which arose in the data analyses phase of this research.

The initial interview protocol designed for this research was vetted via a collaborative process within my dissertation committee, leading to a revised instrument. I tested this instrument via a pilot study of two intensive, open-ended interviews followed by a debriefing process with the faculty interviewed. As a result, I tweaked the wording in three of the interview questions, leaving their content unaltered. The primary focus of the interviews sought to uncover the broad range of faculty work connected with online teaching. Thus, questions

probed faculty work evident in preparations before, during, and after the time dedicated for their courses, including its implementation and subsequent evaluation processes.

I adopted a *narrative inquiry* style of interviewing, seeking to encourage interviewees to organize their responses as stories with beginnings, middles, and ends. Interview questions were designed to move from pre-implementation, to implementation, to post-implementation. However, given the conceptual purpose undergirding this research and the impracticality of representing 16 separate case studies, I could not represent these data in a narrative inquiry format, that is, represent them as 16 separate though related stories. Instead I analyzed these interviews empirically, looking for themes that might emphasize how this particular range of faculty across these five sets of variables conceptualized their work of teaching online. Thus, open-ended interview questions sought to explore the contours of *teaching presence* online from a faculty member's early conceptions, to her or his growth in the effective uses of new ICT, to the subsequent evolution of faculty understandings surrounding the nature of their influence as teachers in these environments over time.

Whenever possible, extended quotations where utilized in the representation of data so as to richly portray the work of online teaching by contemporary online faculty. However, representations of these voices of exemplary faculty reflect more of a mosaic of *teaching presence* than individual portraits of the work of teaching online. Again, this reflects the underlying purpose of this research to examine the CoI framework in the light of faculty perceptions on the subject. And although the sampling strategy was purposive rather than representative, there is value in examining these interviews for themes, as such ideas provide a

range of differences related to the conceptualization of teaching presence online. Moreover, continuities evident in these themes also suggest a set of seminal concepts that may prove useful in future research. Therefore, percentages in these data are offered throughout the remaining chapters. These numbers are not intended to suggest in any way that these findings can be generalized across other samples of online teachers, or even among exemplary online teachers. What they do suggest are fruitful places for further study, especially given the design strategy which sought to promote a range of differences rather than teaching continuities.

More specifically, interviews explored issues of *design and organization* evident in the varied work of faculty in their transition to teaching in digital spaces. These included the varied preparations of teachers teaching in these new environments, faculty work in the creation of course content, and the organization and purpose of various components in their online courses. Questions also sought to uncover the shared work of teaching online when applicable.

Secondly, the interview protocol explored the CoI's proposed dimensions of *facilitation of discourse* and *direct instruction* via an examination of the work of faculty during the implementation of their courses. I directed attention to strategies of assessment, areas of communication, discussion, feedback, and decisions leading to adaptation in the learning environment. Moreover, I pursued a second line of inquiry related to faculty perceptions concerning their roles, the nature of their relationships with learners, and the tone they chose to employ in their communications.

Finally, I pursued questions related to teachers' self assessments of their teaching, alongside other evidence displaying their commitments to personal and professional growth. I

also asked about the role of professional development in how faculty envisioned their effectiveness as online teachers. In addition, I considered the place of teachers' identities both in what they brought to their online teaching and what they may have taken from it. Finally, questions surrounding challenges in online teaching and the influence of technology provided entry into additional contextual features in online environments. See Appendix A for the specific interview protocol used in this research.

In the end, I recorded and transcribed every interview, taking notes during the interview process and writing summary thoughts after each interview. I listened to the digital recordings of each of the interviews two times and I fully read through each transcribed interview at least three times (select interviews were read up to five times). I coded interview data for themes and subjected these themes to an additional process of merging, purging, and re-coding, finally culling together sets of themes under sets of common headings (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). Through this process, four meta-themes emerged which were eventually coded under the common headings of *design*, *the learning transaction*, *teacher identity*, and the *influence of context*, suggesting a four-part division in the representation of these data. Thus, these meta-themes reflect the divisions of this dissertation into 4 chapters, namely, Chapters 2 – 5.

A quick note on blended approaches

The goal and design of this research is to examine the work of teaching in online or mediated environments. Blended approaches to teaching and learning, although extending beyond this purpose in their entirety, nevertheless correspond in the portion of the course housed online. Diana Laurillard, who currently chairs "Learning with Digital Technologies" at the

London Knowledge Lab in the University of London, has outlined what many in the field see as the ideal in blended approaches to teaching and learning (cf., Dziuban, Hartman, Judge, Moskal, & Sorg, 2006). Laurillard (2010) specifies that in blended learning, "teaching and learning activities are designed to exploit both conventional and digital technologies where each is most appropriate" (6). Thus, blended teaching and learning in this study is more narrowly defined to represent formal university courses in which required learning components were located in the university's course management system. Research is also confined to the work of teaching expressed within the digital components of these courses, though faculty perspectives on what it means to exploit each environment is briefly addressed in this study.

Summary of findings

The results of the research highlighted in the previous paragraphs are presented throughout the balance of this dissertation. As noted, results are organized around four meta-themes which emerged in the analyses of the data and which therefore correspond to individual chapters. These four meta-themes surround faculty perspectives on *design*, on *the learning transaction*, on *teacher identity*, and on t*he influence of context* on the nature of teaching presence online.

Chapter 2 explores faculty perspectives surrounding the first dimension in the CoI framework, namely, the processes of *design* and *organization* in the work of online teaching. The data reveal how complexities surrounding online course design have led to the organization of faculty thinking around four primary categories involved in the development of new online courses. Thus, in addition to the work of *instructional design* in online courses, faculty also

identified the work of *composition* in authoring text-based content, *multimedia design* including the effective uses of and development of multimodal resources, and *aesthetics design* required in the crafting of the visual and experiential elements of their online courses.

Chapter 3 addresses the final two dimensions in the CoI framework, that is, the work of *facilitating discourse* and *direct instruction* in the online learning transaction. Although I had planned to address these dimensions independently, the data suggests attending to these conceptions of presence together, in combination. Faculty perspectives regarding the work of teaching in the learning transaction did not neatly divide into these two dimensions of online teaching presence. Rather, faculty spoke of their work using a much richer vocabulary, identifying an array of differences related to their teaching presence within the learning transaction. They spoke of the work of assessment, consultation, supervision, professional orientations, and individualized approaches such as the managing of stratified learning pathways and the guiding of self-directed study, automated learning, self-assessment, and self-paced approaches online.

Chapter 4 addresses faculty perspectives on another facet of teaching presence currently missing in the CoI framework, namely, the impact of the identity of the teacher on the ways teachers are present online. Teacher preferences, perspectives, and personalities varied considerably in these data related to the work of faculty teaching online even among colleagues co-teaching in the same course. Some found great satisfaction in being able to craft a durable presence through their authoring of online content, while others were most satisfied in the building of connections with students in these environments. Faculty anxieties provided a resource for examining the shift in the ways in which online teachers understand their roles,

suggesting that online teaching may even be leading to transformation in the lives of some online teachers. Finally, teachers demonstrated how the pursuit of curiosities and a commitment to creativity and experimentation provided avenues for growth, affecting change in the nature of a teacher's presence online.

Whereas Chapter 4 turns a spotlight into the inner life of online teachers, Chapter 5 turns it outwards, examining various contextual influences which shape online teaching presence. Faculty spoke quite candidly about the implications of online teaching in a research university, highlighting both positives and negatives associated with managing their work of teaching in these environments. Mounting pressures to participate in online teaching seemed to run contrary to traditional institutional expectations, including existing work and reward structures which did not match the time nor effort involved in teaching effective online courses. At times exciting opportunities clashed with frustration in the mediating of teaching presence in these contexts. In addition, clear disciplinary differences influenced the nature of a teacher's presence online, and faculty purposes and even technology itself appeared to influence the ways in which faculty envisioned their presence online.

This work ends with the conclusion of Chapter 6. Implications from these data suggest several important considerations for online teaching praxis as well as the effective administration of online programs. Moreover, they provide an array of seminal ideas for future studies into this broadening perspective on the nature of teaching presence online, including the possibility of multiple models of effective teaching presence varying according to student populations, faculty purposes or preferences, course content, technology, and educational and cultural contexts.

Chapter 2 – *Designing* Presence:
Multi-faceted Teaching in the 1st Dimension

In their pioneering article Randy Garrison, Terry Anderson, and Walter Archer (2000) speculated, "Much work needs to be done before we truly understand how a worthwhile educational experience can be optimally designed and delivered in a text-based environment" (103). These words have certainly proven true, though we might as easily speculate that the same dilemma remains true in our own work of designing online courses today. Who could have predicted only a decade ago that this "text-based environment" of which they were speaking would undergo such dramatic changes, adopting multimodal representations and connecting in unimagined ways to the affordances of the Web?

Our discussion on the nature of online course *design*, however, begins with a look to the past. The first section in this chapter examines the Community of Inquiry's (CoI) original definitions of this first dimension of teaching presence, *design and organization*, tracing the evolution of its meanings over time. Faculty perceptions from this study clearly display how these definitions of *design* do not adequately represent increasing complexities inherent in contemporary online course design. In addition, faculty members provide strong evidence that the rapid proliferation and innovation of new ICT are dramatically influencing the nature of design, especially as it relates to their work prior to the opening of a course. Finally, increasing demand and explosive growth across populations of students now accessing online education add to a growing sense of instability among faculty involved in the designing of online courses. Once again, the uses of percentages suggest potentially fruitful places for future research.

The second and final section in this chapter suggests a way to re-envision the CoI's original dimension of *design* in the work of online teaching. Faculty perceptions of online course *design* portray this work of teaching presence as a multifaceted endeavor, and one organized around at least four primary skill sets or design priorities. Each of these skill sets or priorities is examined and some initial implications given, suggesting existing definitions of *design* in the CoI framework are insufficient in their depiction of the work of teaching currently occurring in these environments. These data argue that a more realistic understanding of the work involved in online course design exists among these four priorities. Moreover, faculty perspectives differentiate between ways of envisioning online course *design* as both an enduring artifact and an adaptable process of online teaching.

Design: A Disparity Between Theory and Practice

Understanding design in the "CoI"

Of the three constructs of presence outlined in the CoI framework for computer-mediated teaching and learning (see Figure 1), *teaching presence* is the least developed element in this theory. Garrison, Anderson, et al. (2000) in their original article on the CoI framework described *teaching presence* as "consist[ing] of two general functions … design … [and] facilitation," that represented "a means to an end – to support and enhance social and cognitive presence for the purpose of realizing educational outcomes" (89 – 90). Interestingly, although the authors only specify two "functions" of *teaching presence* in this paper, they do include the third priority, namely, the work of *direct instruction* in the work of online teaching.

These early definitions were expanded upon by Anderson, et al. (2001) who established the three dimensions of *teaching presence* as they are currently represented in the framework.

Thus, Anderson et al. (2001) expanded upon the meaning of *design* to also include *organization* as a definitional aspect of this dimension. They spoke of *instructional design* as encompassing several activities of the teacher, including "the creation and integration" of learning resources, the "repurposing" of certain face-to-face teaching (like lecture notes), and the establishing of the timeline for learning activities and evaluation in the learning process. In describing *organization* they mention "providing guidelines and tips" for students as well as modeling desired online behavior during the learning transaction.

Garrison and Arbaugh (2007) in their review of the research to date rehearse these same definitions, though only hint at the place of content creation in their treatment of the first dimension of *design and organization*. They highlight the added work of faculty in "developing audio/visual mini-lectures" and "providing insights into course materials" (163). Interestingly, although this idea of content creation in the work of online course *design* is only latent in these definitions, Garrison and Arbaugh (2007) do address the growing trend among higher education institutions to provide various support structures and even personnel so as to effectively manage what they infer are increasingly complex design processes.

In Garrison and Anderson's (2003) first book devoted to outlining the nature and purposes of the CoI framework, they clarify a semantic distinction stating that "design refers to structural decisions made before the [learning experience] begins" and "organization refers to similar decisions … [made] during the learning-teaching transaction (i.e., in situ design)" (67).

However, in both this original book and the second edition authored by Garrison (2011), the subtle references to *content creation* in Anderson, et al.'s (2001) seminal work are absent in their definitions of *design and organization*.

This absence is especially puzzling given Garrison and Anderson's (2003) emphasis in the first edition on the generations of distance learning. The authors note that, "simply substituting screens for paper and the Internet for postal delivery does not produce effective e-learning content" (36). They highlight how additional complexities such as formatting, color, the use of graphics, and other display related issues must be considered. Concerning the uses of various media by second generation distance-learning models, they address the additional need for full production crews along with the unmooring of design processes from the processes of implementation in teaching. Moreover, they stipulate that increases in instructional software tend to require skills that are "usually beyond those of typical teachers" (37).

Although the original discussion on the generations of distance learning is missing in Garrison's (2011) second edition, Garrison punctuates the influences of these complexities in his verbatim quotation from the first edition wherein he stipulates that "the design and organization of an e-learning course … is, at least initially, more demanding than the design and organization of a similar course … face to face" (67). Moreover, Garrison specifies that additional support is necessary in these environments given "the constant introduction of new media and standards" (87).

The absence of these complexities so evident in the practice of online course design from the definitions of the dimensions of teaching presence outlined in the CoI appears be a

consequence of the predominant method employed in the CoI research, namely, the analysis of transcripts from online threaded discussion forums. Thus, evidences in the CoI research of the work of teaching are limited in their representation of the full work of online teaching.

Certainly, the recent literature addressing online and blended course design clearly reveals an increasingly complex set of expectations required of faculty teaching in these environments. Fiona Carroll and Rita Kop (2011), for example, describe the complex nature of what it takes for teachers to select and make effective uses of new technologies in online learning. Janet Hanson (2009) specifies how traditional understandings of faculty identity in the U.K. have been challenged by a growing push among several institutions for faculty to adopt new methods of teaching in online learning. Thus, teachers in the U.K. have needed to acquire new skills, are at times unable to teach their own content, and must struggle with how to adapt their teaching to fit the technologies afforded them. Turning to literature on teaching in blended environments, Philippa Gerbic (2011) describes the changing roles of faculty in these environments and how, for example, new technology roles are often underestimated by faculty who have decided or been asked to teach in these ways. Thus, questions remain as to how the work of faculty in online and blended course design may best be conceptualized, especially amidst today's rapidly changing educational models.

Teaching as improvisation? Facing inherent *design* challenges

Kenneth Eble (1988) in his outstanding work, The Craft of Teaching, emphasized a quality in face-to-face teaching of pivotal importance to our discussion of the work of online course *design*. Thus, Eble spoke of teaching as an "improviser's art" (3), one which is chiefly

"verbal" (60) and which differs from writing or research in how it "flow[s] more freely, finds [its] way into temporary categories, stop[ping] short of conclusions, [and] proceed[ing] tentatively towards some future synthesis" (4-5). Such is not the case, according to the faculty in these interviews, with the work of *design* in the development of online courses. Thus, faculty described two ways in which their online course design strayed from this idea of improvisation, namely, in their work of authoring semi-fixed representations of their teaching, and secondly in the instability they experienced with the uses of a rapidly-changing set of emerging, innovative technologies.

Yosarian, a veteran teacher committed to a collaborative constructivist approach to teaching and learning, described the first of these differences as follows:

> *You have to think through an online course entirely from beginning to end before you even teach it—one hour of teaching. And as a result it's less flexible. It's less amenable to reviewing and redirection. In a face-to-face environment, if you feel like the students are more interested in this than that you can sort of change directions. You can renegotiate stuff. So, there's a kind of cognitive flexibility, I think, in the face-to-face that's not present in the online.*

Despite having 36 years of teaching experience face-to-face and 10 years online, Yosarian went on to describe the discouragement he faced over this decade of online teaching as a result of the instability of teaching in these environments:

> *My whole history of online teaching has been riddled with all kinds of nagging, annoying problems. The technology has never been stable—stabilized enough for me to sort of feel like it's predicable and you know, confident. It often just feels like you're driving on roads that are falling apart.*

Drawing on a related metaphor from Eble's portrayal of teaching as improvisation, online course design reflects the differences between preparing to play your trumpet in a jazz club and preparing to play alongside the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Thus, the complex structures characterizing the second venue are much less amenable to improvisation. Moreover, the player in this metaphor faces the challenge of "performing his artistry" while constantly being asked to perform on a different instrument.

This metaphor connects with two separate themes related to *design*. The first theme, which highlights the rapidly changing contexts which continue to shape faculty work in online course design, is introduced in this first section. This theme is picked up again in Chapter 5 as it relates to the significant influences of certain external contexts on the nature of online teaching presence. The second theme, which addresses the need in online course design to craft a durable artifact of teaching, is addressed under the heading, "The place of composition," in the second main section in this chapter. It is important to note here that these increasing complexities associated with the design of online courses only reflect the first aspect of the CoI definitions of *design*. Issues of *organization*, or what Garrison and Anderson (2003) referred to as "in situ design," stand above and beyond the features of online teaching explored in this chapter. For this reason, issues of *organization* are connected with other features of online teaching discussed in Chapter 3.

As previously mentioned, the literature addressing the nature of online and blended course design paints a vivid picture of an increasing set of complex variables associated with these forms of teaching and learning. It is clear that rapid innovation, both in terms of the sheer

number of possibilities and the varied uses of new ICT, is a primary factor behind why online course design continues to appear more and more complex to the faculty who are responsible for developing online and blended courses. Faculty expressed frustration with knowing where to begin in selecting and becoming proficient in the uses of new technologies associated with these forms of teaching and learning. In fact, 15 of the 16 teachers interviewed (over 90%) specified the heavy investment of time and energy required up front in the development of new online courses. Cindy claimed:

> *There's a lot of time that goes into an hour of online lecture, because you can't just stand up there and talk about it. You have to create the slide, you have to record the audio; we include our preferred animation, you know, there's all this stuff that we need to do. There's so much more up front time. The other thing is your syllabus has to be so detailed, so clearly articulated that any student will know exactly what they need to do, when they need to do it, and how they need to do it from day one. In a face-to-face class, you can pretty much say, "Here's the due date, and more instruction is coming." But online you have to have it completely spelled out.*

However, faculty offered a balanced picture of just why it is that they have continued to pursue these innovative approaches in their teaching despite the challenges they often represent. Thus, 9 of the teachers interviewed (≈ 55%) mentioned their excitement connected with being able to teach in creative ways. In addition, 14 (≈ 85%) spoke of how online teaching had allowed them to pursue one or more innovative ideas within their disciplines—this subject is addressed at length in Chapter 5. Moreover, one-third of the interviewees mentioned their belief that many of the technologies they were using had become much more user friendly than they had been only five to ten years ago. Bill, a professor in the sciences explained:

> *I think that either my understanding of the technology or the technology itself has changed a lot since the first time that we tried to teach this course. And I think it's*

probably a combination of both—the technology moving and my knowing a little bit more about it. I mean people could do really fancy stuff five or six years ago, but it just took a lot more savvy to do it. Now, we can do some pretty nifty things without hardly knowing how to turn your computer on.

It is clear from these interviews that rapid innovation related to the uses of new ICT presents both amazing possibilities and sizeable challenges regarding what it means to demonstrate presence as a teacher in online educational environments. Moreover, such complexities seem to extend far beyond the more simplistic definition of design in the CoI, especially as it relates to the creation, selection, and organization of materials for an online course. Before turning to the ways in which faculty organized their thinking around the varied work of teaching in online course design, it is important that we recognize one further layer of complexity associated with the designing of online courses.

Access, expectations, and the spaces of learning

In the introduction, we considered Garrison, Anderson, et al.'s (2010) charge to expand the research of the CoI framework across different populations of students. Without question, the significance of understanding the nature of teaching presence among growing numbers of online students poses serious challenges today. The explosive growth, in terms of the total numbers of learners having access to post-secondary online education, is unprecedented. No longer do the boundaries of time and space exclude certain students from accessing higher education. Moreover, increasing sets of differences evident among online learners only add to the problem of what it may mean to design effective online courses. As with the changing complexities associated with the rapid proliferation of new ICT, these additional challenges are influencing how faculty are thinking about the work of *design* in online courses.

Faculty noted three primary ways in which this growth in access is influencing their work in these new digital spaces. Firstly, faculty emphasized a variety of ways in which student preferences were shaping how they approach the work of *design* in new online courses. Secondly, faculty suggested that online students are increasingly bringing a variety of expectations to their learning in these technology-mediated environments. Thirdly and finally, faculty addressed the implications of increasing class sizes in these digital spaces.

In these interviews, 12 of the faculty (75%) addressed their growing awareness of the variability in student preferences in their work of teaching online. The most predominant theme among these teachers was the preferences of students for flexibility in their learning experiences. Thus, faculty were considering how they might leverage this capacity to shift the time and place of learning within their *design* of online educational spaces. Faculty also mentioned student preferences connected with differing avenues for professional development within a field, curiosities for cross-disciplinary learning, student learning styles, personality types, certain preferences for independent or self-guided learning, and even preferences for anonymity related to online participation. In addition, several teachers specified that certain students prefer to learn online, mentioning that they would very much like to better understand more of the reasons why this is the case. Ingrid, a teacher in the social sciences who has taught online for 10 years, highlighted two observations related to why she believed certain students preferred to learn online:

> *I think that online is excellent for some of my students who are a little bit more introverted, and who want to frame their words. So, lots of times, you know they're people who can instantly think of what they want to say, but I kind of wish they didn't say it right away because others are still framing what they would say in that particular*

circumstance. So I think the online discussion really helps those who need time to frame it. I think it helps people who have English as a second language, because then they can look at it as they typed it and see, "Does it look okay to me?" And so they can present themselves in a different way and perhaps be more assertive in a class because it's online. And they can also make sure of what they . . . if they're really interpreting something right before they respond. So, you know, if English is your second language you can go back and listen to that part of the presentation again: "I know I've got this right." Whereas, you can't do that face-to-face. You might think you're following, and then wonder, "Am I really following this?" So I think that's a real advantage for a lot of students who might not be the ones who speak out in a face-to-face class.

In addition to student preferences, faculty mentioned that students are also bringing a growing set of expectations to their participation in online and blended approaches to learning. Several of the faculty interviewed stipulated that more students were coming to online educational environments with prior experiences learning in these ways, and that such experiences were tempering what students expected to experience in such environments. These distinctions were recognizable to faculty on a generational level, meaning that they believed younger students were coming with a greater array of experiences and thus more capabilities and expectations related to their work online.

Several faculty members also mentioned that these students seem to be coming to the educational experience with a different set of beliefs or changing perspectives related to the ways in which they understand how learning takes place. These perspectives may elevate the uses of social forms of learning (though not necessarily a desire for collaborative projects), experimentation, and learning in smaller chunks, which in the negative was referred to as "distracted" forms of learning and learning as "entertainment."

Neil, who has been teaching for 35 years, made the following statement regarding his perceptions of how students are changing and thus how his designing of online learning may also need to change:

> *I'm recognizing who the students are as people who've grown up with technology, now. They're more prone to learning in ways that are a little bit different and I have to be a little bit more entertaining. And it seems somewhat difficult, I think, for some students to memorize. It seems difficult for some students as a general rule also, to deal with mathematical principles that are essential to this discipline.*

Thus, several faculty expressed a growing concern regarding how these prior experiences surrounding student uses of new ICT may be shaping the expectations and perspectives they bring to their learning. In fact, 3 of those interviewed mentioned a growing priority in their own teaching to help students become aware, or help them better understand how their uses of technology are in fact influencing the substance of their learning. One teacher referred to this priority as the "second subject of online learning," which he determined to make explicit in the development of each of his online courses. This subject will be addressed at greater length in Chapter 5.

Finally, 7 (≈ 45%) of the teachers in this study mentioned how the priority of developing a "community of learners" online was at times at odds with the educational and disciplinary contexts in which they were teaching, including the priorities or purposes undergirding their courses. For example, as faculty considered how a course ought to be structured and how assessments might be crafted to insure learning, growing class sizes—especially among certain disciplines—were dramatically influencing issues of online course

design. Thus, 4 faculty specified that growing class sizes were influencing the nature of how they were designing their online courses. Ingrid addressed the problem in the following way:

> *I would say the most challenging thing is once a course gets up above maybe 60. I would dream of 30. But 60, still seems like it would be possible, because we're doing more teams, and some small group work, but when you get into the 100s, it's just too hard to keep up the quality. And I think that has to do with issues of academic integrity, too, because it's very hard to give as many papers, and once you stop giving papers, then I think there's some times problems with just doing quizzes. I think it's really good to do frequent assessment and varied assessment. When you get into larger numbers, I know some people are tempted to just say, "I'll do whatever our LMS will grade." But I don't think that's always the approach that's the most effective.*

These thoughts on the influences of large class sizes illustrate how various complexities surrounding the nature of online teaching and learning are influencing what it means to design such courses within today's educational landscapes. Faculty are being called upon to help departments, colleges, and the university extend their reaches in order to meet a growing demand for such courses at every educational level, and across the disciplines. These interviews suggest that choosing to define the work of online course design as *instructional design*, inadequately represents the responsibilities and work of faculty in the development of online courses today. Furthermore, these data argue that educators need to re-envision how online course design is communicated and anticipated, offering more realistic portrayals to potential online faculty for the establishment of durable structures and appropriate expectations in these increasingly prominent places of learning.

Thus, the remainder of this chapter is devoted to exploring how faculty perceptions of their work in online course design can be organized around four distinct priorities or domains which define this dimension of teaching presence (see Figure 3). These *places* in which the

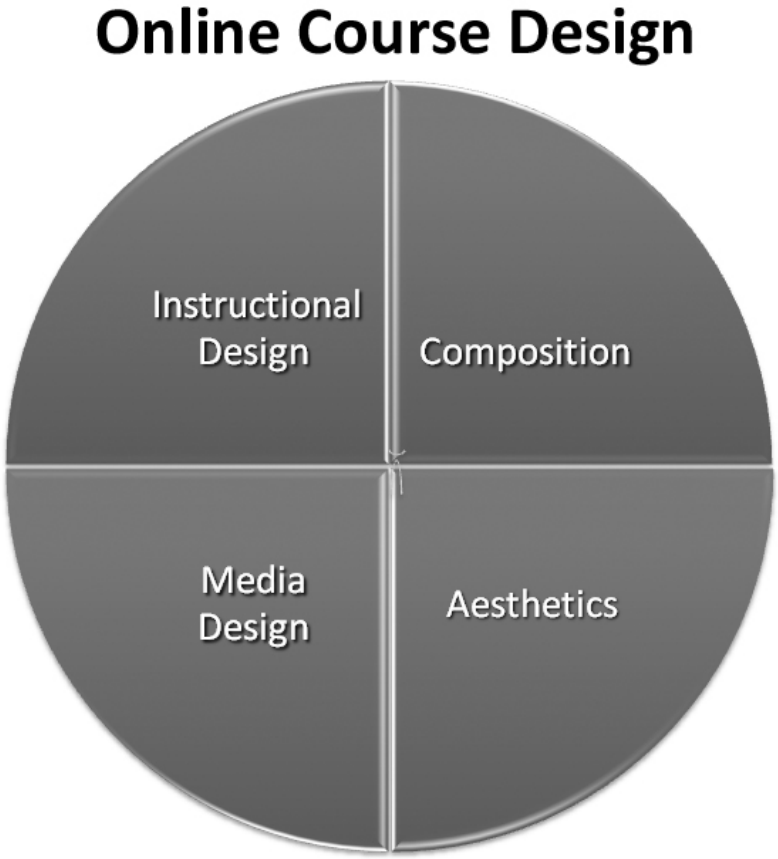

Figure 3. Four Priorities of Online Course Design

processes of online course design take shape represent four distinct skill sets and can be organized under the following 4 headings:

1. *instructional design*
2. *composition* (or the authoring of content)
3. *multimedia design* (the creation and effective uses of multimodal content or learning experiences)
4. *aesthetics* (attention to how certain visual and experiential aspects online can elicit student engagement).

Although these categories overlap in several possible ways, they will be addressed separately for the sake of clarity.

Organizing the Spaces of Online Course Design

At the beginning of this chapter, we considered some of the implications surrounding the definitions of *design* articulated within the research of the CoI framework. Although these works mention certain complexities associated with online course design, their definitions of this dimension of *teaching presence* fail to capture the nature of faculty work in these digital spaces. These limitations appear to reflect a consequence of the research paradigm which, until recently, had been focused exclusively on transcript analysis of threaded discussions to the exclusion of other forms of faculty work online. This focused approach to the subject is somewhat surprising given the significant publication of one of the principal founders of the CoI framework, Terry Anderson (2004), which expanded the theoretical basis of the CoI to encompass more of the work of teaching online. What is especially surprising, however, is the realization that this important work—along with Anderson's second edition (2008)—is never referenced among the subsequent research projects within the CoI framework.

Although Anderson's (2008) chapter on online teaching connects most poignantly with Chapter 3 in this dissertation, his opening thoughts are significant to this discussion. Thus, Anderson outlines what he sees as the four most compelling features of the online medium, all four of which dramatically influence the ways faculty envision their work of online course design. These features are listed in the order specified on page 344:

1. Anderson claims that "the most compelling feature … is the capacity for shifting the time and place of the educational interaction."
2. Second is "the ability to support content encapsulated in many formats, including multimedia, immersive environments, video, and text."

3. Third is “the capacity of the Net to access huge repositories of content on every conceivable subject.”
4. And fourth, “the capacity to support human and machine interaction in a variety of formats (i.e., text, speech, video, and so on), in both asynchronous and synchronous modalities, creates a communications-rich learning context.”

This list resonates with the data from this study which suggests that a much more robust understanding of design be adopted so as to better reflect the array of priorities and skills (or responsibilities) present in faculty work as they create online or blended courses. This research encourages educators to reconsider how this dimension (or perhaps dimensions) of teaching presence online might be better conceptualized and thus inform online teaching praxis.

Beyond “instructional design”

The first hint in these interviews that these proposed definitions of design were indeed insufficient descriptors of the work of course development taking place online was the very strong emphasis on *team* in the descriptions of how faculty talked about the evolution of their courses. Significantly, 14 faculty (≈85%) drew attention to the fact that their online courses were the product of a team of people working together in various ways to create the entirety of the learning experience. Several of the faculty pointed to the successes evident in their design as the primary benefit of having planned and created their course in collaboration with others.

For example, one professor in the sciences who has been teaching in traditional classrooms for 33 years and online for 6 years claimed he and his colleagues were very naïve about the amount of work involved in creating effective online courses. He went on to note how his department’s decision to support a design team for the purposes of enhancing the development of online courses was the key in helping his own courses become effective online.

Among these interviews, teams included the work of professors, educational technologists, graphic artists, students, information technologists, and media specialists working in various combinations and at various degrees of involvement to produce effective online courses.

Although it could be argued that many of these same groups work together in the production or design of traditional face-to-face courses, the need to embed these features within the structures of an online course management system as *durable components* of the content or the instructions in a course reveals how online course design is in fact qualitatively and quantitatively different than teamwork of this kind in face-to-face environments. In face-to-face course design, the uses of technology in a classroom are more supplemental, and as such could quite easily be removed without influencing the substance of the teaching. Faculty claimed that this was not the case in their experiences designing online courses. Rather, faculty specified that a varied set of roles emerged within their own work of design, reflecting different skill sets or priorities in these digital spaces. The first addressed in this work is the place of composition, or the authoring of content evident in online course design.

The place of composition

Beginning with the original article outlining the CoI framework, Garrison, et al. (2000) addressed the significance of text-based communication in computer-mediated environments in comparison to oral communication in more traditional classrooms (cf., D.R. Garrison & Anderson, 2003; D.R. Garrison, Anderson, et al., 2010). Their focus was the potential deficiencies and inherent strengths in text-based communications, of which they concluded that directed facilitation may have several advantages over face-to-face discourse. However,

what is missing in these discussions is how text-based instruction may differ from face-to-face instruction. One might imagine, perhaps, that these differences would reflect those articulated by the authors of the CoI framework - for example, that written instruction also misses certain non-verbal and paralinguistic communication though may offer a more reflective form of communication (cf., D.R. Garrison, et al., 2000). Certainly Eble's quotation on improvisation in the beginning of this chapter offers another set of lenses through which to consider these potential differences. Thus, faculty perspectives offer insight into this unique and yet prevalent feature of online education.

Although the prevalence of authored content in online teaching and learning may seem somewhat obvious to those participating in the designing of contemporary approaches to online education, it is a feature that is often marginalized or even ignored in theoretical frameworks depicting such approaches. Thus, it is significant that 12 of those interviewed (75%) in this study spoke of this aspect of their work in online course design, many of whom described their authoring of content as the most intensive facet of their online teaching. Faculty quotations portrayed over the next several pages portray this pervasive perspective among the teachers interviewed for this study. Moreover, faculty described this work in a variety of ways including the authoring of content, the writing of instructions for participation, the connection of ways of thinking via the uses of hypermedia authoring, and even as the ongoing tinkering evident in the ways faculty maintained and improved course content from semester to semester. Faculty envisioned their composition of content in terms of crafting interactive or engaging content for a variety of purposes.

Interactivity & equivalency: Although the idea of interactivity is very often associated with the ways in which faculty engage students in written communication, Oscar highlighted in this brief response how interactivity can represent a variety of ways that teachers approach online course design:

> *I know I have colleagues who invest themselves in the interactive things, the discussion board, the small group work, and are much less interested in the composing, the hypermedia, and the Web interactivity dimension of it. And what I've tried to argue is that's a choice to be made, that there are legitimate preferences you can express in designing an online course.*

These ideas resonate with the literature suggesting that online course design may indeed lead to multiple effective models of teaching and learning online. In an article addressing the role of interaction in online education, Jason Rhode (2009) notes a perspective articulated by several in this study, namely, that "not all forms of interaction may be either equally valued by learners or effective," and that some may prefer "more flexible learner-paced models that provide learners the freedom to customize … the learning experience to meet their personal and educational preferences" (1 - 3). Terry Anderson (2003) suggests that equivalency theory provides a way of envisioning effective models of online learning along three forms of interaction: student-teacher, student-student, and student-content. He claims that, "Deep and meaningful formal learning is supported as long as one of [these] three forms of interaction … is at a high level" (4). These interviews demonstrate, beginning with design and carrying through the remainder of faculty work, the possibility of envisioning multiple effective models of online education, models varying by forms of interaction, preference, discipline, and even educational purpose (Dobrovolny, 2006).

Faculty examples: Several faculty identified how their formal preparations to teach online had been strongly influenced by early conventions in online education, rather by a consideration of the strengths and weaknesses of text-based content. Oscar, a professor in the humanities and early adopter of online learning, described his original participation in a training seminar which focused almost exclusively on issues of communication online:

> *We were steered toward a week-to-week discussion of the problem of student-to-student communications in a course, and the faculty role in that: how to promote more student-to-student communication; how to moderate discussions; and most of the class seemed devoted to that . . . In effect, suggesting that somehow the content would automatically present itself in the course, that there were no problems associated with getting the content into the class . . . There was almost no attention to how "the content" was presented, which to me was the number one problem there.*

Certainly these thoughts draw attention to some of the ongoing educational debates surrounding what ought to occupy center stage in traditional approaches to teaching and learning. However, even among professors who emphasized the development of a community of learning and the role of student-to-student interactions, the problem of how to communicate content online was equally as significant to their work of teaching in these environments. Yosarian, a professor of 36 years, spoke of the work of composition in online course design from two competing perspectives. In considering the implications of what this feature of design means for his preference to create an online learning community and to teach to the needs and interests of students, he lamented:

> *I think preparing for online teaching is a lot more work than preparing for face-to-face. In face-to-face, you can't wing it, but you can leave a lot more things open-ended, and then sort of go-with-the-flow. In online, you can't. In online everything has to be structured and anticipated, things have to be laid out clearly . . . You've got to have the*

entire course prepared before it even opens, for the most part. Otherwise, you're going to sink somewhere in the middle of the semester.

It may be important to note that Yosarian teaches graduate students, many of whom are adult learners. Ke (2010), in a study of the CoI framework among adult students, identified the preferences of adult students for "pre-determined rather than 'fluid' course content" (812). Thus, even in constructivist online models, pre-determined content may have intrinsic value to adult learners as a design priority. Yosarian also viewed the work of composing content as one feature of online teaching that he greatly enjoyed. He concluded his remarks stating:

Teaching online gives you the opportunity to write . . . I really enjoy thinking through writing. I enjoy using writing as a means to sort of work through intellectual problems. So that's the really cool part of online teaching.

Several faculty spoke in comparable ways of their interests or preferences related to the place of composition in online course design. Some spoke of this work as an intellectual challenge – that "trying to figure out how to convey this information in a written format" was a stimulating exercise for them as a teacher. Others mentioned that authoring content raised questions of how to convey voice or style, how hyper-mediated writing might influence the learning experience, how a teacher's passion might encourage student engagement, how to approach the subject matter, or how to envision lecture as written text. Oscar specified:

I never wrote out lectures for my face-to-face classes. But I started doing this because it just seemed the obvious way to move into the online world; because I believed in what some would stigmatize as strong teaching, that is, I believe what the instructor has to say has some significance.

Without question, the place of composition was center stage in the kinds of questions faculty were considering related to their work of teaching online. And the work of composition, to the surprise of many faculty, demanded a great deal of their time. Oscar noted having authored several online courses of approximately 80 to 90 thousand words each – thus reflecting the work involved in authoring a book. Bill, a professor of 33 years from the sciences who had been teaching online for six years stated:

> *It turns out that most of the time is spent thinking about the content, getting it written down word-for-word, what you want to communicate . . . We've estimated a ratio of about 2 to 1. So it takes about two hours from a content expert for each hour from an educational technology person to get the course out there. We actually worked some numbers on this, not just for this course. Quite honestly it's not what I thought coming into this. I thought it would be less work for me.*

The issue of time required to author content was also connected by faculty to the need to author instructions for various features of the learning transaction. Half of the faculty mentioned this responsibility in somewhat negative tones, highlighting the added work needed to ensure clarity online that they felt was not the case face-to-face. Lauri, a teacher of 27 years in the face-to-face classroom who had just started teaching online said it this way:

> *I found it took a lot of time to think through assignments, and particularly if you're doing things like group dialogue, and by a certain date they need to say something to the full group and then the various groups need to interact in some way about this work. Writing the instructions take a lot of time . . . thinking through the logistics and getting everything exactly right, so that you don't create a problem by virtue of a mistake.*

Faculty identified the work of composition as an integrative part of what it meant for them to design online courses. This work encompassed the creation of course content or commentary joining the various elements of a course. In addition, teachers authored

explanatory content that would have been given orally in a face-to-face classroom. Some enjoyed this written work, while other endured it. Oscar, who has spent considerable time contemplating what it means to author course content online, spoke of his own preferences:

> *I heard one of my colleagues say that he had just been teaching online for the first year, and he really thought it was great. But the thing he hated about it was how much he had to write to create the course. And I said, "Man, that sounds like the best part of it." So, I started with a real commitment to the writing.*

Similarly, several faculty spoke of their growing interests surrounding the place of composition in their work of teaching online. This will be addressed more at length in Chapter 4 related to the perspectives of certain faculty who spoke of teaching presence online in terms of their desire to create a durable representation of their teaching. However, what is important at this point is the recognition that some faculty found the experience of composing quite rewarding, and as was mentioned earlier, a place in which to be challenged in their own academic work and learning.

The place of multimedia

In the previous section, faculty specified how the requirement of authoring content online often added unexpected responsibilities to their already full workloads. However, none of those interviewed perceived authorship as something foreign to their own expectations of teaching. What were unexpected were challenges inherent in these responsibilities. However, wherein the place of authoring content was recognized as falling within traditional expectations of the work of teaching, this was not the case with the expectations of faculty work associated

with the creation or uses of multimedia online. These responsibilities, in contrast, were perceived by many as falling outside of traditional expectations for faculty work.

Although numerous works could be used to frame this discussion, the works of Gunther Kress provide a thorough set of lenses through which to consider both the necessary skills and understandings connected with the uses of multimedia in online contexts. Kress (2004) adeptly summarizes the design challenges facing online educators in the following quotation:

> In the multimodal landscape of communication, choice and therefore design become central issues. If I have a number of ways of expressing and shaping my message, then the questions that confront me are: which mode is best, most apt, for the content [or] meaning I wish to communicate? Which mode most appeals to the audience whom I intend to address? Which mode most corresponds to my own interest at this point in shaping the message for communication? Which medium is preferred by my audience? Or by me? How am I positioning myself if I choose this medium rather than those others? All of these call for choices to be made, resting on my assessment of the environment in which communication takes place, in all its complexity." (116)

Faculty face this series of design questions in the praxis of their online course design as they are confronted with whether—and how—to communicate via text, image, audio, or video representations. Kress (2008) describes how these choices affect meaning, or what he refers to as the *epistemological commitment* inherent in the mode adopted by the designer. His example is a choice between a written description such as "sitting in the late autumn sunshine, Sam and Bill share a bench in the park" (176), and an illustration of this scene. Kress (2008) states, "Now the illustrator has to ask, 'How close to each other were they sitting?'; 'Was Bill to the left or to the right of Sam?'" (176). Kress claims that this *epistemological commitment* is unavoidable. He states, "Every mode imposes/demands such commitments as a matter of course … That has to be part of the designer's consideration" (176). Thus, multimodal design decisions shape

meaning making. And these representations of meaning thereby influence the ways in which students interact with or engage in learning. These pedagogical choices even shape the means and forms of assessment which guarantee the meeting of formal learning objectives (cf., Kress, 2009). Faculty note how such complexities are at times confounding, leading them to question how they might best design the "natural, critical learning environments" Ken Bain (2004) suggests are a mark of what the best teachers do.

Managing "un-expectations": Increasing possibilities related to software and an expanding set of digital resources available on the Web continue to make the design and ongoing maintenance of online courses a real challenge. Neil, a professor who has taught in a technology-based discipline for 35 years and yet who has only just begun teaching online over the past couple of years illustrates this challenge among faculty teaching online today:

> *I wish in some ways that absolutely no new technologies would be invented after right now. Okay? Because there are enough technologies out there now that I don't know about that I should, that I could then apply to the classes that I'm teaching now. I think the technologies that I'm using now are sufficient to create a very exciting and successful experience for the students and also to keep me engaged and to help me feel some sense of accomplishment, which frankly everybody needs to do. But also more importantly allow me to learn from my students in ways that I can manage and I can understand. And so I think like I could probably hit the pause button and say, "Okay, let's just work with these technologies and try to get the best out of them that we can." I think that would be really good because I know that next week I'm going to discover a new technology that I'm going to be actually obliged to incorporate without first having the solid foundation in the capabilities of the technologies that I'm just starting to learn how to do well. And I think that's a really very frustrating aspect of online teaching.*

The challenges of what it means to stay current as an online teacher in today's educational environments were reflected in 15 of the 16 interviews (≈95%) in this study. Thus,

although faculty uses of multimedia at times reflected a means by which faculty brought innovation to an educational experience, they also represented a significant place of frustration in their teaching. Julia, a teacher of 11 years who had just taught her first online course highlighted some of her frustrations associated with the need to integrate a varied array of multimedia into her course:

> *Designing an online course is an incredible amount of work, from my perspective . . . If I would have known what this would have entailed, I would have run screaming from the building . . . it's not the content that's the issue. It's the all of the other stuff . . . It's all the extra elements we put in the course, all these other elements, the little videos . . . the creation of the "think-aloud" clips and the forums . . . and then the procedures for how students were going to make a "think-aloud" clip . . . there was the need to think through all that stuff, then author it, then put it online. I mean, it's insane. And that was just one assignment . . . in our LMS, I can't type a sigma. How am I going to do that? It's embarrassing, the amount of time that I would spend on these kind of things. So, there's a lot of frustration . . . There are things that I wanted to do, that I had to find a work-around. I mean, I have a buzz in my recordings. I have 500 hours in my recordings between the actual recording and the editing. For half of those there's a buzz in it that I can't get out. Because, it turns out, that if I'm using my laptop, and I plug it in, that I get a buzz. And how long did it take me to figure that out? I can't even tell you the hours . . . I think, just from my ignorance, and lack of experience with a lot of these technologies, it is an insane amount of time just to get the stuff up on the web. That's not even talking about responding or doing anything with students.*

The frustration in these words is clearly evident, and as such mirrors to various degrees the same kinds of emotions expressed by more than half of those interviewed. Faculty perceived the need to work with new ICT in online and blended approaches to teaching and learning as bringing a significant level of complexity to what they were being asked to accomplish in the design of their online courses. As was noted earlier in this chapter, the rapid pace of change associated with working in online environments has forced teachers to face a

growing number of challenges and a heightened sense of their inability to keep up with the changes, especially if they hope to keep from burning out in their careers.

Faculty spoke of their work with multimedia as not only adding to the challenges in their design of online courses, but also in the unexpected work of editing their courses. The ongoing need to make corrections or revisions, or even update media they had created was equally as time consuming. Moreover, these necessary adaptations also required specific skills that faculty struggled to acquire given their already taxing schedules. Sometimes, even the need to make simple changes was difficult for faculty working in multimodal environments. Ingrid spoke of the complication associated with adapting video lectures to reflect new editions of a textbook:

> *Updating information [online] is so much harder when a new edition of something comes out. When it's face-to-face it's easier to change what you say. For example, in one of my classes the chapters in the textbook were completely rearranged. So that meant everything I had said in the video lecture that said, "Now as you recall from blank …" No, they didn't. They hadn't read that. So, it's a major organizational shift of all the sections that are online of every word I've said, because I'm basing it on a previous foundation. So that's a big issue. It's very time-consuming. It's just takes forever to upgrade video in that way.*

These faculty perspectives indicate that the introduction of multimedia design dramatically complicated what it meant for them as teachers to design and teach in online environments. One professor addressed the challenges surrounding the ongoing need to adapt to new technologies and software as "a black-hole that can waste a lot of time." Several faculty stated quite forcefully that had they not had the support of additional staff or colleagues they could turn to when needed, that teaching in multimodal environments would have been unmanageable. And yet, faculty in these interviews believed the responsibility for guaranteeing

student learning in their courses rested firmly upon their own shoulders. Chapter 5 provides a fuller portrayal of the tendency of faculty in this sample to seek out help for effectively managing these challenges. Thus, although the uses of new multimedia were at times frustrating and even overwhelming, faculty were cognizant of the need to either acquire these skills for the work they hoped to accomplish online, or find others who already possessed them.

New skills – new possibilities: Although some faculty stipulated that they wished the unrelenting curve of rapid growth and development in technology would end allowing them to teach in a more steady environment, 6 faculty also expressed excitement (at times) with being able to experiment with new software or new technologies. However, both of these sets of faculty recognized that their understanding of the uses of new forms of media influenced whether or not they would be effective in their teaching. One teacher reflected:

> *There's been a definite interrelationship between both what I'm able to teach and the quality in which I'm able to teach it, with the kinds of technology that I have access to and know how to use. The more I understand and use the technology, the more it seems to open up new possibilities for me.*

The challenge in these words, however, lies in the rapid proliferation of new technologies in today's educational contexts. One pointed example comes from Yosarian's description of his own technology journey in the development of one of his online courses:

> *Five or six years ago I started becoming interested in using images. And so, I no longer just sort of present a page of text online . . . Almost always I'm looking for something that has some relationship to the text that I'm talking about. The image could be a serious one or could be a funny one, a cartoon, or whatever, but I try to break up the text with images. I started using audio presentations probably four or five years ago . . . and then they got rid of Breeze and decided to use Adobe Connect, and that created some problems . . . Just this week I got a new iMac and I put VM ware on it so that I can do a*

Windows format, so I can run Adobe Connect, because Adobe Connect doesn't work on a Mac. So you have to use this Windows program, Windows Simulator, and it worked fine, got the Power Point presentation to work well, uploaded it to my online course, and then opened it in my Mac, and there's no audio. And we still don't know why there's no audio. But it works fine in older Macs . . . Now I think the next thing I will have to learn is Camtasia, and maybe Voice Thread, too.

Although this quotation represents a journey of nearly 6 years, the challenges inherent in such transformation are immense. Faculty were acutely aware of these challenges and had begun to think critically about what it means to teach in online environments. In their minds, teaching was no longer necessarily defined by the variables surrounding face-to-face communication and interaction. The uses of multimedia raised questions about the how images communicate, and how video or audio presentations might provoke student interaction, especially given that a student's reaction to such media is not visible to the teacher. In addition, 3 faculty spoke directly of how the opportunities and constraints of a learning management system (LMS) might be influencing the ways in which learning transaction was understood. For example, Emily, a professor who has been teaching online for ten years stated:

I think that part of the issue that we're all facing on this campus is that our LMS is slowly going away. And many of us have been using that system for years, with all of its positives and negatives. Actually right now I'm a participant in a limited field trial for Moodle in the fall, so I'm having to think differently about my course for the first time in awhile because it's different, a different system. So I'm trying again to come up with, you know, in my head, "What's the ideal way that I want to convey this information to students?" And I have to tweak my perception of it because Moodle is just different.

Thus, faculty recognized both challenges and creative opportunities associated with teaching via multimedia. Moreover, several spoke of their work with multimedia in terms of losses and gains, reflecting Kress's (2008) ideas on the varied ways that multimedia

communicate. For example, 2 faculty spoke of how video capture had improved the quality of their lectures, while another noted how video capture had locked her to lecturing at the podium, thus limiting the interactive nature of her lectures. One-quarter of those interviewed specified how the uses of multimedia had allowed them to personalize their work of teaching online, while another quarter noted an increasing sense of isolation when teaching in these ways. Half of those interviewed highlighted the value of being able to provide multiple points of entry into a subject and even graduated options for students at various levels of understanding, while 5 mentioned how the uses of multimedia were seemingly distracting students from actually acquiring the subject matter they were teaching. Thus, faculty viewed their uses of multimedia online as multifaceted, requiring much-needed research in order to identify how these approaches may or may not be influencing student learning.

The uses of multimedia have clearly shaped the ways in which these educators were thinking about and engaging the opportunities of teaching online. They firmly believed that they must be willing to acquire new skills in order to effectively utilize media in their teaching, and yet often felt that the demands associated with this learning curve were not recognized within traditional systems in which they worked, a subject addressed at length in Chapter 5. In the end, faculty desired to acquire a greater understanding of just how their uses of multimedia may be influencing the learning experience of students.

The place of aesthetics

The final quotation in the previous section provides a good place to begin when addressing *the place of aesthetics* in online and blended approaches to teaching and learning.

Emily suggested that the design of online materials and courses must be considered in connection with the learning systems that present them. In these ways, the LMS is the *site*, or environmental context which gives shape to *how* the content and the learning experiences may be presented. However, the structures which guide the processes of online teaching and learning are but one component in these discussions. What these interviews suggest is that the place of aesthetics in online course design is a much broader space, encompassing several related areas and a variety of possible skills associated with how faculty present and implement their teaching in these environments.

Patrick Parrish's (2009) portrayal of aesthetics in traditional instructional design offers a framework for considering the place of aesthetics in online course design. Parrish's emphasis on the emotive experiences connected with aesthetic engagement and their affect on learning, as opposed to a focus on external aesthetic qualities, form the basis for his approach to aesthetics in instructional design. While it is true that faculty specified their choice to utilize a varied set of learning experiences in the design process for the purpose of *engaging* students in meaningful, coherent, and immersive ways, they also drew attention to how online education differed from the classroom. Thus they spoke of, or contemplated, what appeared to them to be a quite unique and inherent quality of online education, namely, the very *visual* nature of how teaching and learning presents itself within these environments. And although only a couple of faculty hinted at how the visual qualities associated with online-ism might be crafted to encourage aesthetic interaction or meaningful learning experiences, implications from these distinctions merit careful and separate attention.

Aesthetics as engagement: Parrish (2009) outlines what he refers to as five aesthetic *first principles* of instructional design which affect the learning experience of students, the fourth of which addresses the role of context within the learning experience. Parish notes how the literature on instructional design most often addresses the issue of context as conditions which are a given prior to the educational experience and so must be taken into account in instructional design. However, Parrish spends the bulk of his article addressing a second approach to this idea of context, namely, what designers can do to *create* a context which encourages the learning experience. Although Parrish suggests that this proactive aspect of context is often not addressed in the literature on instructional design, faculty in these interviews identified it as the primary consideration driving their work of online course design.

Earlier in this chapter, faculty specified how online teaching had forced them to more carefully plan out and think through their courses. They claimed that this characteristic lead to quality over time, as teachers are encouraged to consider the durable outcomes associated with the subject matter they are teaching. On the other hand, faculty also revealed how this often leads to a kind of inflexibility in being able to adjust the learning in real time, because of the complexities surrounding the development of online courses. Thus, in certain respects, they seemed to give less attention to the individualized contexts that students were bringing with them to the learning experience, while giving the most attention to how the learning context might best be shaped to engage students in the processes of their learning.

The chief theme that emerged in these interviews, related to how created context shapes the aesthetic engagement of students online, was the priority of organization. All 16 of

those interviewed drew attention to the importance of organization in their course design. For some, these thoughts emerged as the result of time spent teaching online. Faculty spoke of the vital importance of "making instructions and navigation transparent," and of creating visual and organizational cues to "keep students from getting lost in the course." Bill stated:

> *One of the things with online material is that you need to be so much more explicit, because there's just so many different ways to understand something incorrectly . . . In a face-to-face class if somebody doesn't quite understand what you're saying, they can ask; or you can look at their faces and see that they're not quite sure what you're talking about and you can say it a different way – whereas you sort of have to think that up ahead of time in an online class. And to me, more than anything else that's the real challenge, trying to figure out how to understand what people are getting confused about or how they're dealing with it.*

In addition, approximately 70% of interviewees referred to advice that colleagues or design teams had given them concerning the importance of organization online. These thoughts led some to design interfaces that organized the learning sequences, housed important documents, texts, and learning activities. Some created templates that created continuity from lesson to lesson and/or from course to course. Others organized their courses around visual objects such as colors, artistic themes, icons, and/or consistent headings. Interestingly, the issue of organization was most often associated with avoiding negative responses that might disengage students in their learning, rather than positives designed to encourage engagement.

On the other hand, faculty worked very diligently to create contexts online that would lead to student engagement. This work of teaching online conveyed traditional ideas surrounding the work of instructional design as is portrayed in the definitions of design within the CoI framework. Thus, faculty evidenced each of Parrish's (2009) other four instructional

design principles in their work of online course design. Oscar addressed his thoughts on designing aesthetic, engaging experiences online in the following way:

> *It has always mystified me in my face-to-face classes over the years how students always said that they found it very interactive, even if the students didn't talk a lot. That always puzzled me. Invariably students would feel the course was interactive even if I didn't have as much classroom discussion as other people. Over the years it made me think that interactivity's not necessarily a matter of the ratio of discourse. It's also a question of how the material is organized. That's a key factor in it. And I think over the years I moved towards a way of presenting material that was designed to activate disagreements, to show where the breeches were in thought. The course material was presented in a highly interactive way; and I think students saw that . . . So, this has to do with the voice of instruction, even if it's not formal lecturing, meaning the sort of the tone you set, or the ways you convey the instructor's "voice." Obviously, it's hard to do a lot of those things online. But I do try to get into a number of these in the way I write the lectures, in a sort of online style that I've carefully developed over the years.*

In ways resembling Anderson's (2003) equivalency theory at the beginning of this section, faculty described the interactivity of their courses in ways extending beyond the course's threaded or synchronous discussions. Student engagement was key, leading faculty to consider the various ways they might motivate or encourage student learning through attention to aesthetic experiences with the course's content or learning activities.

The visual nature of online learning seemed to reflect an afterthought for most faulty, brought on once they had begun to engage in the processes of designing an online course. These observations correlate with the findings of Ke (2010) who noted in his interviews with faculty that, "few online instructors [had] received training on information or visional design" (813). Among those interviewed for this study, this recognition of the visual qualities of online learning took shape over multiple offerings of their online courses. Moreover, except for 3

faculty who had graphic arts backgrounds, considering how to visually represent an online course was generally viewed as falling outside normal expectations for faculty work. Several professors noted their decision to bring in one or more specialists with experience in the visual arts to assist them in conceptualizing how to organize or present aspects of their courses online. Several others mentioned various serendipitous experiences which allowed them to adapt their presentation of the subject matter or the design of learning experiences in visual ways over time, after having had experiences connected with multiple offerings of a course.

Those who had taught the longest online were acutely aware of how online teaching has changed over the years, especially as it related to student expectations surrounding the look and feel of online courses. Thus, faculty in these interviews were considering how color, organization, icons, images, font styles, and even the uses of space might influence the learning experience and encourage or discourage student involvement. Once again, these ideas correspond with Kress's thinking on the subject of multimodal course design in which he states the significance of the visual characteristics of online learning. Kress (2005) claims that the aesthetics of the traditional page are influenced by the "power of the author" where online "it is the interest of the reader" that directs the pathways of learning. Faculty expressed this understanding intuitively as they strove to find the best ways to engage students.

Lauri mentioned how she had enlisted a graphic artist to help her conceptualize the big ideas in her course. These ideas were integrated into the fabric of the course via the uses of different interfaces and distinct colors for each main idea. In this way, the students would clearly recognize where they were in the course in relation to these primary concepts. Cindy

mentioned having designed a map to illustrate the journey of her course, creating longer pathways for those sections of the course that had a greater volume of content or required a greater proportion of the students' time during the course.

Gary, a teacher in the sciences who also had a background in the visual arts spoke of his careful attention to the uses of visual components in the design of his online courses:

> *So, one of the aspects that I love about online is that everything you give someone, their whole entire experience is crafted . . . it's a little bit like creating a complete package . . . you can create a very consistent message about whatever it is that you want, whether its responsibility to turn things in, or it's this idea that structurally you can set up a system that overcomes hurdles. One of my hurdles was people's engagement with a topic they're unfamiliar with or very uncomfortable with. And so, how do you do that? Well you may create some kind of soft introduction to the topic, so they aren't afraid to ask questions. So I use the visual, or branding a lot. I realize that there's a feeling that branding is about deception or that it's cheap, because it's advertising-based, that it shouldn't necessarily be in education. But I think that students actually have an emotional response to these visual elements. And because they have an emotional response that means that they are willing to engage it. And that is something that you can't do face-to-face. Like when you come into a classroom there's a structural component there that is more in their face, and how you dress that day, or how you're coming across with signals that you may not intend to make, or you may come in and have a frown on your face – is it them, is it you? I guess I just really like the aspect of being able to send a very clear signal online.*

In the classroom, a primary feature of the teaching is the oral nature of instruction and group communication. However, much of the online experience is highly visual, and textual. This "visuality" of the online experience is a feature identified by faculty as significant to the online experience, and thus a critical component in online course design. Moreover, half of the faculty interviewed specified that they did not feel like they had sufficient skills or the training necessary to effectively craft the visual qualities of their online courses. However, faculty were

very aware of the need to incorporate visual elements or visual qualities within their online courses, and several expressed a growing interest in understanding how skills in aesthetic representation might enhance the quality of their courses. Finally, 3 faculty identified how the visual nature of online learning had begun to shape how they were envisioning their disciplines. These examples are addressed in greater length in Chapter 5.

Summary

These portraits of online teaching clearly reveal the increasingly complex set of variables associated with the processes of online course *design*. Conceptualizing the first dimension of the CoI framework simply as *instructional design and organization* misses these significant domains of faculty work in contemporary representations of online education. Faculty resonated with a broader set of descriptors including composition, media design, and aesthetic design in the practical responsibilities associated with creating online courses. Most expressed reluctance to move confidently into the full scope of these varied responsibilities on their own. Instead, the vast majority of online faculty sought out others who could complement their skills across these four design priorities for the purpose of designing effective online courses. This re-envisioning of design to more accurately reflect its multifaceted qualities offers a way to improve the management of these digital spaces, providing the support necessary for online education and helping faculty to engage this work with realistic expectations surrounding what online course design truly entails.

Chapter 3 – Redefining Presence:
From *Dimensions* to *Roles* in Online Teaching

Without question, Chapter 3 was the most difficult to author in this dissertation. My original intentions were to devote this chapter to exploring faculty perspectives on the second dimension of teaching presence, *facilitating discourse*, and then to devote Chapter 4 to the third and final dimension of teaching presence, *direct instruction* (see Figure 2 in Chapter 1). However, data from faculty interviews did not divide themselves neatly in this way. Rather, faculty described their online teaching using a much richer and more diverse vocabulary in depicting this work. For this reason, Chapter 3 explores faculty perspectives surrounding both of the final two dimensions of teaching presence, *facilitating discourse* and *direct instruction*.

Chapter 3 is divided into three major sections. The first section discusses the problematic nature of the final two dimensions of the CoI framework, outlining evidence from prior CoI research as well as from these faculty interviews concerning the difficulties inherent in such a division. This section concludes with a rationale for examining these final dimensions of teaching presence together, as overlapping parts of the work of teaching occurring in the *learning transaction*. In addition, the work of *organization*, originally connected to *design* in the CoI framework (Anderson, et al., 2001), is explored within the work of teaching evident during the learning transaction.

The second major section adopts a more recent descriptor for these final *dimensions* – one utilized by Terry Anderson (2008) in his significant piece on the nature of online teaching. Thus, the term "roles" is used in place of the term "dimensions" to facilitate the description of

faculty data emerging from these interviews. Faculty perspectives organize around 5 *roles*, including the work of teaching in blended approaches to online education. These roles appear to be *descriptive* of the work of online teaching rather than a *prescriptive* or exhaustive list.

Finally, the third major section turns to a growing set of approaches which seek to leverage the inherent flexibilities of online education by increasing student self- and co-regulated learning. These emerging approaches correspond with Anderson's (2008) description of a second "competing model of online learning … involv[ing] independent learners who work by themselves and at their own pace through the course of instruction" (348-349). The most recently published research on the CoI framework confirms these expansions, calling for additional work related to these effective models in contemporary online learning.

The Problematic Nature of *Facilitating Discourse* & *Direct Instruction*

In theory, the final two dimensions in the CoI framework, *facilitating discourse* and *direct instruction*, represent different teaching functions in computer-mediated environments. Starting with the most recent descriptions of these two dimensions from Garrison's (2011) second edition of E-Learning in the 21st Century, we can begin to see the inherent difficulty in clearly delineating between these two dimensions.

Garrison (2011) defines the CoI's second dimension *facilitating discourse* as, "facilitating reflections and discourse for the purpose of building understanding" (58). He also describes this work of teaching as needing to be pedagogically *focused*, so that a teacher can "ensure progression toward intended educational goals" (58). Moreover, he claims this function of

teaching needs to be *balanced*, meaning that it ought to display appropriate levels of group interaction and teacher direction in the processes of such discourse. He states that in *facilitating discourse*, teachers "must know their subject" in order to help students make meaningful connections with the content of a course (95). In summary, Garrison describes *facilitation* in terms of a teacher's *direction* of discourse towards intended educational purposes and within prescribed educational content.

What makes a clear delineation between the second and third dimensions problematic is their close definitional and practical proximity. Thus, *direct instruction*, is also described in terms of connecting learning to issues of content and within the disciplinary expertise of the teacher who brings the subject matter to bear on student learning. Later in Chapter 9 of Garrison's (2011) book he states that both of these dimensions require teachers' focused feedback as they give care to shape online discussions without dominating them. Teachers are encouraged to give *direction* to discourse, and to *facilitate* understanding by guiding students toward the objectives and the intended content. Practically speaking, it is very difficult to parse out differences in these definitions and practices except perhaps in that *facilitating discourse* is more often described as a work directed towards group or collaborative learning, while *direct instruction* is more often described as directed toward individual students.

Evidence from "CoI" research

In the previous chapter, we considered the evolution of the CoI framework, especially as it related to the dimension of *design* in online education. Thus, we saw that Garrison, et al. (2000) initially conceptualized *teaching presence* as "consist[ing] of two general functions …

design … [and] facilitation" (89 – 90), with *direct instruction* reflecting a category in their coding template. Later depictions of *teaching presence* within the CoI literature expanded this understanding, though it is perhaps significant that *direct instruction* appears to have gained its place as a dimension to buttress online teaching against a kind of facilitation in which the content expertise of the facilitator was either minimalized or deemed unimportant (cf., Anderson, et al., 2001; D.R. Garrison & Anderson, 2003).

Anderson, et al. (2001) further hint at the difficulties involved in clearly distinguishing between these proposed dimensions in their discussion of the second dimension, *facilitating discourse*. Thus they make the claim that "facilitation of discourse is usually integrated within direct instruction and *in situ* design [later termed *organization*] of instructional activity" (7). In arguing against the guide-on-the-side approach to facilitation, they claim, "the arbitrary distinction between facilitator and content provider we find troublesome" (8). Thus, although the authors seem to be arguing for an integrated approach to computer-mediated discourse, this cohesive understanding of the teacher's role is divided in the CoI research.

Garrison and Arbaugh (2007) make this point in their response to a study (P. Shea, et al., 2006) which concluded that these final two dimensions were indistinguishable among online students. Garrison and Arbaugh clarify that, "Discourse, on the other hand, is disciplined inquiry that requires a knowledgeable teacher who must manage the progression of the discussion in a collaborative constructive manner (i.e., direction)" (165). Thus, they define the *facilitation of discourse* in terms of the *direction* of a knowledgeable teacher, or what elsewhere is described as *direct instruction*.

Peter Shea, Chun Sau Li, and Andrea Pickett (2006), mentioned above, describe a multi-institutional investigation among 1067 students, suggesting that the final two dimensions of teaching presence in the CoI framework are better understood as a singular teaching function which they entitled "directed facilitation" (81). In a more recent study Peter Shea, Jason Vickers, and Suzanne Hayes (2010) specified four limitations constraining the CoI research to date, the first of which reiterated the need to revisit the final two dimensions of teaching presence. Thus, even the research within the CoI framework reflects the problematic nature inherent in articulating a clear distinction between the *facilitation of discourse* and *direct instruction* in online teaching presence.

Finally, one additional study identifies aspects of the learning transaction which do not correlate with these two dimensions. Shea, et al. (2010) specify that their analysis of student discourse in small-group, collaborative projects "does not conform to the patterns of teaching presence identified in other kinds of student interaction" (141). They go on to state that these forms of student self- and co-regulation represent "fertile ground for extending the framework" (141) and thus should reflect a place for future research. Moreover, these authors confirm the validity of a fourth dimension, *assessment*, in their research.

Evidence from this study

Faculty data in this study suggest that online teachers do not envision their work of teaching as simply a combination of these final two dimensions of teaching presence. Rather, they understand their work of online teaching as representing an integrated function displaying a much broader array of meaning. The final two sections of this chapter highlight one set of

meanings expressed by faculty, namely, a diverse set of "roles" adopted by online faculty in their teaching. However, faculty articulated additional meaning associated with their online teaching, meaning which portrayed how the *inner* world of the teacher (Chapter 4) and the *outer* worlds of various contexts (Chapter 5) are shaping the ways in which they envision the nature of their teaching presence online.

Faculty portrayed their teaching as an integrated craft by which they sought to serve as intermediaries between their disciplines and student learning. Teachers viewed themselves as bridges, linking what at times appeared to be very independent worlds. This was especially true among undergraduate teachers, all of whom identified their online classes as extending to non-majors and thus requiring additional attention to how to connect students to the subjects they were teaching. However, none of the faculty in these interviews identified a two-fold understanding of presence, namely, *facilitating discourse* and *direct instruction*. Even faculty exemplifying collaborative constructivist pedagogies described their work of teaching as a careful balance between individual and group learning, and between the shifting priorities of intervening or remaining quite in online discourse. Thus, faculty described their communication with students more in terms of an integrated art, or as an intuitive or experience-driven understanding whereby they would continue to assess whether course learning objectives were being met and the degree to which and ways they ought to involve themselves in these processes. Lauri's description of these aspects of her teaching was typical:

> *We had discussion groups, small groups that would discuss and then post things so there could be an ongoing dialogue. But the first time I taught the course, because I'm pretty conscientious, I thought I should respond to every post. I've since learned that this is a normal process that online faculty go through. Well it didn't take me very long to figure*

out that that was not possible to do. And beyond that, beyond the time, I didn't think it was pedagogically very wise, because I realized pretty quickly that it was setting up a situation where a person is essentially waiting for the approval of the teacher. And so it diminishes the sense of responsibility of other people in the class to feel like they're in a dialogue . . . As I reflected on, "how would I do it in [my face-to-face] class," I might say thank you to somebody, but I wouldn't comment on every response if I was trying to get a conversation going. So I had to think about how to do that online. I talked to different colleagues about this, and one colleague who I admire a lot said that if he had something to say, he'd make a comment. And he'd have a presence that kept people knowing he was there, but that he didn't try to answer everything.

Turning to individual teacher-to-student communication, faculty also spoke of these conversations with students in varied ways. For some, many of these conversations took place via e-mail involving social, cognitive, and subject matter related concerns. Others made portions of their individual communication with students public for the benefit of the entire class. Still others identified private ways in which they communicated with students, especially surrounding the assessment of student work. Although the CoI might categorize much of this as direct instruction, at times such communication was crafted by teachers to provoke interest or motivate self-directed learning in the mind of the student. Sometimes faculty desired to encourage an ongoing conversation related to the subject matter or push students to consider personalized applications in their learning. Again, these features of presence appeared to integrate the ideas of discourse and direct instruction.

Student reflection is a feature of student learning identified in the CoI literature that was clearly articulated by faculty in this study. In fact, assessment involving reflective learning often helped teachers to better understand how to mediate between the students and their subjects. Two illustrations help to situate the varied ways that faculty approached reflection in

their online teaching. Firstly, Yosarian described his attention to student journaling as a reflective learning exercise. He designed a series of questions to help students connect course content to their personal lives and their professional work. Thus, although his class was oriented around the development of a collaborative learning community, these reflective activities reflected a private conversation between him and each student. He stated:

> *The idea of the reflective activities is for [students] to help me understand how they're thinking about the material and for me to give them feedback. That's actually an interesting idea, but it turns out to be quite burdensome; they're a lot of work. I still believe that pedagogically it's a really useful activity for them to do and for me as the instructor to read those.*

Lauri's example, explained more fully under the heading "Assessment" below, illustrates additional purposes attached to student reflection in the teaching and learning transaction. Like Yosarian, Lauri used these reflections to better gauge how her students were making sense of the course content. However, Lauri also used these individual statements of learning to craft summative feedback in the form of a letter to the class. She explained:

> *What I will do … is compile the findings and feed them back to students as a way to reinforce learning; to say, you know, "In this class half of you thought this was the most important part of the lecture last week," and then you can say, "That really is the most important." Or, "one-third of you thought this …" And so it's a way to provide some summaries of the learning.*

Other faculty spoke of their intensions in the uses of reflective work as helping students personalize their learning via real-life application. These very personalized features of student learning were a discourse of sorts, though one directed equally, or at times exclusively by the

student. Over half of the faculty identified this work as *feedback* rather than as discourse or direct instruction, perhaps melding these ideas together under a singular purpose.

Not only was the distinction between *facilitating discourse* and *direct instruction* problematic related to the integrated ways that these faculty understand their work of teaching online, it was also problematic in how it limited the varied purposes and preferences evident in this work. One example of this diversity of purpose was evident in faculty's uses of group work and collaborative projects. As might be expected, some of this collaborative work involved small group dialogue as teams communicated together about how to go about creating a team product. However, the actual producing of a group project and the teacher's role in this process varied considerably. Some teachers mentioned focusing on the content of a group project, while others focused on the processes of group work and problem solving. For several, group work was addressed by teachers as a process of consultation. This was especially true when teams were required to submit multiple drafts demonstrating a progression of learning by incorporating teacher feedback in the process. One professor identified the difficulties he experienced with adult learners who struggled to establish effective collaborative teams in the creation of a group project online:

> *A major reason why I use collaborative projects is that it requires [students] to develop collaborative relationships with one another. And that is a really important part of my teaching beliefs, my pedagogy. If we do anything, we should be helping students learn to get along. We should be helping students to learn to work across difference … I mean a major goal of [these projects] is to foster team work and interpersonal communication, and collaboration, working together to produce a product, working for the common good. That's what collaboration is about. And students are having a devil of a time doing that … For whatever reason there is a real strong reaction among many students, not all, but among many to working collaboratively … Students have a love-hate relationship*

> *with group work. I think they like working in groups so long as they're not held accountable as a team. I think that's what it is. As long as they can go off and do their own thing, then the group thing is okay. But as soon as you require them as a group to produce something together, it is a recipe for disaster.*

This perspective corresponds to other studies which demonstrate how the purposes and preferences of adult learners may differ from other student populations (e.g., Ke, 2010). Thus, as with the research of Shea, et al. (2010) noted above, faculty data suggest that group work does not neatly fit within the proposed final dimensions of the CoI framework.

Variability was also evident in disciplinary differences and teacher preferences. The influence of *discipline* in how faculty envision teaching presence online was significant and is thus addressed at length in Chapter 5. However, it is important to acknowledge that disciplinary differences appeared to significantly influence the nature of a teacher's presence online, especially as it related to varied approaches in the assessment of student learning. In regard to teacher preferences, these interviews demonstrate that a teacher's educational philosophy, beliefs about learning, and pedagogical choices also influenced how s/he was present online.

Daniel D. Pratt and Associates (2005) make the point that how a teacher understands her/his role as a teacher profoundly influences the ways in which a teacher approaches the learning endeavor. Although these perspectives are most often explored in face-to-face environments, they were clearly evident in these interviews as well. For example, Oscar identified his commitment to model a kind of academic writing in his responses to student work, reflecting an inductive form of *apprenticeship*. Lauri's commitments to facilitate student self-efficacy and an emerging collaborative perspective appeared to reflect a *nurturing* perspective on instruction as defined in this work.

Thus, these interviews underscore the inherent difficulty found in dividing the work of teaching between the dimensions of *facilitating discourse* and providing *direct instruction*. The work of teaching online is complex, involving a varied set of approaches based upon disciplinary, pedagogical, and philosophical differences. Moreover, the work of faculty online evident in teacher *feedback* and *assessment* is layered, differing according to educational purpose and perhaps suggesting that they represent additional dimensions of teaching presence in the online educational process.

Examining the learning transaction

Before turning to the themes which emerged from faculty perspectives concerning their *roles* in the work of teaching online, it is important to reiterate three foundational perspectives that are guiding the representation of these data. Firstly, the decision of the CoI research to focus exclusively, until only recently, on the analyses of threaded discussions has constrained the representation of teaching presence online (cf., Ke, 2010). Morgan (2011) stipulates that earlier research lacked the breadth associated with the "considerable negotiation that instructors engage in while facilitating a course" (17). Moreover, Shea, Vickers et al. (2010) specify their belief "that the bulk of online instructional effort occurs outside such fora" (140), that is, outside threaded discussion forums. Given the limitations of this narrow focus, it is apparent why the current framework appears not to effectively represent the full range of teaching depicted in the perspectives of online faculty.

Secondly, the extensive scope of faculty work involved in the designing of online courses, in terms of total time and effort involved, reveals a clear break in the minds of faculty

between the work of *design* prior to the opening of an online course and the work of *organization* evident during its implementation. These features are addressed as a singular dimension in the current CoI framework. However, faculty describe the labor- and time-intensive tasks involved in online course *design* as producing a mostly fixed environment that is much less flexible for real-time adaptation during a course. In contrast, what the authors of the CoI framework refer to as *organization* and express only in terms of teacher work in threaded discussion (D.R. Garrison & Anderson, 2003), faculty describe as a range of work occurring across a variety of components within an online course. These thoughts suggest that faculty understand their work as extending beyond the definitions outlined in the CoI framework. Perhaps this observation corresponds with some who have suggested that the work of *organization* online may actually represent an additional dimension of teaching presence (cf., Peter Shea, et al., 2010).

Finally, it is important that we reconsider the theoretical basis for examining online teaching as an element of *presence*. Garrison (2011) makes the significant observation that *distance* is no longer an adequate descriptor of the nature of online learning today, arguing that, "with the proliferation of Internet technologies, distance has become relatively meaningless" (3). These interviews resoundingly affirm this observation, though go even further in their portrayal of online teaching and learning. Not only do they evidence that *distance* has become a meaningless descriptor of online education, they reveal that *presence* has become laden with meaning. Thus, the primary question undergirding the balance of this chapter is, "In what ways do traditional faculty demonstrate *presence* in their work of teaching online as they engage themselves in the learning transaction with students?"

From *Dimensions* to *Roles*: Teaching Presence in the Learning Transaction

Thus far we have seen that faculty work online suggests a broader understanding of how teachers are thinking about the nature of their presence online. While this appears to be a consequence of having extended the research on teaching presence to encompass the entirety of a teacher's work in these environments, questions remain regarding how educators might conceptualize a teacher's presence evident during the learning transaction. Therefore, in addressing the problem that these data do not organize around the final two dimensions of teaching presence, help was found from Anderson's (2008) significant work on the nature of online teaching. Thus, Anderson's use of the term *roles* was adopted in place of *dimensions* to describe this work (or works) of online teaching presence.

In this second section, we examine the idea of teaching presence as a combination of one or more teaching *roles* in online and blended formats. Faculty perspectives in this study organized around five distinct teaching *roles* online. These priorities of online teaching are:

1. Consultation
2. Supervision
3. Professional orientations
4. Assessment
5. Blended teaching

This list is not meant to suggest a comprehensive understanding of roles in online teaching, but rather to initiate a discussion surrounding the varied work of online teaching in contemporary environments. A case in point is the *role* of critique mentioned in one faculty interview in this study and touched upon in the final section of this chapter. This feature of teaching may carry considerable weight deserving of additional study, especially in the arts.

Consultation

The priority of consultation was especially prevalent among graduate-level courses within the soft disciplines. In these courses, teachers took on the role of advising students across a varied set of individual pursuits, so that teaching involved conveying professional or research-based processes within a given field. Teachers sought to help students learn how to pursue their own interests, yet in ways reflecting certain sets of standards such as those associated with composition, citation, or ways of reporting research. Teachers provided feedback for early, middle, and/or final drafts, and offered guidance related to roadblocks, the conceptualizing of a problem or project, and how to find or use resources in support of a student's research. For one professor, consulting with students in their projects during an online class reflected his own self-directed preferences related to his own learning:

> *I think I was beginning to realize that the thing I just loved about the computer was the opportunities to do things yourself. And I think I brought into it a certain idea from the study of adult learning, in which I've always favored the sort of adult learning project idea: the opportunity to get people to do things on their own.*

Two professors identified the role of consultation in their work of guiding and assessing small-group, collaborative projects. In both of these examples, the priority was on helping students make connections from the required readings to real-life practice. These emphases on application and integration required teachers to individualize the nature of their feedback. Furthermore, group projects were held to standards reflecting certain conventions in their respective disciplines. Thus, this work of teaching as consultation required faculty to speak to issues of form and process, especially when the content of a given project may have fallen—to one degree or another—outside of a professor's particular areas of expertise. In these ways,

consultation seemed to reflect different nuances and even different skill sets than those traditionally connected with *facilitating dialogue* or providing *direct instruction*.

In one final example, Mike spoke of his uses of consultation across two components of his teaching within his blended learning course. The first connected with the face-to-face component of his course which he adapted to focus more prominently on the processes of consultation. However, Mike also looked at his work of teaching in the discussion forums as a place for consultation. Mike had come to realize in his 9 years of online teaching, that adult learners were not as interested in developing online community in his online forums, but were more concerned with the assignments in the course. Thus, Mike adjusted his forums as a place for feedback on student and group assignments:

> *I think some of our students see discussion forums as, "Okay, it's another thing I have to do." Not something that really benefits my learning … I think that one of the things that students like is quick feedback on questions related to the work they're doing … almost all of our students are working full time. So they're looking at, "What do I have to do to get through this course?" And "I have to get my assignments done, okay? To the extent that readings help the assignments, I'll do them; to the extent that watching videos may help with the assignments, I'll look at them." But their focus is on the assignments, so I think what I'm getting in terms of feedback, what people like is quick turnaround when they have a question, because it's helping them … So I don't run discussion forums for pursuing the content as much as using the discussion forums tied to the assignments … So again, in terms of this notion of presence, they know that I'm there watching how they are dealing with the assignments, which in their minds is the only currency that counts. That's what's graded. So that's where I try to put my presence.*

These thoughts are also confirmed in the research, suggesting that adult student preferences reflect these priorities and thus that teaching ought to recognize this (Ke, 2010).

Supervision

In both editions of E-Learning in the 21st Century (D. R. Garrison, 2011; D.R. Garrison & Anderson, 2003), the authors describe supervision in online courses as a facet of what it means to facilitate dialogue in these environments. However, 4 faculty in these interviews made uses of different understandings of supervision in their online courses. 3 of these cases involved the work of supervision over teaching assistants (TAs) in the processes of online teaching and learning. The final case describes a teacher's supervising of students who were encouraged to instruct or assist fellow students in the completion of required assignments.

One professor called upon to supervise TAs in the teaching of several of his online classes highlighted certain benefits associated with having selected TAs whose philosophical and pedagogical preferences reflected his own. His TAs were all advanced doctoral students and native English speakers, which was an essential quality given the highly textual nature of his online class and his approach to assessment. In addition, he spoke of the values associated with having had the opportunity to work with his TAs in advance of their teaching, as well as their availability to teach these courses several times each over a period of multiple semesters. He identified these characteristics as having generated a level of consistency and depth in their teaching which was born out in very positive student evaluations. Finally, he spoke of how this longevity had helped to engender a collegial set of relationships encouraging his work online.

A second case involved a very different set of circumstances surrounding the supervising of TAs in the processes of teaching and learning online. In this case, TAs were predominantly non-native English speakers who had come from abroad and who generally would only teach a

course for one semester. According to the professor supervising the TAs for this course, these circumstances were driven by the nature of his discipline as well as by the large numbers of students desiring to enroll in his classes. Like in the previous case, this professor noted the value of a decision to work with TAs in advance of their teaching. However, unlike the first example, this professor's training became a formal process required of TAs prior to their selection to teach. In this second case, the primary means of assessing student learning was testing, perhaps allowing a greater flexibility surrounding the work of non-English speakers in the assessment of student learning. Finally, this professor noted how the need to formalize a training program for teaching online had helped to clarify in his own mind the nature of what it meant to teach and to learn in these environments.

In both cases, these teachers enlisted others to assist them in the teaching of online courses which they had created, and therefore were responsible to supervise. Both teachers had taken it upon themselves to train TAs in how best to approach their respective courses. They believed that the nature of their disciplines, and thus the kinds of assessment associated with the teaching and learning of their courses, had influenced their decisions regarding how TAs were selected and trained to teach online. Finally, they articulated this work of teaching teachers to teach online as quite different from the tasks of teaching online themselves.

One final example underscoring the work of supervision in online courses comes from a professor called upon to teach an undergraduate course comprised of around 400 students, 200 online and 200 face-to-face. Ken teaches in a hard discipline that is mathematical in its orientation, which has led him to create online story problems as assignments using LON-CAPA.

LON-CAPA is an open-source distributed learning content management and assessment system, which currently networks around 160 institutions for the creation of open content and assessment tools. LON-CAPA allows this teacher to randomize both numbers and words in generating a multi-layer set of story problems that makes cheating quite difficult for students. These assignments are a relatively small percentage of the total grade in Ken's course and they serve to prepare students for three proctored exams.

Ken's students are required to complete nine different sets of problems over the semester, and are encouraged to help one another via the use of an online discussion forum. As each student has a different set of problems, online discussions allow students to direct one another through the processes involved in solving such problems. Ken allows students five chances to solve each problem within a one- to two-week period. In addition to providing the content necessary to learn these skills, he also provides additional help via these online discussions. However, he has purposed to encourage students to supply help to each other in this environment while he supervises those discussions. Ken explained:

> *I tell the kids, "You can help each other, but don't give them the answer. Help them as if you were me." I have a story of a girl . . . it was like the sixth problem, or something like that in the semester, and I noticed that she was responding to a lot of kids, giving really good help. Not just giving them the answers but helping them along. And then I looked at her scores up to that point. They weren't that good. So I e-mailed her and said, "You know, your comments were really, really good and they were very helpful and I appreciate you doing that." And she e-mailed me back and said, "Well, you know, I've really struggled in this class, but I really understood this problem and I thought I would give back because a lot of kids have helped me along the way." It was pretty amazing. It was really one of the more amazing moments in teaching, actually.*

As with consultation, the work of supervision does not easily fall within the suggested dimensions of teaching in the CoI framework. The work of supervision is a responsibility or adaptation to the work of teaching online that appears to be substantively different than either *facilitating discourse* or providing *direct instruction*. Supervision involves articulating the nature, or substance, or processes involved in teaching online to another who will be helping to teach online. It may involve modeling or clarifying an action that is often done intuitively. Thus, it surrounds the passing on of a skill or skills, not simply the passing on of content knowledge. Moreover, in the final case, supervision may involve finding the delicate balance between providing clues that lead to learning, and providing answers that may inhibit learning.

Professional orientations

The work of teaching among professionally oriented disciplines certainly overlaps with some of the observations discussed thus far concerning the work of teaching online. However, as it provides another set of lenses for examining our subject, it will be treated separately here. Although any of the disciplines represented in this study might be looked upon as leading to competency within a profession, this designation is used here to represent those disciplines in which a body of knowledge has been identified by the profession and processes put in place to standardize the assessment of qualifications to work within such fields. Once again, as this study does not seek to reflect a representative sample but rather to explore variation across these examples, a single case of a faculty member teaching a blended course in the college of medicine is examined here. This case reflects another unique set of roles and educational purposes which give shape to the ways teachers demonstrate presence in their online teaching.

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According to Faye, her discipline is oriented towards professional development and is highly competitive, thus creating a learning environment that is characterized by increasingly large enrollments and a strong sense of motivation among students even at the undergraduate level. Moreover, her field is complex, drawing together a varied and ever expanding set of available resources regarding the subjects connected to her course. The implications for teaching in such an environment are multifaceted: her teaching involves the uses of cases so that students can begin to deduce over time how layers of meaning associated with these subjects may be appropriately understood; large numbers of students create the need for students to be self-motivated and thus self-directed in their learning experiences; learning is problem-based, meaning it is oriented around applications and solutions that are complex, or that present themselves via multiple pathways. Thus, Faye notes how the online components in her blended course have been very helpful in guiding students through these processes:

> *The variety of online material makes that material available for students any time. They watch at their own pace and go back over and over again if they need to, or speed it up and get through it once quickly. Students are at a whole variety of background levels. Some have never seen anything about [this particular medical field] and others may have majored in it. So we have this whole wide variation in background levels of students and I think the online material is a way that helps the students adapt themselves and do what they need to master the content.*

In these ways, this professionally oriented discipline organizes itself around teaching as consultation and teaching as supervision. However, as is evident in the quotation above, faculty also rely on the learner to navigate through the resources made available during the learning transaction. Thus, the pace and the level of instruction are at times decided by the learner, and

instruction is therefore individualized based upon where a student is in relation to the specified outcomes. Although the medical field was the only discipline in the current study to reflect all of these specific orientations in toto, others in this research made uses of self-directed and self-paced learning which are addressed in the final section of this chapter.

Assessment

Terry Anderson (2008), in his reframing of the CoI *dimensions* as *roles*, suggests a fourth category along with the original dimensions of *design*, *facilitation of discourse*, and *direct instruction*, namely, *assessment* in online education. He states, "Effective teaching presence demands explicit and detailed discussion of the criteria by which student learning will be assessed" (351 – 352). Although Anderson does not include assessment in his pictorial representation of the CoI framework, he does include it in his headings describing the major components in the framework. Research in the CoI framework certainly addresses assessment, though almost exclusively via a focus on the *design* of assessment tools rather than on the nature of faculty work in carrying out such assessment. Recent research on the CoI framework extending analyses to all of the content areas of two online courses has also argued for a fourth dimension, *assessment* (Peter Shea, et al., 2010). These works highlight the growing belief regarding the importance of assessment in online teaching and learning.

Once again, as with other facets of online teaching, faculty interviews portrayed a wide range of difference related to this feature of teaching presence online. Faculty spoke of formal assessment associated with the guaranteeing of academic work alongside informal forms of assessment wherein they were able to gage student learning and the effectiveness of their

teaching. Assessment also clearly varied according to disciplinary differences and the forms of assessment adopted to verify learning. Finally, faculty spoke of the added complexities associated with designing and assessing student learning in multimodal contexts and the challenges of guaranteeing academic honesty in these anonymous digital environments.

A first example comes from an informal approach to assessment within a graduate educational discipline. In this case, Lauri identified her desire to replicate an approach used in her face-to-face teaching wherein she would take time at the end of each class to provide both formative and summative assessment in response to that day's discourse. Lauri explained:

> *I don't know if you're familiar with CAT—classroom assessment techniques? CAT is something that's very popular in higher education now, and which started probably almost 20 years ago. They're ways to do very immediate assessment of students' learning. They're very short things that can be used in a way that helps students learn to be more reflective about their own learning, more meta-cognitive about it. I have used them very frequently in classes. One example that many people use is the question, "What was the muddiest point?" You know, "What is it that got you most confused?" or another is, "What do you think is the most important idea that you've learned from this particular lesson or unit?" And what a teacher will do is collect those and then read through them and see where the problems are, or what are the highlights of learning? Typically, what I will do with CAT is compile the findings and feed them back to students as a way to reinforce learning; to say, you know, "In this class half of you thought this was the most important part of the lecture last week," and then you can say, "That really is the most important." Or, "one-third of you thought this …" And so it's a way to do some summaries of the learning. That's just one example of a CAT. But the point here is that it is something I've used a lot in teaching for very fast formative feedback.*

Faculty mentioned a varied approach to informal assessment online. 25% mentioned the uses of mid-course evaluations for renegotiating certain more flexible elements in their courses. For others, as noted previously, student reflective activities provided avenues for such

assessment, while still others engaged in formative and summative assessment through the interplay between individual, small-group, and large-group interactions.

Likewise, formal assessment techniques and tools for guaranteeing academic learning varied widely. Disciplinary distinctions were clearly evident, as was a growing concern to integrate varied and comprehensive low-stakes assessment. Some focused on cognitive growth, including metacognitive displays of learning. Others assessed multimedia representations of student learning. Several focused on developing desired skills. An extended quotation from Oscar provides a poignant illustration of how the assessment of individual student work functioned as a conversation with students, and one organized around the skills of composition:

> ***Oscar:*** *One thing students comment a lot on is the detailed responses I give. I think students really feel themselves read in the very detailed responses, in the care that I give to their papers. So that's a major strength I think from the perspective of the students. It does mean writing over 200 "400-to-500-word responses" every semester. That's a lot of writing for me to do. But it's worth it because the students seem to really think that's important.*
>
> ***Interviewer:*** *In those responses, how would you describe your style or the way in which you communicate as a teacher?*
>
> ***Oscar:*** *Well that's a little like cooking. I mean, I have a very firm sense of how I do it, though I've never theorized it or schematized it. But it reflects a certain level of precision. That is, reading the student papers carefully and responding to what they write. Exactly quoting back what they do, offering a reading of the overall design of the paper or piece, directing them to themes or questions of points that they have neglected. Recognizing points they make that I haven't thought of myself – that's the best part of responding. I think it's a matter of having something of a schema in mind . . . trying to balance recognition and acknowledgement of what they do well with some measure of direction to them, or invitation to them to recognize where they might have done things a little differently, or a little better. But it's on the formal side because it's written, but it's informal to the degree that it approximates speech to some degree, as well. I find the long, written comment much more satisfying than a sentence here, sentence there on*

the paper itself. I think that's an important part of doing this. It produces a sort of instructional discourse of a kind that forces me to organize what I'm writing and to distribute my comments across what they've written in a way that signifies to the student I've read [their papers] and that I'm trying to respond to as much of it as possible. It's formal, but it's not institutional prose. I proofread my own responses very carefully, because I'm sort of modeling writing to them, and so I try to do the best I can. And I try to write with an academic vocabulary, too. It's a discourse that's not technical, necessarily, but it's a sort of a discourse of mature prose using dependent clauses, and avoids this sort of casual communication. But I have to say, I never really tried to organize my thinking about what I do. I have a sense of what it sounds like. Maybe that's the problem. As I read it and as I write it, I sort of know what I'm aiming for. I write the comments in a way that I hope reflects back on the students as much of their paper that they've written, as possible. Occasionally I'll identify a single detail—something I'm really impressed by, and give more attention to that. But I try for coverage, too.

These thoughts depict a form of instruction through the work of assessment that is connected with a kind of conversational discourse. Oscar went on to describe how a select number of students every semester will take up the spirit of such instruction and continue a conversation with him outside of the assignments in the course. Interestingly, one study of teaching presence from adult students' perspectives identifies written assignments as the "most critical to learning" (Ke, 2010, 813).

Perhaps the most challenging aspect of assessment in online education involves the assessing of student learning connected with or demonstrated through multimodal approaches. Even as Kress (2005) expounds upon the importance of considering aptness of mode in designing environments for learning fitting for all participants, subjects, and contexts, he also (2009) identifies the inherent complexities involved in recognizing how gains and losses associated with such modes connect with the ways faculty assess effectiveness and learning in online environments. One teacher described the struggle in such assessment as follows:

Students were in small groups, and they were required to complete some task in those small groups. And one of the tasks was a 5-minute video clip on some statistical topic. I think some of the students really enjoyed that, they were ed-tech people and they made these astounding movies, though it was the doing of the movie and not the actual content that I think they enjoyed. I mean other students totally hated it … Then there was our [final assessment] on the very last day, which was our synchronous exhibition, where students gave a presentation. That was the first time that I heard the students speak … So, you never know until you get to the end. And for one of these people, it was pretty clear that he had no idea what was going on. And so then, throughout the course, there's the issue of being able to assess people in a secure way. That's a huge thing for me. And, for me, it was never solved satisfactorily. I don't foresee any solution for me that seems reasonable for the student and reasonable for me, right now. So that's a problem. So this particular student who, we get to the end, and it's clear he has no idea what he's talking about, he aced every assessment, which is not a complete surprise because you can do them any time you want. And I purposely meant it to be a low-stakes thing. But there was no way for me to really assess people in a way that was formative … I really hate that part of it.

These emotional words portray the frustration several faculty experienced with seeking to effectively work within multimodal environments while authenticating student learning via assessment. One teacher quipped, "in an online format, I have no idea who did their work." In the end, 6 faculty members raised the issue of cheating or academic honesty in their work of online teaching, and how that education within online environments creates additional challenges given the anonymity "of the screen." For 3 of these faculty, this led to the adopting of proctored exams for certain aspects of the course, thus limiting the access of their online courses to those students who could either come to campus or find acceptable proctors where they lived. Others worked diligently to create assessments that would make cheating quite difficult, like tailoring individualized assignments or as was noted earlier via the uses of LON-CAPA for randomization. In the end, the place of *assessment* in online education was portrayed

as an area requiring much needed research, especially given the multi-layered purposes and differences evident among faculty perspectives.

Blended approaches

Interestingly, although only 5 (≈ 30%) of those interviewed for this study were actually teaching a blended course, 50% specified growing interests in and at times preferences for blended approaches to teaching and learning. For example, one early adopter who was only teaching in online and face-to-face environments referenced the growing body of literature suggesting that blended approaches are the most effective educational model when compared with online and face-to-face only environments today. He summarized his reading this way:

> *A lot of people who have done blended courses don't do in the face-to-face portion of a blended course, what they used to do in lecture: it's completely transformed what they do when they see the students face-to-face. The subjects, the interactions, are completely changed.*

As defined in the introduction, thinking about blended learning meant that teachers were considering how to make the most of their teaching in two distinct environments. However, faculty saw different advantages to what the online component offered for their teaching. Anne spoke of how the online environment helped her better connect with students:

> *Teaching online helps me create a relationship even if [students] are invisible in the classroom. And vice versa, they get to know me better too than just someone who stands up front and does the talking.*

For Mike, however, the capacity of the online environment allowed him to move much of his delivery of the content to the online environment, and thereby to set aside his face-to-face

classroom times for attention to how students make specific applications of this content via collaborative group work. Mike described his preferences in the following way:

> *I prefer the blended format now, with a lot more contact online, because I can put my lectures online and use my face-to-face time for group consultation. So now even when I'm teaching my course face-to-face, I blend my face-to-face sections. I use some of my lectures that I've captured online, and when we're together we do more group work, more problem-solving, more of the consultation model with the groups of students that are working on their projects.*

Thus, even among teachers who were looking to the ideals of Laurillard (2010) highlighted in the introduction, namely, "to exploit both conventional and digital technologies" (6) within blended approaches to teaching and learning, differences in perspective were clearly evident. Where for one, online teaching provided a means to facilitate greater connection with students in the learning process, for another it offered a way to liberate the conventional classroom time for a desired pedagogical purpose.

From *Dimensions* to *Individualization*: Student Self- & Co-regulation

The introduction suggested how early conventions in online teaching and learning appear to have shaped trajectories that continue to influence how educators understand their work in these environments. These interviews reveal how such conventions may have created a blind spot in our understanding of the promises of online education. Returning again to Terry Anderson's (2008) four most compelling features of the online medium listed in the last chapter, Anderson claims that "the most compelling feature … is the capacity for shifting the time and place of the educational interaction" (344). Thus, and without denigrating the significance of creating community online, educators are confronted with how the online

medium inherently presents unforeseen opportunities to leverage this capacity to shift both time and place in our models of online teaching and learning. Recent research utilizing the CoI framework has also recognized this potential, calling for additional studies to examine self- and co-regulated approaches to online education (Peter Shea, et al., 2010).

Faculty perspectives in these interviews provide three sets of lenses by which to examine how individualized approaches are influencing conceptualizations of teaching presence online today. *Firstly*, faculty perspectives specify how student preferences related to self-directed learning are influencing models of online teaching. *Secondly*, they address the place of self-assessment and the growth of automated approaches within features of online education today. *Thirdly* and finally, three cases utilizing self-paced approaches to teaching and learning offer insight into how faculty are envisioning the nature of their presence online.

Understanding student preferences

Teaching at times requires a careful balancing of pedagogical concerns alongside a willingness to listen to the preferences of students in these processes. Do teachers know best, or do students know best? Depending on how we qualify this question, one could imagine arriving at opposite conclusions. This challenge is only exacerbated for those who choose to adopt the priorities of collaborative learning and individual meaning making, especially when considering how to individualize teaching in such settings. As with the other aspects of teaching pursued in this study, tremendous variety characterized the ways in which faculty approached student preferences via their teaching online.

Over half of those interviewed specified that student preferences had influenced the ways in which they had chosen to approach the teaching of their courses. For many, this recognition led to a stratification of the learning environment to provide multiple points of entry into the subject matter. Dale identified how he and his team had tagged the many and varied resources in his course according to the type of resource each represented:

> *We restructured the materials in the course to identify for each item what its function was in that topic. So, core knowledge, would be one. Analysis of the topic, would be another. Example of a particular principle or point, would be another one. So that if the students weren't going to look at them all, they could have more information before they looked at an item about what its purpose was and what its content was intended to convey … We went through and we labeled the 250 items in the course … we had about 5 different categories that we created to describe each one.*

Thus, part of Dale's online teaching included providing students with additional information as to the purposes which lay behind the resources in the course. And while these descriptors influenced the process of design, they also provided a rubric for interacting with students during the course.

Faye, like Dale, was concerned with providing students multiple points of entry into the subjects addressed in her course. However, students' primary concern within these medical disciplines was preparation to meet professional standards. For Faye this meant an additional concern as students arrived in her course having a variety of prior understanding in the subjects she teaches. She believed that part of her responsibility as a teacher in a medical field was to encourage students to be self-guided in their commitments to learning. This quality was portrayed as an essential characteristic of the kind of professionals her program hoped to turn out. Thus, the online experience provided a means to achieve both the preferences of students

and development of a desired characteristic in students' lives. Moreover, these commitments shaped Faye's interaction with students in individualized ways:

> *I think having some things online makes it easier for students to figure out what they need to do to master the material, so they can start at whatever level they're at, and decide whatever time they need to spend to understand the material . . . For a medical school course, it's essential to all of them that they pass the course. It's not just whatever grade they get. It's a pass/fail course, and so the standards for the grading are a little bit different from other courses . . . Part of the reason for the development of the online materials was to have things accessible to students. You know, at whatever level they're at, they can use them as much as they need. And to give them different ways to look at the materials so it's not just a presentation and lecture but also other ways to come to or approach the material to get a better understanding. And so, I really try to use a very student-focused approach with the idea that there's so much variation amongst students that what I do I want to be accessible and helpful to everybody.*

For other teachers, student choice was mediated through the uses of hypermedia, in essence providing avenues for extended learning via the choices made by students as they navigated course materials. Once again this commitment influenced the design process, but also the teacher-student conversations which unfolded in the course. Oscar described his rationale for utilizing hypermedia:

> *So the idea was to sort of write out the course, but to do it in a way that capitalized on the unique affordances of the web by incorporating links to all sorts of resources. That to me was the big innovation—the hypermedia format … And that was the cornerstone of what I was doing. I really became a believer pretty quickly for what might be called philosophical or cognitive reasons, because it reflected what I liked doing myself, that is poking around on the Web, sort of going from item to item … The possibility of learning by the organization of and the networking of all kinds of different resources suited my own intellectual style … So the networked computer allowed me to make out of my own cognitive preferences, the pleasures I found in doing such work, to convert that into a pedagogical style. I read a lot from people who were pioneers in using hyper-text in the 90s. So I dove into that literature and found a good deal of support for what I was doing.*

Turning to a set of examples, several faculty noted their creation of resources that provided entry into a subject depending on the prior learning of students in the class. Some of these, mentioned previously for other reasons, described how their creation of particular resources provided background knowledge that students at a more introductory level might find beneficial to their learning. Likewise, other materials were crafted to offer advanced students opportunities to delve further into subjects. In these ways, teachers sought to allow students to tailor their learning experiences, which once again led faculty to tailor their interaction with students throughout the course.

Finally, two teachers of graduate-level courses specified how the preferences of adult learners had influenced the nature and work of their teaching online. In both cases, adult students had overwhelmingly stipulated that they preferred independent work, and the self-paced formats of these two courses – one in the sciences and the other in the humanities. Cindy described how their department's uses of surveys had uncovered the preferences among their adult students for the self-paced approach they had adopted:

> *We used a beginning survey, a mid-term survey, and final survey, first to get kind of an overall feel for why they're taking our online course, to gage how students were doing in the course, to find out more about their experiences during the course, their comfort level with aspects of the course. You know, just general things like that . . . Interestingly, I even asked them in the mid-point survey, would you prefer more student-to-student interaction, and group-work. All of them overwhelming said "no." So, at least for our student population, they prefer the self-paced format to accomplish their work.*

Likewise, a survey of over 250 graduate students who had taken four self-paced courses over a span of three years revealed that 95% of these adult learners preferred the flexibility of the self-paced format, and only 18% would have preferred that the course include any required

student-to-student interactions. In fleshing out the reasons for this, Oscar identified how the contexts or responsibilities of adult students seem to be shaping their preferences for self-paced approaches to learning online:

> *And the self-paced feature of the course? I guess it may be even more powerful for a lot of students, the freedom they have to do the course at the pace they want. I think it's something they really appreciate. Many will say, they have kids; they're almost all working. And the freedom to manage their time in the way they decide, not having to meet deadlines for posting, not having to work with groups is something they appreciate enormously in this course. And to me that corresponds very much to what we recognize about adult learning. That it needs that kind of freedom.*

We will return to the subject of the self-paced format at the end of this section and to the implications of what this might mean for how we envision teaching presence online. But for now, this compilation of faculty beliefs surrounding the preferences of students online suggests a kind of teaching oriented around the interests of individual students. They suggest that individualized educational approaches seem to have found a place among the varied work of online teaching today.

Self-assessment & automated interaction

In certain senses, self-assessment and automated approaches online represent similar ideas. Self-assessment in more traditional classrooms might represent the creation of flash cards whereby a student then has the capability to quiz herself as to her understanding or memory. Online, self-assessment has taken on the functionality of new ICT as the means by which tools have been created to help students assess their progress in a course or their understanding of a subject. For one professor, this included the uses of certain online games,

developed to highlight relevant principles in her course and to engage students in interactive ways. For several other faculty, self-assessment was utilized in the form of practice assignments that allowed students to test their understanding of subjects and receive immediate, automated feedback. Others designed self-check quizzes, which likewise provided immediate, automated feedback, and which some faculty randomized to allow students to have multiple attempts at achieving a certain standard. One unique approach utilizing self-assessment was to scaffold the process so that students could first engage the practice assignment, and then if needed—through the use of rollovers—could receive successive hints crafted to guide them to what might be amiss in achieving the correct answer to a particular problem. In each of these cases, self-assessment was a feature created in the design process, which provided the basis for subsequent interaction with students during a course.

Although these forms of self-assessment were all automated, not all automation had the primary purpose of self-assessment for students. Thus, teachers automated components of their courses for a variety of purposes. The most common automation noted in the interviews was the use of automated e-mails to alert faculty to students' postings or the uploading of an assignment. One teacher automated the generation of an alert for practice exercises should a student not receive a perfect score the first time. Another design team created a help button that allowed students to seek out help with the click of a button, rather than needing to use the e-mail system. One professor of a large online class created a rubric grading tool for student assignments which allowed her to more quickly grade the various facets of student work. She also automated the rubric so that for late work it would automatically be worth fewer total

points. This feature allowed her to concentrate on grading aspects of the assignment without having to figure in reductions for late work.

Self-assessment and other automated features in the online learning environment influenced teaching in several ways. For some, it put learning into the hands of students and thus made teaching a response to students who had already engaged a subject or activity on their own. In these ways, content delivery became a feature of design, and the facilitation of learning was oriented around giving guidance or direction to students depending upon the nature of their engagement. For other teachers, automating responses meant considering in advance what might lead a learner to make an incorrect response, and how a teacher might respond to such a misunderstanding. Interestingly, this feature very closely resembles some of the Open Educational Resources emerging on the Web today. One difference in these interviews is that online teachers were involved in monitoring student interaction with automated or self-guided assessment, as well as in responding to students in these processes.

Self-paced & independent approaches

The affects of individualization on online teaching takes on additional nuances via a study of three self-paced approaches in this study. The first example reflects a highly automated approach geared toward professionals in the field who desire subsequent training for greater effectiveness in their professions. A second example is oriented around intensive interaction with the teacher who in a manner reminiscent of a British tutorial approach guides students through their interaction with the subject matter. A final example connects individual student work accomplished while on a study abroad program with group work over an

extended educational timeframe. Each example suggests a varied set of perspectives related to our understanding of teaching presence online.

The first example comes from the sciences, a graduate for-credit and non-credit course designed to provide additional training to professionals in the field who want to increase their skills. Two faculty who were involved in the design and teaching of the course described how the decision to utilize a self-paced format evolved after a process of consultation with these professionals. What started as a non-credit course for professionals wanting to add to their skills eventually became a highly automated, interactive graduate course, integrating a creative self-paced format with a visually appealing and engaging set of materials. Bill stated:

> *The first version of the course we developed, I think was close to an online book with exercises. Really it is the increase in different forms of communication, audio scripts, visual things, and also the greater level of interaction required of the student while they're engaging the materials . . . That's how it's changed.*

Given that their department had made allowances for students to progress through the units at their own pace with no required student-to-student interactions, faculty recognized the freedom that such an approach afforded. Thus, they decided to allow students to start the course at any time, giving them up to six months to complete all of the assignments. This decision required that they automate the enrollment process in order to alert them when a new student entered the course. They decided to build a significant amount of interactivity into these automated features, and to create a varied set of means by which faculty would be alerted when a student needed assistance along the way. Cindy clarified:

> *The reason that I wanted to do the interface, I mean all the animations and the check boxes was for instructor presence. I also didn't want them to feel like they couldn't ask*

questions if they had questions. That's why I put in the hyperlink for "I need help." I wanted it where all their tasks for the unit were, on one page. Students could just click and go to the video. And then right after they watched the video, it would be right there. So if they needed help, you know, they wouldn't feel like, "How am I going to find this out?" I was hoping that it would take away some of their frustration.

Thus, faculty were involved with students in helping them address problems they were facing in their assignments. On the flipside, what this meant was that should a student receive 100% on an assignment, no alert would be sent to the teachers unless the student chose to do so. Even the videos in the course were highly interactive, providing ways for students to interact with the materials throughout the delivery of instruction. As with some of the previous examples, this course evidences a kind of teaching presence perhaps more appropriately labeled consultation or guidance. The work of teaching evident in the learning transaction was organized around the required assignments—and the student engagement in these assignments—rather than around the content in the course. Drawing a parallel with face-to-face teaching, it would be like organizing classroom time to discuss assignments and student work rather than to discuss the content of the course. Content delivery is accomplished in this setting via the independent work of students in response to the online learning design.

A second example is a graduate course in the social sciences also geared toward professionals, though not limited to those already practicing in the field. This course is oriented around a strong set of student-to-teacher interactions and the place of composition in the learning experience. Oscar described the metaphor he envisioned leading to adopting the self-paced format in his courses:

> *I realized that if I wasn't going to use student-to-student communication or small group work, then I was free to experiment with the calendar. It meant that the courses could be self-paced. The model I had in mind was reading a book. People read books at different paces. And the freedom they have is that they're not required to talk about the books with other people. So, I realized that you could organize a course much in the way someone reads a book.*

As highlighted previously, Oscar's approach centers on his own intensive written feedback—or interaction with—individual student writing. In this sense, his work of teaching during the learning transaction is both directive and dialogical, though not in the collaborative sense of the CoI. Thus, his own writing serves as a model for the kind of writing he hopes to engender in the work of his students. Finally, although the self-paced format has meant that students were not required to engage in any student-to-student interactions, students have consistently voiced their preferences—as noted previously—for this format.

In a similar way as with the first example, the work of teaching online in this second example emphasized a kind of instruction difficult to frame within the dimensions of the CoI. In this case, teaching presence reflected a kind of instruction found in scholarly discourse and academic writing. Certainly there are elements in this discourse which resemble the priority of direct instruction. However, there are also elements which reflect a more conversational tone, though between a teacher and a student and not in the collaborative sense of the CoI. Once again, the final two dimensions of the CoI appear to be insufficient descriptors of the work of online teaching.

One final example provides yet another variation regarding how self-paced teaching and learning may be envisioned online. In contrast with the first two examples, this example is an

undergraduate course in the field of photography. This course is unique in several ways. First it is offered to non-majors who are looking to complete an arts requirement while on their summer study abroad programs. Neil's description of what he had in mind is telling:

> *I became very excited thinking about all the different places that students go through [the university's] study abroad programs. They are literally all over the world. And I thought, wouldn't it be cool to have a classroom that really is world-wide, where students are in the same class and they're interacting in the ways that they would in class, sharing pictures, sharing ideas with each other and with me, getting my feedback and other people's feedback too, but being able to be in another place . . . Think about the student in Athens, Greece where everything's blue and white saying to the student in Japan, "Wow! The colors over there are so different. They're so pastel in Japan, or they're so gaudy because I am in downtown Tokyo. So they're gaining perspectives that are cultural that are going to enhance their own Study Abroad experience.*

The students in Neil's course are required to do independent work prior to leaving to study abroad, such as mastering certain understandings about photography. Students continue work in a self-paced format as they shoot pictures across several culturally-laden categories, posting certain images to the course site. Finally, students are required by a date several weeks into the fall semester to have communicated collaboratively with each other around these cultural artifacts, that is, around the images they have captured. Thus the vast majority of the work in the course is done independently under the supervision and consultation of the teacher, one-on-one. It is only in the final activities in the learning process that learning is expanded to include the notion of group discourse. However, this discourse is qualitatively different in that it encompasses the idea of adjudication, and that from two points of view. Thus, the teacher judges the work of each student according to his artistic expertise, and then students judge others' works to demonstrate their competency in this subject. Neil specified:

With the online students, I say, "When you leave, you're going to be expected to be capable, from the readings that you've done, from the videos and Power Points and so forth, you're going to be expected not to be studying photography when you're abroad. You're going to be expected to be making photographs." There's a different process of learning that goes on once you're overseas. And that process involves making pictures, editing them, making some value judgments of your own about your own pictures, and then sharing certain pictures with your classmates, looking at their photographs, writing about their pictures, reading what they have to say about your pictures. So the learning parameters are very different - sort of like two parts to the class . . . I think it's pretty similar to the kind of balance I try to maintain in a classroom, in that I'm there to convey specific information that's essential for them to learn, so I think that part of my role is as a person who has a particular expertise and understands the nature of the specific areas of technical information that are important for somebody at their level to understand. Though another role is for me to function as a critic of art, which involves not just technical matters, but they expect from me a certain level of expertise and a certain ability to convey to them basic principles of composition, basic principles related to potential content for art, and specifically content for photography. And so, in looking at their work, they expect feedback from me that relates to how successful or unsuccessful were they in using the capabilities of the camera, and in their own perceptions which bring those things together into a picture.

As with the other self-paced examples, teaching presence in this case is difficult to frame within the categories of direct instruction and facilitating discourse. The place of critique as a function of teaching and of learning appears to reflect a different perspective on the work of teaching online. Having thus considered the place of individualized approaches to teaching, these data confront us with an array of meaning related to the work of teaching occurring during the learning transaction. Approaching teaching as an individualized craft, as consultation or guidance, as academic composition or discourse, or even as critique suggests that teaching online is indeed a complex process requiring a broader set of descriptions than simply the *facilitation of discourse* and the uses of *direct instruction*.

Summary

This chapter demonstrates the problematic nature of the final two dimensions of teaching presence outlined in the CoI framework. Faculty perspectives in this study align with previous research from the student point of view suggesting that these two dimensions be viewed as a single dimension of teaching presence. Furthermore, these interviews portray the work of teaching online as a much more diversified set of roles ranging widely according to discipline, educational philosophy, teacher preferences, and the nature of the subjects. Adopting the term *roles* from Anderson (2008), these interviews reveal at least 5 unique roles influencing the nature of a teacher's presence online, some of which may suggest the possibility of classification as an additional dimension in the CoI framework. Finally, emerging self- and co-regulated approaches in online education extend these understandings, suggesting equally effective models which leverage the inherent flexibilities in such environments.

Chapter 4 – *Inside* Teaching Presence:
From Anxiety to Identity

Elaine Showalter (2003) in her important work devoted to teaching begins in the heightened, panic-stricken moments of a teaching anxiety dream. The dream is her own, though in the paragraphs that follow she reveals the strong company she keeps with teachers who, like her, have written about their own anxiety dreams connected with teaching. Showalter opens her book in this way as a means of broaching the subject of the inner-worlds of teachers. In fact, her first chapter is devoted to exploring these hidden tensions in a teacher's experience, which she organizes around seven types of anxiety in teaching. Although Showalter intended for these insights to provoke the thinking of teachers in the traditional classroom, these windows into the inner-worlds of teachers also provide a helpful way of examining the inner-worlds of online teachers.

Showalter's seven types of anxiety (see below) provide a set of lenses through which to examine the nature and influences of a teacher's "inwardness" (Palmer, 1998), examining how these windows into the personal and professional struggles of teachers may provide insight into a teacher's presence in online environments. Given the fact that the data from these interviews clearly evidenced such struggles, most of Chapter 4 is organized around six of Showalter's types of anxieties, omitting only her seventh "grading" as this type did not surface. Showalter seven types of anxieties are:

1. Isolation
2. Coverage
3. Performance

4. Teaching Versus Research
5. Lack of (Pedagogical) Training
6. Evaluation
7. Grading

As noted previously, the literature on teaching suggests that "there is no one best instructional method," and that "what constitutes effective teaching depends on the students, the context, the topic, and the discipline" (xix, Davis, 1993). Thus, this research has sought to consider the work of teaching online in a much fuller sense than has typically been represented in the Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework. Although the collaborative constructivist approach undergirding the CoI is assumed—in its best applications—to reflect an effective model of online teaching and learning, the literature on teaching suggests that it may be but one of several potentially effective models of online teaching and learning (cf., Bain, 2004; Eble, 1988; Pratt & Associates, 2005). Chapters 2 and 3 reveal some evidence supporting this understanding that among exemplary teachers teaching online and in blended formats, conceptions of effective teaching presence vary considerably as they relate to online education.

Certainly, one of the defining characteristics of teaching presence in the CoI is its strong conceptual linkage between teaching presence and what it is that teachers do in online environments. However, the literature on teaching suggests that what a teacher does is often viewed as an extended consequence of "who" a teacher is. Palmer (1998) states that "good teaching cannot be reduced to technique" but rather "comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher" (10). It appears that a major component influencing what it means for a teacher to be present online is currently absent in the CoI framework. Moreover, the current interviews

clearly demonstrate that faculty are very cognizant of how the "who" in teaching may affect the nature of their teaching presence in these educational environments.

In addition to the decision to organize most of Chapter 4 around six of Showalter's types of anxiety, Chapter 4 also draws attention to two larger thematic categories, namely, the teacher's *self* (Palmer, 1998) and the teacher's *growth* (Bain, 2004). Although *self* and *growth* are overlapping categories in much of these data, they are treated separately here for the sake of clarity. Thus, three of Showalter's types of anxiety, *isolation*, *coverage*, and *performance* offer a useful way in which to examine the significance of a teacher's *self* in the manifestation of teaching presence online. The three remaining types of anxiety outlined by Showalter, *teaching versus research*, *lack of training*, and *evaluation* provide a useful framework for examining faculty *growth* as it relates to teaching presence online. Finally, as these interview data suggest certain insights which extend beyond Showalter's six types of anxiety, a final section in this chapter is devoted to exploring additional features connected with a teacher's inner-world that appear to shape the nature of online teaching presence.

The Online Teacher's *Self*: Isolation, Coverage, & Performance

The *self* in teaching is a messy subject, though as Kenneth Eble (1988) describes, even the "idiosyncratic" nature of teaching, found in the "combination of personal qualities and behaviors that seem to defy analysis" (5-6), can be attended to and learned from in ways that inform a teacher's craft. These interviews suggest that the teacher's *self* clearly influences what it means to demonstrate presence online. Showalter's (2003) first three types of anxiety

provide points of comparison for examining how a teacher's *presence* online may differ from face-to-face environments.

Isolation

Thus far, the anxiety of teachers as it may relate to feelings of isolation has been only hinted at in these interviews. Showalter (2003) claims that teaching is traditionally a privatizing endeavor, accomplished out of sight of colleagues. However, faculty in this study identified two opposing distinctions related to online teaching which shape how they think about the anxiety of isolation. Firstly, several faculty noted an increased sense of isolation in their online teaching, especially as it related to their connections with students. Secondly, several faculty spoke of how an increasing reliance on team approaches to online education has resulted in a heightened sense of collegiality in their teaching. Moreover, they noted how the visible and thus observable nature of online teaching and learning typically produces a record of online teaching evident to all of those working together in such teams.

Many faculty still teach primarily alone online, much in the way they do face-to-face. In this sense, the idea of isolation in online teaching is comparable with face-to-face. What was different for several faculty in this study, however, was a heightened sense of isolation in relation to their interactions with students. One teacher framed these differences as follows:

> *That's another thing that bothers me about online teaching. I feel at a distance in my teaching. At one level, the students who participate on a regular basis, I get to know better than I do sometimes students who are in my face-to-face groups. But, there's something qualitatively different about the socio-emotional environment in the online context from the face-to-face context. Sometimes you can just feel like you're just spewing stuff into the wind, into a dark void. Most of the time there's no response.*

> *There's no feedback. And it can feel quite lonely and alienating. And I try to be chatty. I send e-mails saying, "Okay, you're probably tired of getting e-mails," so I'll put out another e-mail kind of thing, trying to create this kind of informal environment. And then there's no response. It doesn't have the kind of robust give-and-take that I imagined in terms of discussion and exchange of ideas and arguing back and forth. It's just not there. There may be some instances where I can point to that, but as a rule, I think I've been really disappointed with the quality of intellectual exchange among students and myself.*

Thus, although online teaching creates a more visible and thus more observable representation of teaching than does face-to-face teaching, feelings of isolation may be heightened as teachers struggle to make connections with students online.

At the polar opposite of these increased feelings of *isolation* for some, was a heighted sense of collegiality for others. In fact, over half of those interviewed identified a paradigm shift regarding how teachers envision the nature of their teaching today. As noted in Chapter 1, complexities inherent in online course design have led to the unbundling of traditional faculty roles, often requiring the adoption of a team philosophy to carry out the work of teaching online. Many in this study noted the necessary combination of efforts from a team of teachers, educational technologists, IT specialists, graphic artists, and/or media specialists so as to be able to carry out effective online teaching. This was especially true for six online courses in this study with class sizes over 100 students. For other teachers, these collaborative relationships were evident in the startup phase of course design, but disappeared during the ongoing maintenance and improvement of the courses thus creating some ongoing challenges in their work of teaching. Furthermore, 8 faculty identified that they had sought the help of other colleagues, family, or friends in order to effectively carry out their teaching online. One teacher claimed:

I mean, if it weren't for my personal relationship with [David], I mean his work on this online course and the close relationship that we have, you know, I would be sort of up a creek without a paddle on a lot of this stuff, because to call the IT help desk over in the library – they don't have a clue what is needed. They can certainly handle basic code for the course management system, but if they're looking at things that have been tailored, or stuff that has been adapted over the years, there's just not that kind of help available.

Thus, all 8 faculty who felt compelled to seek out help pointed to the importance that these personal relationships played in helping their work of teaching to be a success. Several of them wondered aloud as to how other teachers were managing, who like them may not have a support team in place to effectively manage the additional responsibilities associated with teaching and learning online. However, faculty understanding of the changing nature of teaching in online environments went much further than simply specifying from whom they had received support or help. In Neil's extended quotation, there is evidence of a belief that online teaching and learning has begun to change the very nature of faculty work today:

I cannot do my job now in teaching in this online environment without depending on other people. And that's a great frustration for me in some ways. It's a great benefit, in that I don't need to learn everything, but it's not like when I first taught in this discipline, where it was expected and it was reasonable to expect that a professor could know everything they needed to know and more, to be successful. Now it would be very unreasonable to expect that a professor could know everything that they need to know, and more, to be able to teach. And I find that challenging in some ways, in that, you know, I think anybody in my generation that grew up in that kind of teaching mode feels a little bit offended in a way (laughter). You know, I don't want to depend on other people. I want to be able to do it myself. But now I have to come to grips with that – that that's part of the new way. And that if I want to be a professor for another 10 years, I've just got to suck it up – not just suck it up, but embrace it, and say, "Yah, this is great." I think what online has done in a strange way (some think of it as all technology) but in a strange way it's created a high level of importance on personal connections with other people that are now part of the team that you're the front man for, rather than being a one-man band. I think a younger, freshly-minted faculty member coming out and looking for their very first job hearing me say something like that, would say, "Well, duh. What

did you think?" It's not a revelation to them at all, this idea of interacting with other people and coming to grips with working as a team. But speaking specifically about the role of a teacher, that's pretty profound, I think, now. Not profound that I said it, but a profound impact on me.

Neil's perspective on teamwork depicts the gathering of a support team in which a teacher is the "front man" in the processes of teaching. 5 of those interviewed spoke of teamwork in these ways. However, 9 faculty also identified a different perspective on the place of teamwork in online teaching. These teachers portrayed teamwork as a picture of colleagues working together in a variety of ways to carry out the work of teaching and/or to supply a sense of camaraderie and even motivation in their teaching. Oscar spoke of the influence that such teamwork had in relation to his online teaching:

The evaluations are not the only thing I have. I also have the colleagueship of [Dan, Jim, and Carl]. It started as a bureaucratic matter in order to be able to teach all the courses every semester. But as we got used to doing it, it supplied to me, and then I think to the group of us, a sense of solidarity and confirmation . . . I felt less and less isolated. And that became a real resource for me . . . I think that's something unique to the situation I have in the department. I mean, I don't think anybody else has a team like that, where the relationships are a sort of combined independence. I don't know what name to give that, but I think the sort of tacit support we're giving one another convinced all four of us that the format of these courses seems to work pretty well.

As educators consider the significance of the teacher in online and blended approaches to teaching and learning, there is evidence of a changing set of understandings related to the roles and functions of teachers in such educational environments. Certainly, the willingness and ability to work in teams in one capacity or another appears to be an increasingly significant characteristic of online teachers today. And without question, these new approaches are influencing the nature of how teachers are present in such environments, engendering levels of

dependence in the teaching process. Online education is shaping what faculty are describing as shifts in their understanding of a teacher's identity in the teaching process, describing teaching in terms of collegial co-independence, or interdependence, or even collaborative teamwork.

Coverage

Showalter (2003) speaks of coverage as a type of anxiety from the vantage point of a literature teacher specializing in contemporary fiction who struggles with the need to keep current with an ever-increasing volume of publications. She goes on to state that the advent of the Internet and new ICT "makes the problem of coverage more intellectually perplexing" (12). Certainly, disciplines across the university face this daunting challenge today whether teaching online or face-to-face. However, faculty perspectives evidence that the struggle to provide coverage in an online course reflects additional challenges and unforeseen benefits when compared with face-to-face instruction.

One teacher spoke of the challenge of students needing to devote focused time on learning presentation software in her course, which may have contributed to the unintended consequence of students learning the technology but not learning the content. For another teacher in this study, the challenges of coverage surrounded negative feelings of not being able to communicate as much, or as thoroughly online as he does face-to-face:

> *I think I do a better job of covering the content in face-to-face than I do in the online environment. I think in the online environment, I give students introductions and guidelines and sort of advanced organizers and do a little bit of scaffolding, but I leave it up to them to acquire the content, to do the reading . . . It's hard to make the parallels, because they aren't of course quite parallel. But if you look at the total number of*

contributions I make online that percentage would be less than the amount of time that I talk in face-to-face.

The theme which resonated most among faculty perspectives related to coverage was the struggle with the proliferation of content, especially on the Internet, and its representation in online courses. In certain respects, this theme reflected Showalter's portrayal of the perplexing nature of managing such resources. What perhaps was different for online faculty, however, was a perceived need to blend coverage in a course via selected readings and authored content with a *contemporary* representation of the course via online hyperlinks.

Faculty often selected published texts or other media as a basis for this commitment to some form of coverage, alongside developing their own commentary, online discussions, and assignments which supplemented or guided the uses of such resources. 13 of those interviewed (≈80%) also noted the added self-imposed responsibility of providing entry into their subjects through a contemporary set of connections to the Web. This subject was often brought up alongside the work involved every semester to guarantee that links were still functional. Moreover, 9 faculty mentioned their commitment to find resources that were contemporary within the previous year of the course being offered. Faculty did not explain the rationale behind why they felt it important to provide a contemporary set of resources online. However, part of their presence as faculty was reflected in this commitment to gather resources throughout the year in order to update their courses each ensuing semester.

These challenges related to providing coverage, however, carried additional benefits in the minds of faculty in this study. Thus, faculty claimed that online course design encourages a more rigorous commitment to a thorough instructional design process. These ideas have been

touched upon at several points in the current study. What is important to acknowledge here is that although some faculty felt coverage more difficult online, others saw the design process as helping to focus the content in ways that enhanced their ability to provide coverage. These faculty were challenged in tangible ways to consider instructional objectives. Moreover, they noted feeling forced to consider the whole of what they were teaching much more in advance of their teaching than in comparable courses face-to-face. In essence, online course design provoked faculty to ask questions that they were not necessarily asking in their face to face classes. These opportunities for learning are addressed in the final section of this chapter.

Faculty in this study also addressed the subject of coverage from another perspective differing from face-to-face instruction. Thus, several teachers spoke of their desire to craft a form of teaching that would be durable or lasting in ways that are different from traditional forms of teaching. These ideas first emerged in Chapter 2 in the discussion of online course design. Several faculty identified the satisfaction they enjoyed related to the design and development of online courses. Gary explained how the opportunity to craft a durable presence in his online course was quite meaningful to him:

> *I'm interested in technology, and so it actually ended up being this really perfect medium for me to create lesson plans that were kind of artistic; and because of my interests in education, [technology] provided a way for me to be able to take educational theory and apply it. The idea of creating a product was actually something that resonates with me . . . I've been teaching 6 years, and if someone would ask me what I do, I might say, "Well I taught 6,000 students" . . . But to be able to say that I crafted these modules that are being used by students, that actually sounds more satisfying. So what I found was that online learning actually resonated with my skill sets, things that I was interested in.*

In many ways, faculty viewed the authoring of content for online courses as comparable to the work involved in writing a book, albeit an interactive one. Moreover, the capacity to continually improve upon the authored aspects of a course each semester, to tinker with the turning of a phrase or with searching for the perfect illustration was something 4 faculty specified as a satisfying facet of their teaching online. Thus, the anxiety of needing to provide coverage for students may be lessened for some who enjoy the careful preparations associated with online course design. In these ways, faculty are able to craft a lasting or durable expression of teaching in the online environment. Another teacher specified:

> *I think I like writing online classes more than teaching them. It's really satisfying; I mean I like seeing the students do something with the material. So when the students contact me, I find it very satisfying to help them with the materials I have authored . . . Right now I'm writing [several other online courses] . . . and I really enjoy thinking about these ideas and how they can be conveyed in a written format, and then how they can be supplemented with additional things to make it all more interactive.*

Anxieties of coverage in online education thus display—on one hand—an expansion of what must be covered in a particular course, as the *subject* of necessary technical or technological abilities must also be covered. For some, coverage online reflected a greater difficulty, though for others the opportunity to carefully craft the online experience was seen as encouraging a more effective covering of the subject matter. This second group believed that online design processes had provoked them to create a more lasting or durable expression of their teaching than had their face-to-face teaching. Finally, the majority of faculty in these interviews noted a self-imposed decision to offer a very contemporary representation of their subject matter in the online format. Thus, the anxiety of coverage online seems to have elicited a desire to incorporate more contemporary representations of the subject matter.

Performance

Showalter describes this type of anxiety from within certain polar opinions surrounding the value of "performance" in teaching. She seeks to avoid extreme which depicts performance in derogatory ways, equating it with showboating or seeking popularity among students. Thus, Showalter defines performance using the ideas of Kenneth Eble. She notes how Eble believed that performance in teaching is best understood as a kind of presence connecting inner energy, conviction, and belief with the arts of communication and interpersonal engagement. These ideas surrounding performance undergird the perspective taken here.

In these interviews, 3 faculty identified how teaching online provided a means by which certain negative aspects which occasionally accompany the work of teaching in face-to-face courses might be mitigated. These teachers specified that the capacity to carefully craft learning experiences and lectures online seemed to make teaching less susceptible to certain potentially negative dynamics in teaching. For example, they mentioned certain communication struggles such as personality conflicts between a teacher and a student, or unintended gaffs while teaching, or other misunderstandings which occur in some of the unplanned spontaneity of teaching in the classroom. These 3 faculty members claimed that many such difficulties might be allayed via the precisions of online course design and the shifting of the time and place of instruction through asynchronous teaching and learning. Thus, their anxieties related to effectively and clearly communicating their instruction were described as lessened in the online educational environment. Interestingly, each of these negatives suggested in faculty interviews involved aspects of teaching as performance. Gary explained:

> *When you come into a classroom there's a structural component there that is more in [a student's] face, and how you dress that day, or how you're coming across with signals that you may not intend to make, or you come in and you have a frown on your face – is it them, is it you? I guess I just really like the aspect of being able to send a very clear signal online.*

These thoughts beg the question of whether teaching online may provide a kind of anonymity for teachers that mitigates against certain anxieties associated with performance in face-to-face teaching. Perhaps the more significant questions surrounding the anxiety of performance in online teaching, however, are whether or not online teaching can even be envisioned as performance, and if so, then how? Faculty in these interviews suggest that it can, via an examination of how what teachers bring to their online teaching may be shaping the nature of such innovation.

Dianna Laurillard has bemoaned the oft-used strategy in technology-enhanced learning of adapting existing technologies for use in educational pursuits (cf. Laurillard, 2008; Laurillard, Oliver, Wasson, & Hoppe, 2009). She has argued that education ought rather to be the driver behind the development of such technologies for use in teaching and learning. Although these interviews revealed that faculty were not involved in the development of technologies to suit their own educational purposes, several nevertheless adapted the ways in which technologies were used in their courses to accomplish certain teaching priorities.

One of the ways that teaching priorities shaped faculty uses of innovative ideas and technologies surrounds the use of visual cues in the learning process. Interview data have alluded to several of these priorities thus far in this research, such as the uses of selected colors, conceptual designs, art, graphics, or icons that enable students to quickly identify how a

specific part of a course might fit into the whole. One faculty mentioned how the creation or uses of something visual might provide a soft entry into a subject often held at bay because of the biases students bring to their learning. Another noted how specifying educational purposes for the various resources provided in a course can help students learn to be more self-directed or informed in the processes of their learning.

In addition, faculty in the hard sciences revealed their dissatisfaction with the uses of technology in guaranteeing certain kinds of assessment. New technologies certainly allow for the randomization of various facets of complex mathematical problems, which as was stated previously led several faculty in this study to include certain low-stakes assessment in the online environments they were creating. However, many still felt compelled to rely on proctored exams to guarantee more weighty assessment. For these reasons, Ken decided to adapt his uses of innovative technologies to encourage one of his educational priories for students, namely, time on task. It is important to also note, that this decision emerged in Ken's thinking after his move to teaching online:

> *Now the cool part is that I give students this thing called "second chances," which is the very same exam, but optional. But this second one is online; it's randomized; it has different numbers and different required parts in the problems … So, half-hour after the [proctored] exam is over, they go home and [the second online test] is available for two days. They can get on and off all they want and they get about three tries – they're told whether they're right or wrong. Students probably communicate with each other, obviously. But, I don't help ... And the cool thing is that I don't tell them what their score was on the first exam until they're done with the second exam. And they get 25% of the increase in points between the two. So when they come out of an exam, they may have a pretty good feeling of how they did. No sort-of sucker-type alternatives, but they're not certain. So they come out and think, "Okay, I might have gotten 10 out of 13 right. But I could use those extra points." But the only way you can get those extra points is if you do*

all 13 questions again. It's really just time on task. It just forces them to spend more time with the material. It seems to me that it really is the only way they're going to learn it.

These thoughts illustrate how a teacher's pedagogical commitments may influence the performance of teaching online. Neil identified two educational priorities in his work of teaching online that drove him to innovate the processes of teaching and learning in his course. Firstly, he spoke of the importance of performance in the arts. Thus, Neil decided to organize a public exhibition of student work to encourage this facet of learning. He decided to provide the students in his online class with an opportunity to add a blended learning experience for any who might want to attend:

I took the first semester's worth of student work from the summer . . . and we put together an exhibit. I thought wouldn't it be fun to have students who have never met each other come together and see each other's pictures. So we put on a show here in February, which was fantastic . . . I also realized that these pictures were a way to bring people into the art building. I had engineering students, agriculture, large animal science students, everything. Never in their wildest dreams did they imagine when they first became a student at [the University], that part of their experience would be being honored at an exhibit of their art work in the [University] Arts Center. I think there were probably five or six families who drove in from all over the state. They were so excited about this; grandmas and grandpas came in from way up north to be there to support their favorite grandchild and to participate in this experience. It was fantastic. We had people who would never have set foot in the arts center, and that was really cool.

Secondly, Neil identified how the priority of feedback in student learning, and especially in a student's capacity to understand the role of critique in art was a priority for him. Neil described how an innovative idea had been generated via this commitment to find a way to express his teaching and learning priorities in the online environment:

I was looking for ways to use technology to gain some feedback for the students . . . So, one of the things I'm doing with this semester's class is to think through how I could take

the idea of a flash mob and do something like that with photography. So what we're actually going to do is, this Friday night, 11:59 is the deadline, each of [the students] has to send me what they think is their most successful photograph they've shot since the beginning of the semester . . . And I'm going to take all the students' photographs and incorporate them into a Photo Shop document that's 3½ X 8 feet long and print that out downstairs and mount that onto a piece of foam-core. It's going to say: "Photographs by online photography students. Come and give your opinion". . . I've given a number for each student, number one, two, whatever, so that'll be their number on the picture. So somebody can scan this QR code with their smart phone, it will say, "Do want to open this link?" So when they go to this link it will open a Google survey called "[course name] photo exhibit at the student union." It'll say, "Thank you for sharing your comments. Please enter the number of your favorite photograph. See numbers on the prints." And then, "Please share your comments as to why that photograph is your favorite." So you can click there and start typing away. And then when they're done, they'll hit submit. And what I can do is go to that site and download all the comments and see whose picture was voted number one and provide the feedback. And then for people like you and me, without one of these phones, I created a Gmail account. So students [without a phone] can make a note of their favorite picture, and e-mail their comments.

Once again, these innovations in online teaching and learning appear to have been a consequence of a faculty member's commitment to perform in certain ways in is his teaching. The online environment, though it posed a challenge to such performance, became an opportunity for innovation as the teacher contemplated the nature of his performance online. One final example comes from Lauri who described how a commitment in her face-to-face classroom engendered an innovative equivalent in her online course:

The other thing I would do face-to-face is probably take 10 minutes or 15 minutes, at the end of the class session to say, "Let me step back now and help us all think about what we've been doing." And that's often when I will link the bigger concept to a particular class. Typically in that kind of summarizing, I will want to elevate certain ideas or comment on certain themes that I've seen emerge, so that we're not leaving a class just with a lot of disparate ideas. I might want to weave comments from the discussion to the readings. I might want to highlight questions I think have emerged, that I think are useful questions for us to think about as we move into subsequent units. That's usually

what I'm trying to do, pedagogically. So, with that in mind I thought, "Okay. What I'm going to do online at the end of each unit is write a letter back to the class." It was a very substantial piece of work for me. I wrote this as a letter to the class and not to individuals. It could be 4 or 5, 6 single-spaced pages and I would highlight themes, I'd highlight questions, I would link things to their readings. I'd say, "We seem to have some different opinions around this idea. This is how I would think about it, but I really want to recognize these other alternative viewpoints." It would always be a very organized letter. People could read it and say, "Okay, here are some of the big things we need to think about that are coming out of this unit and this discussion" . . . I also very carefully and purposefully named names. I wouldn't name everybody in every letter, but I would make sure that I wasn't always naming the same people and that everybody got named pretty regularly. But it wasn't just pro forma, that I just sort of named everybody. It would be more like, in a face-to-face environment, the way a conversation would go. And they liked that a whole lot. It was also quite conversational. I'd talk about things that were happening, or things about my family, not terribly personal, but things that just make me more personal and hopefully connect to human dimensions of the lives of people in class. So the feedback from this was very, very positive. People really liked it . . . People would say, "This really helped us to bring together our learning and to really highlight what we want to take away" – which is exactly what I would do in a face-to-face class. So, in terms of presence, that was one of the things that was quite important to me.

These examples demonstrate how faculty who have chosen to teach certain face-to-face courses online have thought critically about how they might carry out certain educational priorities in these new environments. In other words, teachers have sought out how they might express their own educational preferences in new ways, and in so doing have fashioned new, innovative approaches to engage students in meaningful ways. As was also reflected in these extended quotations, such innovation was greatly appreciated by students who recognized how these manifestations of performance displayed the *person* and the *personality* of their teachers. In each of these cases, faculty commitment inherent in the work behind such innovation was brought on by a teacher's commitment to learning, by a commitment to carefully consider who they were as teachers and how these qualities might shape their online teaching and learning.

The Online Teacher's *Growth*: Teaching, Training, & Evaluation

Wilbert McKeachie (2002) stipulates his belief that "there is no one best way of teaching" (xviii). This is a significant statement given his strong commitment to provide a host of *tips* for new teachers entering their teaching careers. However, McKeachie is clear that the purpose of his work is not to suggest that teaching can be reduced to the things teachers do, but that who a teacher becomes is very much connected to this idea of learning or growth. He claims that "developing as a teacher is a recursive activity" (320), which he connects to a teacher's commitments to learning, experimentation, practice, adaptation, growth, reflection, and even the motivation to repeat these processes over the life-span of a teacher's career.

Anne, a relative newcomer to online education identified this priority in her ongoing preparations to grow in her abilities to teach students in the online environment:

> *So I'm sitting there, you know, a few weeks ago, and my technology helper's there with me, and all my students are in there in the classroom, all of them are researching 50 different countries around the world, many of them in different languages, so they have to use one of the translate tools. And at their fingertips they can find out if there's a theater company that focuses on puppetry in Indonesia – right in Indonesia! I mean how detailed is this. And I thought, "When I was a college student …" not even that it never happened but it wasn't even in our consciousness at all. It's a different world, to have 45 students learning about things so quickly in the far reaches of the globe. The boundaries are erased. It's fascinating. And students have no concept of what it means to not have that. So, I better do my due diligence and help them, and learn myself, or I'm not going to be helping them learn the best way that they can learn.*

Faculty interviews clearly demonstrate how the act of, or commitment to teaching online had pushed them to reconsider their teaching, seeing it in fresh and challenging ways and provoking new curiosities which led to experimentation and even further research.

Teaching versus Research

In many respects, Showalter's (2003) fourth type of anxiety shares similarities with her fifth. The difference appears to be that the fourth addresses the tendency among faculty to discount their teaching as somehow less significant than their research, while the fifth anxiety is a consequence of a teacher's lack of pedagogical training. Thus, in describing the gap which exists between these responsibilities of teaching and research, Showalter suggests that faculty "reconceive [their] pedagogy to make it as intellectually challenging as [their] research" (11).

Faculty interviews revealed that not only did a teacher's priorities influence the nature of a teacher's innovation online, but exposure to the innovation of online teaching influenced their commitments to teaching. 3 faculty noted how their teaching had taken on greater prominence in what they were being called upon to do. One seasoned teacher claimed:

> *You know the university says, "Okay, you're 40% teaching, 40% research, 20% service." That's kind of the general thing. Well I think that's pretty unfair in a way, right now. Because I find myself spending a lot more time thinking about whether I'm being effective in the [online] classroom.*

Interestingly, this growing commitment to the responsibility of teaching as opposed to research or service also led to the development of formal online training programs by two faculty members in this research. Thus, online teaching has led faculty to consider their teaching in new and at times profound ways. More often than not, this refocusing of a teacher's priorities was referred to in terms of a net positive. However, in 3 cases existing administrative structures guiding faculty work and reward made these priorities seem more negative to faculty as these expectations were perceived as a potential risk to tenure.

Overall, teaching via the uses of new ICT was viewed as having a disruptive effect on those carrying out such teaching. At times, faculty noted certain frustrations associated with learning how to teach in these environments, especially under the constraints of their current responsibilities. However, faculty also pointed to how such disruption was providing a source for renewed excitement, creativity, and even revitalization in their teaching, providing new opportunities for faculty to engage themselves in questions about their teaching.

Thus, faculty highlighted certain curiosities related to their work of teaching online which engaged them as teacher-learners in their work of teaching. Many also noted how their willingness to experiment in their teaching provided a resource for learning and engagement. For some, these experiments in teaching represented implementing innovative ideas, such as those mentioned previously. For example, Lauri crafted a summative letter to her class and utilized CAT techniques for formative and summative feedback; Faye developed 3-D resources for medical students; Cindy created animations and automated self-directed learning components; Neil introduced a “flash mob” concept to his field of photography; Oscar experimented with the uses of hypermedia reading and writing. In these ways, faculty engaged their students and their subjects by pursuing solutions to problems or intellectual curiosities that they believed would more effectively engage their students in the processes of learning.

Perhaps the most prevalent theme in these interviews related to faculty curiosity and its effect on online teaching was what many referred to as the visibility of student learning. 9 of those interviewed highlighted the unique capacity of online models of education to make student learning visible, and how this characteristic of online learning provoked, in one way or

another, their own interests in the processes of online learning. Three examples illustrate this focal point of faculty learning online. Yosarian noted how his uses of individual reflective work and problem-based, collaborative projects provided entry into student learning:

> *I look for ways in which I can sort of see the manifestation of the students' intellectual work in the face-to-face environment, whereas it's really quite obvious in the online environment where they're at intellectually with regard to the content. It's much less evident in the face-to-face. All you get is the quality of their classroom participations on a daily basis. You don't really see that anywhere else than their assignments. So in the online environment you're able to monitor them a little bit better.*

In these ways, the online environment provided a visual manifestation of both individual and team-based understandings through the clear, written record of student learning. In a second example, Gary underscored how this visible record of student learning online had provoked his interests in pursuing additional avenues of research:

> *I find the idea of the record of online learning kind of intriguing—this idea that you might be able to track actual thought processes—of being able to say, "Oh, you had an issue with this and an issue with this and an issue with this. So that probably means that you're not grasping this concept." I think it's partly that everything's recorded in [our course management system] and there's a potential path there if I could just figure out, you know, the combination, to be able to actually address really cool systems thinking aspects recorded online. I haven't gotten there yet, but … you know, I think it's the visual aspects of online learning that I appreciate the most.*

This window into Gary's fascination with the pathways of human thinking and the potential for diagnosing ways to improve online learning illustrates how faculty learning may influence the nature of teaching presence online. This attention to teaching and learning has provided a potential resource for a teacher's ongoing engagement. For example, Anne re-envisioned her approach to group work online given the visible qualities of student learning:

> *So I required that students create two slides on the Google site. But the really cool thing is that if you're working on your slide you can see—on the left hand side of the column—your slide and my slide at the same time. It lists all of the people that are working on their slides. So you can go and click on the slide I'm working on. Or you can click on somebody who's already finished theirs and see their work immediately . . . and that really makes their work visible. And in my opinion, it raises the bar on the standard of work, because you know that one student who's the overachiever, or more than one student, they're going to do amazing work. And everybody else looks at them and gets new ideas. And they build off of each other to create really strong work. So the online part makes learning visible, in my opinion.*

Thus for Anne, the real-time visibility of student learning provided a way to think of group work in terms of *influence* rather than as *team product*. In addition, her willingness to experiment with her online assignments engendered a growing excitement related to her work of teaching online. Thus these curiosities and opportunities for experimentation seem to provide a steady source of motivation and personal satisfaction in teaching online.

Although the interview protocol for this research (Appendix A) only directly pursued questions related to the place of self-evaluation and professional development in the learning processes of faculty teaching online, surprisingly 14 of the faculty interviewed (≈ 85%) brought up additional curiosities and places of inquiry related to their work of teaching online. For many, these places of inquiry into online teaching and learning were born from a desire to solve challenges faced in teaching in these environments. Thus, even for those faculty who did not find teaching online as satisfying as teaching face-to-face, these flashes of creativity found in various solutions to the problems of online-ism were very satisfying. Likewise, although technological difficulties were quite deflating for several online teachers, these avenues of inquiry were spoken of as "motivating," "enjoyed," and even "fun."

Intellectual curiosities and purposeful inquiry provided resources out of which teachers expressed a sustained willingness to engage students and their subjects in the teaching of their online courses. For one teacher, these curiosities were built into the way she fashioned assessments in her course, aiding her own interest in student work and her motivation in responding to assignments. Several others highlighted curiosities surrounding the effective uses of multi-modal teaching and learning noting that online education may be transforming the very nature of how they teach. Thus for each of these teachers, curiosities surrounding inherent differences in online teaching and learning encouraged both personal and professional growth, sustaining motivation and providing meaningful work. Anne's curiosities reflected in the following quotation illustrate this pathway from interest to faculty engagement:

> *I think that there's much farther that we could go in regards to how we use online teaching to bring you as a student sitting in some distant city closer to what's happening in that class and to who that teacher is, rather than just you being their satellite audience member watching what they're doing, almost voyeurism . . . I think one can create a stronger presence to make you in [some other city] feel like you might actually be one of a small group, rather than one of 500. I think there's ways to do that. I haven't done it, but I'd be willing to figure it out.*

Although some of what has been outlined in these sections thus far might connect with teacher research, one additional illustration merits attention here as it expresses a different facet of faculty attention to teaching. Thus, several identified how their work of teaching online influenced the directions they took related to their ongoing contributions to scholarly research. Faye's thoughts illustrate this point:

> *I've written up some manuscripts, publishing scholarly work based on what I've done over the years. And that's been a very satisfying and beneficial part of what we've done here, in terms of sharing ideas with others. I think that's something that is really*

important for the future, to be able to use the work of teaching as scholarly activity and not necessarily consider research as totally separate, but to improve scholarly attitudes toward our educational work.

Several teachers in these interviews identified how their work of teaching online and their scholarly work of research intersected in significant ways. This attention to how online teaching may influence research, and vice versa, reflected an important facet of how faculty were thinking about the nature of their presence online. In essence, these curiosities and avenues for research not only influenced and sustained motivation in teaching by providing opportunities for meaningful work, they also provided places for faculty to open secondary subjects to their students related to what it may mean to study their disciplines via the uses of new technologies or in mediated ways. This subject is examined more fully in Chapter 5.

Lack of Training

Alongside Showalter's (2003) anxiety surrounding the division of teaching and research, she lists a fifth type of anxiety, which she refers to as "the most profound anxiety" (4), namely *the lack of training*. By lack of training, Showalter is referring to the underemphasized place of teacher preparation in our graduate faculty development programs. Thus, while Showalter's description of the gap between *teaching and research* is a call to reconsider how teachers find a balance in their work of teaching, *lack of training* speaks to the problem of feeling ill-prepared to teach. For faculty this means dealing with the anxiety surrounding making the most of classroom time, of understanding pedagogical principles that can guide teaching.

Three-quarters of the faculty in these interviews drew attention to how, in the work of preparing to teach and in teaching online, they had been confronted by issues of pedagogy. For

some, these thoughts were unexpected, and expressed as having influenced their teaching in significant ways. For others, these thoughts were reminders provoking them to rehearse what they already believed or knew. Several quotations provide general examples of how the work of teaching online had pedagogical consequences. These general examples are followed by some specific references to how teaching in these environments influenced faculty perspectives on the place and nature of *lecture* in teaching.

One seasoned educator described how moving to online teaching had influenced the perspectives of faculty in his discipline by confronting them with issues of pedagogy:

> *Over time, having looked at this stuff with a lot of instructors in different departments over a period of years, the most important changes that have come about because of online instruction's huge proliferation, has been to make instructors, both online and face-to-face, much more sensitive to learning objectives. I will tell you that [faculty in my discipline] even though they're all great professors don't know diddly about pedagogy. They don't know anything. When they go into class, they just talk about the material. They rarely have specific learning objectives in mind. They just never thought of it . . . And when ordinary, run-of-the-mill professors started talking to other experienced faculty who had created online courses, all of a sudden they were confronted by a push from a course producer . . . who said to them, "Okay, Professor X, here we are on topic one. What do you want the students to know in topic one? What are the important things?" "My gosh, I never thought of it that way before," because you have to create content in an online course. You're not standing up there blowing out smoke. And because content creation is so expensive if it's done well, you've got to make sure the content helps the students meet the learning objectives that you want. So the revolution as a result of the online proliferation has been to get lots of people who don't teach online to think more in terms of learning objectives, in devising tools, tricks, and ways of getting the students to meet those objectives.*

Again, in this example online faculty are often confronted with a kind of teaching which assumes a team approach in the design process. And these "revolutionary" responses, to use

this professor's words, reflect a consequence of how teaching via the uses of new technologies are confronting faculty with the ways in which they are teaching. Another example from the sciences helps to further clarify the significance of this force that is reshaping the nature of teaching across the disciplines:

> *One of the interesting things I see in online education is all the things we should be doing in face-to-face. A lot of it you're more forced to do … I'm asked this question, "Did I cover that material?" Obviously you should think about that anyway, but I mean, it's real easy to go back and check online … When I'm doing face-to-face classes I don't have a complete record of everything I've said. So I may think I said something better, but I didn't … [Online], you know what material you're presenting, you know what exercises are there, and every exercise is tied to some content that you've presented in a very clear way; it's all very logically organized. Also, [face-to-face] you may have situations where you have a lab section that's doing something that's disconnected from what you're doing in the class. This frequently happens in the sciences. Frequently people are doing labs and it's not at the right time so it's not exactly obvious to them what concept from lecture this is all about. Maybe that's just bad teaching; but to some extent, I've had my own labs get out of sync as well as with computer labs. And so you've got to take some time to say, "Listen. Here's additional content you need to know because we're ahead in the lab. Or remember back last week when we were talking about this, this lab's about that. Where, in online stuff we actually do exercises because they've gotten to the right place. I think, as I alluded to earlier, there are some advantages to the online format that go beyond convenience. I think that's one of them.*

The necessity of having to carefully plan the learning experience appears at times to have had certain unintended consequences which may improve issues such as coverage, precision of expression, and managing the sequences and timing of the learning experience. This same idea was expressed by another teacher who mused about the impact that teaching online was seemingly having on her ability to craft successful learning rubrics for her courses:

> *Teaching online also helped me learn how to write a clearer rubric. And I'm trying to think why would that be? (pause) I think because I'm not there.*

In this significant example, the imposition of online teaching in having removed the physical presence of a teacher from the learning transaction may have forced greater attention to the teacher's ideas of what it means to be *present* in her teaching.

Finally, several faculty highlighted how learning to teach online had helped them transfer skills related to the uses of new technologies into their face-to-face teaching experiences. Thus, faculty articulated that another benefit of having been forced to learn these skills was a growing level of comfort with and new capabilities in the uses of technology in a variety of teaching environments. One teacher, initially reluctant to teach online claimed:

> *I think all of the things I know about teaching with technology, I was forced to learn through prepping online class. So if I had never been pushed to do it, and I really was pushed to do it – I was reluctant. If I hadn't been pushed into doing it online, my face-to-face classes wouldn't have the benefit of technology they have today. So I'm very grateful for that.*

Three additional examples highlight another pedagogical focal point voiced by 6 teachers in this study, and that is how online teaching influenced faculty perspectives on the place and nature of lecture in their face-to-face teaching. In the first example, a teacher described how teaching online led her to reduce her uses of lecture face-to-face:

> *Teaching online has forced me to look at my methods used in face-to-face, and really I have spent a lot of time rethinking how I lecture and what I lecture on, and I would say that in the past I lectured a lot from the textbook. This is a major complaint of students, right? "Either make me buy the book, or make me go to class. But if it's redundant, I'm not going to do both." So, after teaching the course online, I changed my on-campus courses to really cut back on lecture. I tell the students the first day, "I assume that you've done the readings for today. And I'm going to go through them quickly" … So I've just found that the use of the technology in general has helped me to use my classroom time much more efficiently.*

3 teachers specified that their decision to write out their lectures had influenced the quality of their lectures in both online and face-to-face environments. In the following example, one teacher described how choosing to write out her lectures online shaped the nature of her face-to-face lectures in the classroom:

> *I think writing forces you to (I shouldn't say force), but the process of writing out your lectures really gives you the opportunity to think very deliberately about what you are teaching. Because when you are just giving a lecture, you're obviously preparing, you have your slides that you're using, you have your notes, you have how you've taught it before. But once you get up there you kind of just wing it, unless you're someone that reads your notes, which I don't. I kind of go up there and just start talking. And so, having the opportunity to write down what you want to say really highlights places where you are jumping from one concept to another, or where you feel like, "Oh, this would be a good place for a graphic. Oh wait, I don't have a graphic in my slides. Maybe I should add a graphic here." So I think writing everything out has made my lecture class better because I've had to be so deliberate. I've had to really think through every lesson and how it's structured, what concepts to present before another, what graphics to include. And as I found my online class diverging, I've gone back and supplemented the material or changed the order of things or something in my lecture class.*

In 1 final example, a teacher stipulated how the video capture of his lectures had influenced how he conceptualized his lectures, leading to what in his opinion were more effective uses of lecture online and in the classroom:

> *I think that the biggest change that teaching in this modality has produced in me is that it has made me feel more comfortable as a lecturer, because it has forced me to be thinking about my lectures in smaller components, tighter components, more structured components . . . It's not like I do a 45 minute lecture and then divide it up into three pieces. I conceptualize it as three shorter pieces. I'm not a great lecturer. I find having these shorter time-blocks of content produce a more quality lecture. I ramble less; I think they're more useful for the students. The technology has influenced that because it's a streaming issue, it's a file size issue. It's just much easier for them to download and make use of these shorter clips. It's also less time that they're sitting there staring at me, and there's a lot of evidence from what I've seen in the field that says that after about 10 to*

> *15 minutes, people's attention span is gone. So why waste their time and your time? So I think it's been a nice match of what the technology is suggesting as a better way, and what seems to work better for me in terms of my lecture ability.*

Finally, faculty specified how opportunities for professional development influenced their commitment to learning, and ultimately their growth and effectiveness as online teachers. It is important to reiterate here that faculty in these interviews were recognized as exemplary in their approaches to online and blended educational formats. Thus, whether by nature of their experience teaching or their support structures or their drive to learn, it was clear that these faculty had sought out resources which could help them grow in their understanding of online learning and their capacity to teach in these environments. Although teachers highlighted a variety of means used to acquire such skills or understanding, by far the most significant resource—noted by 11 ($\approx$ 70%) as having influenced their development as online teachers—was the significance of individual relationships with friends or colleagues.

These examples illustrate how decisions to teach online are reshaping faculty perspectives on the ways in which they teach in every educational environment. These kinds of faculty learning experiences were at times unintended, perhaps the consequence of the ongoing interplay between teaching and innovation. For faculty who choose to attend to these differences, they identify a growing understanding of what it means to demonstrate presence as a teacher online and in the classroom. Returning to Showalter's definition of the anxiety of *lack of training*, it appears that online teaching may provide a practical course in pedagogy. However, as the next section illustrates, not all faculty learning online is incidental. In fact,

these interviews reveal how purpose-driven learning is shaping the nature of online teaching presence in the experiences of exemplary online faculty.

Evaluation

Showalter's final type of anxiety corresponds with the uses of evaluation as a means for teacher learning and teacher growth. She notes how student evaluations at times are perceived as judgmental tools that approximate receiving a final grade for teachers. Showalter suggests that faculty rather look for ways to supplement standard university course evaluations so as to pursue a steady stream of helpful feedback related to their teaching.

In this study, every interviewee specified that they utilized standard student evaluations as mechanisms for feedback which affected the ways in which they chose to adapt their teaching online. However, reflecting the spirit of Showalter's admonition, 9 (≈ 55%) of these teachers also noted having crafted their own supplemental evaluation tools in addition to standard university evaluations. These tools provided resources that helped them examine their own teaching, student uses of online resources, issues related to the rhythms of student work online, and feedback on some more experimental facets of online teaching.

Three examples help to illustrate how the development of supplemental feedback mechanisms were useful to faculty as they considered the ways in which they were demonstrating presence in online courses. In this first example, Faye explained the purposes which lay behind her uses of student evaluations:

> *I always devise feedback tools if I'm trying something new. Last year when I first made these short Camtasia recordings to try to connect lecture and lab material and the*

resources that provide more 3-D orientation, I designed a short survey that I gave the students in the laboratory setting … I just asked them about the effectiveness both of what I did, and then of some of the other online material to see if what I was doing was helpful to them … I think it's really important to get feedback from students that can help in developing online materials. Getting student input at various points in that process has been really important and has led to some changes in the way things have been done [in our college].

Thus, faculty made use of feedback tools for more effective development of online resources within their courses. This use of feedback was by far the most prevalent among the faculty who created their own evaluations, perhaps as a means of navigating the complexities related to the uses of new media in online teaching. However, for two teachers who were teaching in ways that extended beyond the conventions of online teaching and learning, evaluation became an important gage by which to examine student preference and even sustain motivation in their work of teaching online. Oscar's insights reflected these ideas:

The responses I get term after term about the self-paced format, about the preference that students have for this format rather than working in groups … have confirmed the biases I brought to teaching online. In fact, they have strengthened them and prompted me to be more forward even about what I was doing. I felt less marginalized … The student evaluations … actually pushed me more into the online world because they convinced me that I had something to offer that was different from what other people were doing. So I wound up speaking at a lot of conferences. It's starting to show now in the sort of invitations I'm getting and the interactions I have with people, and the roles I can have. There's so much convention in the field that the course evaluations turned out to be a sort of scholarly resource for me, an ideological resource for me, that convinced me that it wasn't just me, and my experience and my biases. But that what I was doing was consistent with what a lot of the students wanted, too. So the evaluations have been important in that regard.

It is significant to note that these teacher-crafted tools became a resource leading to motivation, perseverance in the work of online teaching, and even attention to scholarly work.

Finally, one teacher highlighted how her online course had evolved over time so that it had begun to draw in students from other disciplines, in essence providing a more cross-disciplinary appeal to undergraduates who might want to take the course as a part of their elective credits. Thus, the evaluations had become a valuable resource for re-envisioning how to adapt the course over time:

> *The evaluations at the end of the semester helped us come up with the impetus of having a new lab … a lot of students have said that they like doing the labs because they speak to real-world things … And the class was more technical when it was first taught. When I took over I tried to broaden it because for a lot of students, it's the only class in our discipline they're going to take … So I've made it slightly less technical and added things like a discussion on ethics … I've tried to include a variety of things to kind of broaden the appeal a little bit … I mean we were totally losing students from [some other disciplines] … so I took out some of these really, really specific concepts and tried to keep to these broader concepts.*

In the end, six of Showalter's (2003) types of *teaching anxiety* provide a fruitful way in which to explore the inner-worlds of online teachers, and how these understandings of identity may express both continuities and discontinuities when compared with more traditional, face-to-face teaching. Moreover, they reveal the compatibility or usefulness of the vocabulary found with the literature on teaching generally, despite the fact that these frames for understanding teaching were often never intended to convey perspectives on the work of teaching in an online environment.

Online Teaching Presence: From Anxiety to Identity & Back Again

Reflecting back on the nature of faculty perspectives mentioned thus far, it is quite evident that faculty portrayals of certain struggles often elicited very personal and often

emotional responses in these interviews. This was especially true as interviewees spoke of various unforeseen responsibilities required of them in their effective management of their online courses. Teachers spoke with heightened passion and transparent emotion as they addressed aspects of their online teaching, aspects which excited them, and even more so those which frustrated them. For each of these teachers, the work of teaching online was very much connected with her/his identity, and especially with how teaching in mediated ways might be shaping professional experiences. The following quotation clearly illustrates the emotion associated with a number of frustrations facing one faculty member:

> *One of the bigger frustrations with teaching online is that there's supposed to be all these resources, which I know there are, like I said. I mean, it could be that I'm just a doofus, and I didn't know where to find them, how to search, or whatever … I went on the faculty development site and it said something's under construction and it'll be like a year or something before you can access what you need. And I was like, "Are you kidding me?" I mean everything's just totally unclear to me on how this is supposed to happen, other than just people fumbling around. And another really frustrating thing is when you run into one of your colleagues in the hallway, and you find out, "Oh really, you're teaching online, too?" "Oh yes, I am." You know, if I hadn't run into her … I mean, there are people all over this college that have done things and who have all this expertise. And it's just right there. It hasn't gone anyplace, but you don't know anything about it. And there's a definite conflict with the reward structure. There's no reward for us walking around saying, "Hey, you need help with blah, blah blah? I heard you were teaching something." There's no reward for somebody to say, "We should get together every week and have presentations" because no one has time to do the presentations. Nobody's going to organize it. Nobody's going to make it to the meetings. So it's like, how are we going to do this?*

These interviews demonstrate that faculty see the work that they do online in very personal ways, ways connected to how they understand themselves as teachers. And these perspectives

impact the ways in which teachers demonstrate presence online, including their willingness and capacity to teach in these ways over the span of their careers.

However, teachers not only evidenced individual *pathos* related to their work of teaching online, they also portrayed a varied set of ways in which their personal preferences, personalities, and teaching styles influenced the ways in which they were present online. These ways included preferred educational philosophies and pedagogical choices. Just as Randy Garrison describes with passion his commitments to a constructivist approach to teaching and learning in the CoI, so too faculty in these interviews identified how their beliefs about teaching influenced the ways in which they demonstrate presence online.

Returning again to Pratt and Associates' (2005) five perspectives on teaching, faculty perspectives clearly evidenced differences in the ways in which a range of educational purposes influenced their teaching online. In the previous chapter, faculty interviews demonstrated how a teacher's presence online can evidence the educational priorities of the *apprenticeship* perspective and the *nurturing* perspective. Another example worthy of attention comes from Haley, who discussed how the discipline of geography seeks to help students to think spatially. She mentioned that one of her priorities was considering how her instruction might cultivate a student's ability to think like a geographer. Thus, a *developmental* perspective on teaching influenced the ways in which she envisioned the nature of her teaching online:

> *Geography is a very visual discipline, which makes sense because we're looking at maps. The way I talk about my class is that maps are the way that geographers tell their story. Geographers learn about changes in migration patterns from one country to another. The way you tell that story is through a map. And so it's visual. In some ways, geography classes lend themselves I think to an online format really well, because you can show*

> *those graphics on a computer screen. And sometimes those graphics will tell more, those maps will tell more, than me talking it out in a lecture . . . So, I think in terms of how teaching online has changed my teaching, it's kind of almost forced me to be more visual in trying to convey a concept to the students.*

Thus, Haley envisioned her online teaching in terms of its graphic representation. In fact, while discussing the idea of the visual dimensions of her instruction she quipped with a smile, "You know, a picture is worth a thousand words." These thoughts raise the question of just how a teacher's pedagogical purposes may influence the nature of her presence in online teaching.

For some, the student's capacity to grow in certain skills occupied some or most of the underlying impetus in a course. Whether these student abilities included composition, critiquing art, writing a grant proposal, the uses of technology, or diagnosing real-life problems, these priorities drove the ways in which teaching and learning were oriented online. For others, preferences encouraged teachers to craft nurturing environments, cultivate disciplinary ways of thinking, or provide multiple entries into the subject matter. Furthermore, faculty sought out ways in which they might express enthusiasm for their subjects in the online environment. Thus, faculty preferences varied in a host of ways, such as the formality of authored content, the personal nature of communication, and even the style or voice of instruction and feedback.

Anne articulated how the individual styles of a teacher or the different approaches to teaching can influence the nature of teaching presence online. For Anne, her background in the performing arts strongly influenced the ways she envisioned her presence online:

> *A performing arts background to me creates a stronger teacher because we learn about interacting with other people. And we learn about tools and techniques of presentation. I mean, you can have a teacher that lectures primarily and students fall asleep. Or you can*

have a teacher that lectures primarily and they are dynamic. They're fantastic. Students don't go, "I'm so bored." And that's about teaching methods and techniques. I think the same thing happens online. You can't just say, "Here, do this online." Teachers mentor and nurture and support and praise and criticize and compliment. And if you are not that present in any form, then teaching is not really happening.

But teachers also displayed their preferences in ways connected with Palmer's (1998) thoughts on how identity and integrity intersect in the teaching endeavor. Defining *identity* in respect to teaching is no easy task. Karl Schiebe (2005) highlights this problem noting, "Identity is so pervasive in human experience that the meaning of the term itself can be slippery. Indeed, the term is used in a variety of senses" (668). However, Palmer (1998) suggests that these very personal representations of who a teacher is and who a teacher is becoming (cf., Hall, 1996) can be found at the nexus of these inner struggles of the teacher in her teaching.

Thus, in describing themselves, several teachers identified their initial and even sustained reluctance to teach online. Some specified how that over time they had come to open themselves up to teaching in these environments. However, others expressed that teaching online may not necessarily suit their preferences as teachers. One extended quotation makes this point well:

The piece that's really different to me is – and I think it relates right to the heart of what you're talking about – teaching for me is a very "human" experience. And it has a whole lot to do with connection. There's many ways of course to be connected. But I don't find myself feeling as connected in the online environment as I do face-to-face. I think you can probably see I work really hard to find ways to create that connection online. But I never feel that I'm as connected. I don't feel as though I get to know the students as well. And beyond that, teaching [face-to-face] brings me a lot of happiness, and I think it has to do with being connected with people. It has to do with being able to read people's faces and respond to the group, and see who's getting something and who isn't, and seeing in somebody's face that they have something that they want to say. Having a

sense of, you know, helping to weave together a community that is very present together. In the online environment, one of the things I realized—this sounds awful, what I'm about to say, in a way, but it's a way I can express it—it feels like a job to me. I do it. I did it well enough that [our team] won this award. Students respond well, but it literally feels like a job. It's something that I have to do. And it's not that I'm unhappy doing it. I wouldn't say that. I know I'm helping people learn. But the joy that I have in face-to-face teaching just isn't there. It's intellectually interesting to me, because I'll try different things, I'll learn . . . And I don't mean to say I don't enjoy it. But it's not the experience I have when I'm teaching face-to-face . . . I think some of it is that it really helps me to see people . . . I'm very intuitive about a lot of things. And this is probably hard to explain. I'm not even sure I have the words, but I am a very connected person. I can sort of see people and get a sense of, you know, "Are they sad? Are they happy?" And all that's taken away from me when I'm online. So that could be why a lot of what for me are the dimensions of who I am as a person don't really connect with teaching online. I feel like I'm sort of teaching with my hands tied behind my back.

Faculty preferences thus raise the question of whether or not every teacher functions best in online environments. This is not to say that one or another teacher is not capable of teaching effectively online, but rather whether in teaching in these environments some faculty may be distancing themselves from the heart of who they are as teachers. What are the implications for faculty, and especially pre-tenure track faculty who have started teaching online out of their desire to help out their departments, colleges, or universities, but who may be feeling more and more at odds with who they are becoming as online teachers? What implications may accompany administrative decisions to meet increasing demands for online teaching and learning through growing numbers of reluctant adopters of online teaching?

Finally, the challenges and uniquenesses of teaching online may be reshaping the ways in which some faculty understand who they are becoming as teachers. As noted previously, complexities inherent in working with new ICT have often led to the unbundling of faculty roles as well as to the extension of certain expectations and responsibilities in teaching. Some faculty

resonate with the possibilities of crafting a durable presence, and are therefore gravitating toward the work of online course design as a focus or even the central focus of their teaching. Faculty are being confronted with new expectations surrounding the adoption of team approaches to online course design. Moreover, faculty must navigate the changing dynamics related to feelings of isolation, coverage, performance, and growth in their online teaching. Yosarian's words vividly portray certain implications associated with these changes:

> *Teaching online is not just one of the hundreds of things that a faculty member does. It becomes a real central focus of your identity as a faculty member. It's hard to put into words. I would have never predicted this ten years ago, but the idea that I'm teaching online is a big chunk of who I am professionally right now. Not only in terms of the practice, but in terms of the intellectual work: the research, the theory, what I think about, what I find interesting, how I think about things. As coordinator of our online program, I'm exploring how we might do stuff internationally, how we might take some of this stuff and move some courses to an international level, and offer some things in places that might use them from a professional development point of view. So, it's become really integrated into who I am as a faculty member in a way that I would have never predicted. So that if I stopped teaching online tomorrow, this is always going to be with me. Ten years from now, fifteen years from now I'll have memories of online teaching experiences, what I've learned, frustrations and joys … It's not insidious, that's not the right word, but it slowly sort of seeps its way into your being. It becomes a fabric of who you are … it's not just a plug-in or an add-on, or something. For me it's just become a part of my being, a part of my identity. When people are talking about some aspect of online, it's like two or three people in the department that they're pointing to. And I'm always one of them. Not necessarily because I know anything but because I've been doing it forever and so I must know a lot (laughter). Fooled them.*

These words illustrate how the pathways of faculty work expressed in their online teaching are shaping, or may even be transforming understandings of faculty related to their identities as teachers. They reveal that a teacher's journey in online teaching will most likely encounter certain tensions (cf., Morgan, 2011), *anxieties* which may lead in new, and at times

unanticipated directions. Moreover, they suggest that the problematic nature found at the confluence of discipline, technology, and the teacher may even elicit a "dynamic and paradoxical relationship" (83, Dirkx, 1997) that could give rise to certain transformational affects in the minds and work of online faculty. However, these data also reveal how faculty are giving shape to their journeys via the perspectives and preferences they bring to this work. It is at the intersection of these varied influences that online teaching is finding expression, a homily crafted from within the scholarship on teaching though applied within a very different world.

Summary

Chapter 4 illustrates the value of conceptualizing online teaching presence, and especially thoughts surrounding the online teacher within the existing literature on teaching. Showalter's (2003) types of anxiety offer a fruitful way for considering how a teacher's *self* may in fact influence the nature of teaching presence online. Team approaches to teaching online are providing places for collegiality in the teaching experiences of many, sustaining and motivating teachers in their work, though others struggle with intensified feelings of isolation in their teaching. These interviews suggest that performance anxieties may be mitigated in an online context, though they may also provoke certain self-imposed challenges involved in maintaining very contemporary representations of the subject matter.

In addition, a teacher's *growth*—viewed through three of Showalter's types of anxiety—displays how the disruptive effects of online education are encouraging greater attention to the work of teaching in online environments. New curiosities, experimentation, and purposeful evaluation are driving professional growth, and in the end are giving shape to *who* such

teachers are becoming via the processes of their online teaching. Finally, differences in teacher preferences, including varied educational philosophies and pedagogical approaches appear to dramatically influence the nature of a teacher's presence online. Thus, these data argue that the inner influences affecting the nature of a teacher's presence online ought to inform the way educators conceptualize the dimensions of teaching presence in online education.

Chapter 5 – *Outside* Teaching Presence:
From Conditions to Contexts

Maryellen Weimer's (2010) recent work addressing a teacher's capacity to maintain *inspired teaching* across a career provides a helpful bridge leading from Chapter 4 to this chapter. In keeping with the ideas in Chapter 4, Weimer identifies certain attitudes and purposes emerging from inside the teacher which are able to sustain her across the career. However, she also reminds the reader of how certain externals can influence a teacher's effectiveness. Two of these environmental features of teaching are the subject of this chapter, specifically *institutional* and *disciplinary* influences which affect the ways teachers manifest presence online. Thus, Weimer notes the strategic nature of the environments in which teachers work, environments which are able to encourage teaching vitality while protecting teachers from what she refers to as the "insidious power of burnout" (18).

Returning again to Garrison, Anderson, et al.'s (2010) tenth anniversary summary of the Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework, the authors stipulate that their research to date "does not reveal all the complex variables of context, personality, discipline and timing that make up a unique educational transaction" (8). Although several kinds of context emerged in the analyses of faculty interviews, only the influences of *institution* and *discipline* were significant enough to merit inclusion in this chapter. The first section examines influences of *institution* naming 2 conditions faculty identify as critical to sustaining their work online. Section two addresses the influences of the *disciplines* on the work of online teaching. A third and final section highlights the profound affects that technology appears to be exerting on the disciplines.

The Problems of Institutional Expectations and Support

Parker Palmer (1998) in a final chapter dedicated to educational reform notes the somewhat fatalistic belief among teacher practitioners that any hope of reform will ultimately be in vain as an entrenched set of institutional impediments stand in the way of implementing desired change. Thus, Palmer goes on to suggest how social movements might bring about educational ideals, encouraging teachers to live undivided lives in such pursuits. Although entrenched structures governing higher education may at times seem impenetrable to the forces of desired change apart from coordinated and authentic movements such as Palmer describes, the disruptive forces of online learning have seemingly already surpassed critical thresholds leading to such revolutionary change (Christensen, Horn, & Johnson, 2008). What remains unclear is whether administrative structures in the university will be flexible enough to effectively adapt to such change.

Faculty perspectives suggest that changes are necessary as they relate to two forms of institutional support. Firstly, faculty specified that in addition to initial support for the development of online courses, support for the maintenance and ongoing adaptation of these courses was equally as important. Several referred to their desire for "real-time help," organized around the ever-changing contexts of teaching with technology. Secondly, faculty addressed the need to transform current academic structures governing faculty work online so that institutional expectations would more accurately reflect the responsibilities of teaching in these environments. Thus, these implications surrounding the changing nature of faculty work and their potential influence on the long-term effectiveness of a teacher's presence online are

significant. Creating sustainable online programs may depend upon an institution's ability to find appropriate responses to such challenges.

Uneven technological support

In Chapter 4, faculty interviews suggested that one of the primary ways that the work of teaching is changing in respect to online education is a heightened emphasis or focus on teaching. Thus, institutional expectations encouraging balanced commitments to 40% teaching, 40% research, and 20% service are not representative of the kinds of attention faculty believe they are able to devote themselves to when teaching in these environments. Some educators might argue that a teacher's introduction into online teaching simply mirrors a teacher's introduction into teaching, generally. James Lang (2008), for example, notes how that for teachers who are first-time users of technology, "start up costs, in terms of time invested, can be tremendous" (46). This parallels his descriptions of the first year of teaching as "all-consuming" (214), wherein he recommends that faculty "abandon any ambitious plans … for research or writing during [their] first semester of teaching" (216). However, what these interviews reveal is that demands for teaching online do not necessarily decrease in the same ways they do face-to-face after the first semester of teaching. In fact, as several of the quotations thus far have demonstrated, even seasoned online teachers at times find themselves in the throes of unrelenting demands on their time, especially as it relates to their uses of technology in their work of teaching.

These interviews suggest that many departments and colleges have invested or are currently investing in the development of online and blended programs. However, interviews

also reveal that this attention to development may not be enough to ensure the sustainability of such growth over time. Thus, faculty noted ongoing challenges related to what it takes for them to maintain and / or improve their online courses over time. Interestingly, all of the faculty in these interviews mentioned having sufficient to excellent levels of support in their initial phases of development. This characteristic may have contributed to why these online teachers were able to produce online courses that were recognized as exemplary. This is not to say that there were not teachers in this study who found the challenges associated with the initial development of courses frustrating in one way or another, several did. What these faculty specified was that they felt like they were given enough support to create a good initial online or blended course. Over time, however, support for the ongoing maintenance, development, or improvement of their courses was at times underestimated or overlooked by those administrating these programs.

Thus, the complexities associated with new and emerging ICT were described as increasingly burdensome among several in this study. One early adopter spoke of the oversights of those administrating his courses in the following way:

> *I've just been discouraged by the lack of support. It's not that anyone is mean; it's just that people aren't anticipating the kind of needs that this kind of work increasingly becomes. I can't imagine what other people are doing teaching online. I mean I can't be the only one that's having problems. I think they're going to have trouble getting faculty to teach courses online. I mean I'm ready to just say, "Look. I don't want to do this anymore." I spent a day-and-a-half trouble-shooting one lesson, right? - a day-and-a-half that I could have been writing in my book. Or I could have been doing a host of other things which are far more productive. And that's discouraging, that's real discouraging. So even though I like teaching online, I enjoy it. I'm beginning to realize just what kind of a rabbit hole online teaching can be.*

These words evoke a host of emotions related to what it may mean to teach effectively online. The complexities of working in multimodal environments, of needing to keep current, and of complying with the expectations of students who are coming to these environments with increasingly high expectations are features of online learning that must inform the ways in which institutions support those who teach online.

Another illustration of the struggle many faced to find needed support is evident in the approach to team that many were forced to adopt in this study. Of the 14 faculty (≈ 85%) who mentioned the role that team had played in the development and upkeep of their online courses, half of these specified that they had needed to seek out help on their own to support their work of teaching online as their departments and colleges did not provide such help. Thus, in this study successful online teachers very often took it upon themselves to seek out and develop relationships with other faculty, friends, educational technologists, information technologists, and even family in order to support what they were doing online. This observation raises the question once again as to whether such approaches will be sustainable over a teacher's career.

Faculty responses to a question on teacher satisfaction as it relates to this perception of needed technological support are revealing. Thus, data reveal uneven results surrounding the satisfaction of faculty related to their work of online teaching. Specifically, all 5 faculty teaching in blended formats claimed that they were satisfied with the online portions of their courses, though 2 of these teachers emphasized that having support structures in place was a primary reason why this was the case. Of the remaining 11 faculty, 3 referred to themselves as "techies"

and stated that they found online teaching thoroughly satisfying; 2 identified departmental and college-wide support structures as key to their ongoing satisfaction; and 6 offered qualified responses indicating degrees of satisfaction and dissatisfaction in their work of teaching online. Of these 6 respondents who qualified their answers, 3 were relatively new to online teaching; 2 mentioned preferring face-to-face teaching over online teaching; and 4 stipulated that there were insufficient support structures in place to sustain their work of teaching online.

Interestingly, the two strongest statements of dissatisfaction came from a seasoned online professor and an assistant professor who had only recently begun to teach online. The first example illustrates how lack of technological support for the ongoing maintenance, adaptation, and improvement of an online course could potentially affect the sustainability of such courses. A second example, introducing the next section (below), addresses the problem of institutional work and reward structures, which according to several faculty in this study did not correspond with the nature of the work they were asked to do in their online teaching.

Turning to the first example, a seasoned online professor highlighted some of implications surrounding what it has meant for him to commit himself to the work of teaching online. For this professor, real-time support was a significant need:

> *I've just had this iMac for about two weeks. The techs from downstairs came in, installed it, and walked away. I mean, I have an iMac at home, and I know a little bit about how to use one, but they're replacing a PC for crying out loud! There should have been alarm bells that went off you know, saying, "Okay, he's going to need some support. We should probably schedule a time to walk him through the upgrade, or ask him if he wants someone to walk him through some of the features of that iMac." But there's nothing. And all the stuff that I had installed on my PC is not installed here, so I've got to go through each of these individually, one at a time. They didn't do it when they made the*

> *switch. You know, that's the kind of stuff that drives you crazy . . . [Another example], If I want to learn Camtasia, I want to be able to get on the phone and say, "Look. Can we schedule a time to do this?" Ideally, I'd like them to come right up right now. I understand that that's not always possible. But it should be within the day. It shouldn't be like two weeks from now on a Saturday afternoon or something. But that's not the way the place works . . . Why can't we have a Camtasia faculty learning group? That kind of a thing, you know, for a few weeks or months, or whatever, until each one learns what they want to learn, people just working together. People have got to get out of their silos.*

Again, this professor like all of those in this study specified how initial support for the development of his courses had helped him to launch into the world of online education. However, it is quite clear that difficulties associated with the rapid development of technology were significantly influencing his teaching. If left unresolved, these struggles could very easily undermine his work as an educator in these environments.

Significantly, each and every teacher in these interviews specified how increasing demands for online or blended forms of learning had influenced their decisions to teach online. In fact, 14 of those interviewed ($\approx$ 85%) brought up that fact that they had first become involved with online teaching as a result of some departmental or college level incentive, or because they had been asked to do so by their departmental chair. Faculty described how the growth of learners interested in online education, especially among adult learners, had played a significant role on their department's decision to move more courses online.

Without question the influence of such demand is profound, especially given the fact that online courses offer departments and colleges a growing revenue stream with what many believe are diminishing costs over time. In the end, it does not matter whether or not this pervasive perception accurately reflects reality. Such perspectives are contributing to the rapid

proliferation of online development. Thus demand for online and blended forms of teaching and learning is often met by the influences of departments and colleges seeking to develop such programs as a means of increasing revenue and acquiring a greater share of a growing market. However, faculty identified how the increased need for real-time support in their ongoing work of teaching online was often overlooked.

Online work & the academic rewards system

The second example from among the two strongest statements of dissatisfaction related to online teaching, leads into a second problematic area related to institutional support. In this case, an assistant professor was asked to develop and teach a new online course in a shortened time span, thus requiring his full attention and forcing him to place other important work on hold. With emotion in his voice, this teacher explained:

> *Sorry, I'm ranting. 'Cause what's required of this is at odds with what the reward system is that I work under. And so, for me, this could be the kiss of death, basically. If you were to get engaged in some sort of thing like this, and you put all your time in it like I did, because I know it was really important for the college to have this high-quality class. But, I'm going up for tenure this year. There's a huge opportunity cost to this, and I'm fortunate in that my department chair understands and supported my decisions to concentrate on this task that my department chair gave me. But, if that wasn't the case, this would be a really easy way for people to just say, "He just doesn't fit well with the vision of our college." So, it's just not a good thing. And, I understand the needs of the college, though it's not necessarily what I want to be doing, either. But, I know that this is what I need to do for my job. So, you do it. But there's tons of work to make it something decent.*

These emotionally laden words raise questions as to what the implications may be for tenure-track faculty who are asked by departments or colleges to develop and teach online

courses. In fact, for the 3 assistant professors in this study, this expanded set of expectations for producing quality courses online was seen as a significant potential risk. These assistant professors spoke of the tenuous nature of not knowing how their time-intensive investments in the development and ongoing maintenance of online courses might contribute or detract from their consideration for tenure. Thus, questions remain as to whether or not existing administrative structures are sufficient to sustain the steady growth of online programs and the motivation of online teachers.

In this study, 5 faculty also noted the disparity between institutional expectations and the work they felt compelled to accomplish in order to create effective online learning environments. One teacher summarized this tension in a more thorough way:

> *The structure faculty need is not just the fact that there's an organization where you can go to for help. It's also: this is what I get rewarded for – for my work. And this is how I get evaluated. And you know, this sounds really strange, but I put in an application for the AT&T award because I felt like I needed to have some statement reflecting the things that I did, that I delivered. I never expected to win. When I won, I was totally shocked. And I joked that obviously I was the only one that applied. But the other thing was this huge sense of relief, because it was like, thank God. Because now I can put this on my Vida to match up with all of the time and resources that went into this. It was a cover-your-butt thing . . . I just love my job. I really like what I do. And in my situation, I feel like it worked out very well, thank God, because I had the support. And the award is like this little badge of honor that you can say, "This is what I spent all my time on, but look what I got." But, that's really the best-case scenario. For other people, I really don't think it's the best situation. I think the big, overall thing that the university has to figure out is how they're going to do this. And I don't know what the solution is; you could do it in a way that fits in the current reward structure, but unless a person is willing to go above and beyond, the product just may not be that great. If you demand a product that's really good, then that doesn't really seem to fit in our current system. So then what are you going to do with that person? Or, are you not going to provide online education with regular faculty, but you're just going to hire a bunch of adjuncts to do it? I don't know.*

But I don't think the work of online teaching is compatible right now with the existing system. And I think they need to figure it out.

Eble (1988) claims that teaching will always carry certain conflicting demands, and that what is most important for teachers is "to recognize the choices we have in directing our efforts and in following our strengths and inclinations without abandoning our obligations" (223). Although faculty might be willing to concede that they can learn to navigate the conflicting demands associated with online teaching over time, what remains to be seen is whether or not online faculty will truly feel this kind of freedom, a freedom to direct their own efforts and follow individual strengths in the processes of their online teaching. Once again, this seems especially precarious for pre-tenured faculty who may be asked to teach in ways that do not reflect such freedom, though the potential for burnout among seasoned professors seems equally problematic.

Several of the quotations highlighted thus far have addressed the common perception among faculty that online teaching requires more work than teaching face-to-face. Several have identified the extensive work involved in the processes of online course design, the time required to attend to technical aspects online, and the added work of monitoring class interaction and responding to students throughout the week. However, in addition to this perception of managing increased workloads, several faculty mentioned changes related to the distribution of their work. For some, these changes in the rhythms of their teaching were welcomed while for others they reflected challenges that were difficult to manage effectively.

Emily mentioned how teaching online had provided her with the kind of flexibility that was beneficial to her management of her own work-life balance:

I think when I started teaching online I had either one or two young children at the time. And so online teaching essentially gave me so much flexibility … to do work at home after the kids go to bed, that's when I do all my online course stuff, except for video making which I do here in the office. But creating online PowerPoints, answering e-mails, catching up with grading, was all in the evenings after my children were asleep … As an assistant professor before I had children my work hours were whatever I wanted them to be. As a mom and a professor, my work hours were 9 to 5. That's when they're in school – I don't have a lot of flexibility over that. So the online teaching really helped with the work-life balance for me … Sure designing an online course is a hard prep up-front. But then I feel like once its set, and you're happy with it, it goes smoothly. And I might take the same amount of time I take with the face-to-face course, but again, I can take the time whenever I want to take it. And I guess the students probably feel that way, too. "I can work on this course when I'm free. I don't have to be at a certain place at 12:40 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursday."

Thus, in many ways the provisions of online teaching offer the kinds of flexibilities to teachers that students so often find inviting. The asynchronous nature of teaching online can be very appealing to certain faculty on both professional and personal levels. For other faculty, this redistribution of work required that they not only rearrange their schedules, but also adjust their expectations related to the demands of teaching in these environments. Neil outlined how these changes affected the nature of his teaching:

I have work to do for [the online class] that is very different from what I would do with another normal semester class … If I'm teaching in the summer, for example, I'm going to teach four days a week and four hours a day I'll see those students. But then when I'm not in the classroom teaching, I can do my own research, I can attend to my own work, I can do any service projects I might be involved with, or I can even go fishing, or do whatever I want to do. But I'm under no obligation to interact with them say, on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. My obligations are Mon.-Thurs. in that classroom setting. I'll get some e-mails from people about, "Oh, I'm having an emergency here," or whatever, "Can I meet you in the office?" But with the online people I wake up every morning, I get a cup of coffee, and I open my computer and I look at student work. And I see what's been most recently uploaded. And I go to students' Flicker sites and I look at whatever pictures they have uploaded, and I'll spend easily the next hour or maybe the next 6

hours, depending on how many students have uploaded on the day before, looking as much as I possibly can at every picture that's been posted, so that I can give them as prompt feedback as I possibly can because they're only over in London for a month. So, if I wait 2 weeks to respond to their pictures, they're not going to be able to go out and reshoot, and they're not going to have the time to digest what I have to say to them.

In these ways, a teacher may in fact be more *present* in an online course than he would face-to-face. This is, in part, because online education makes student learning and classroom dialogue visible, suggesting that a teacher's work may need to extend beyond traditional boundaries in order to effectively monitor or guide what is happening. However, in removing certain boundaries related to time and place, online education perhaps somewhat more subtly removes additional, unexpected boundaries from the teacher's work-life balance. Thus, the normal break between what is considered work time and what is personal time may be somewhat blurred, lacking the clear-cut boundaries evident in more traditional classrooms.

The distribution of faculty work in online environments is also influenced by the growing commitment to team. Although the place of teamwork in online teaching offers the kinds of strengths mentioned previously, being able to accomplish the work of teaching alone also has certain advantages. For example, planning and preparing to teach is simpler than coordinating the work of a team of people. Lauri expressed these complications in the following way:

When I'm thinking about next semester [online], it's a different way of thinking and preparing for class. I'm thinking, "I've got to make sure that I'm prepared in a way that doesn't inconvenience our educational technologist if I want to call him." Whereas, if I was teaching face-to-face I'd think, "Oh, maybe between Christmas and New Years I'll have a lot of time. I can make some changes." But I know I've got to work well in advance because it wouldn't be fair to any of the technical people to be bothering them.

Lauri notes how in making preparations to teach online, faculty must consider the necessary contributions of their team, setting additional time aside to effectively manage these opportunities. No longer can a teacher place the burden of necessary preparations or even spontaneous decisions on her own shoulders. Lauri went on to note that although online teaching does provide a certain kind of flexibility, it also can make dealing with unforeseen problems or impromptu circumstances more difficult to manage:

> *It is true that online learning does provide some flexibility. I have several grants and I have to travel some. So, it does provide some flexibility, but it also complicates my life in another way. I can't do my planning in the same kind of way that I do face-to-face … Almost every day I'm literally going hour to hour with meetings. So anything to do with preparing for class, reading people's papers, or writing I do at night, until very late at night or on the weekend. So, this would be an example of how this gets complicated. If I'm face-to-face, I know what kind of time I need and I can prepare. But if I'm worried about anything in terms of technology or how to set up something on the web, I would have to make sure I block in time during the day, during normal working hours in case I need to call over to our technology people to help me … So sometimes I look at my calendar and I think, "Oh, my goodness, I can see I don't know how to do something that I have to have on the Web by Friday. It's Monday now. I can see that there are hardly any breaks in my calendar, so how am I going to get the technical help that I need?*

Perhaps the most significant consequence related to how the changing nature of faculty work may influence understandings of teaching presence lies in the impact that such change may have in the minds and lives of teachers. Unrealistic expectations or insufficient real-time support could seriously undermine the motivation and successes of an online teacher. Moreover, the prospects of facing these ongoing challenges or problems related to a teacher's work of teaching online, could impact the sustainability of such programs especially over the long-haul. Faculty suggest that such support is essential in the development of effective online programs of study.

Teaching, Technology and Academic Disciplines

Thus far, the data from these interviews have hinted in several places at the significant influence that a teacher's discipline may exert on the ways in which s/he chooses to demonstrate presence online. The interview protocol, though not designed to explore a representative sample of faculty within specific disciplines, nonetheless sought to explore differences across a spectrum of disciplines involved in the processes of online teaching and learning. These interviews suggest that at least some of the variation evident in the perspectives of online faculty intersects with disciplinary differences among these faculty teaching online.

This section on the disciplines is organized into three main subjects. The first subject highlights research surrounding two different categorizations of the disciplines, which offer ways in which to examine differences across the disciplines. The second and lengthiest subject provides a comparative analysis of the courses in this study as they reflect disciplinary distinctions. As such, these data represent a slightly different approach than used elsewhere in this research, relying less on extended qualitative quotations, and more on quantitative ratios of coded categories. In the third and final subject, faculty revealed several of their own priorities which appeared to be influencing the nature of their presence online and their desire to reform aspects of their disciplines or extend their teaching in new ways.

Disciplinary differences by schema

Janet Donald (2002) in her comprehensive work devoted to exploring the multifaceted differences among the disciplines, identifies several inherent complexities involved in defining

what are *disciplines*. Donald's summary definition, representing her study of the combined results of researchers devoted to this subject throughout the 1960s and 1970s rehearses, "A *disciplinary area* was defined as a body of knowledge with a reasonably logical taxonomy, a specialized vocabulary, an accepted body of theory, a systematic research strategy, and techniques for replication and validation" (7, emphasis hers). Donald's study traced differences across eight disciplines organized around Biglan's (1973) classification schema, (described below) and specified that clear differences exist related to the "language used, the logical structure, the preferred criteria for validating knowledge, and the most pronounced methods or modes of inquiry" (28). These areas of difference correspond to the three lenses noted above used to analyze faculty data in this study, namely, a teacher's and course's orientation around the subject matter, approaches to assessment, and the collaborative versus autonomous divide used in these approaches.

The literature over the past three decades has remained remarkably consistent in its depictions of potential classification schemata for the disciplines, relying primarily on two seminal works. The first is Anthony Biglan's (1973) classification dividing disciplines into hard and soft, pure and applied, and living and non-living categories. In this schema, the hard and soft distinction reflects whether or not a discipline has a "clearly delineated paradigm" (195) in its approaches and methods of inquiry. Hard do and soft do not. Pure and applied disciplines differ in "terms of [their] requirements for practical application" (196), pure not having such requirements and applied having them. Classification into living and non-living is self evident.

Several studies have identified significant distinctions related to the influence of the disciplines on teaching using Biglan's schema. For example, Laura Barnes, Kay Bull, N. Jo Campbell and Katye Perry (2001) specify their findings that the hard disciplines display faculty orientations surrounding the priority of the subject matter, as compared with soft disciplines in which faculty tended to focus on student development. These tendencies, regarding differences in teaching between hard and soft disciplines, have been confirmed in more comprehensive studies (Donald, 2002), as well as international studies (Lindblom-Ylänne, Trigwell, Nevgi, & Ashwin, 2006). Studies to date have not found significance in teaching differences related to applied and pure, or living and non-living categories (Lindblom-Ylänne, et al., 2006).

The second is John Holland's (1973) framework for career types orienting its classification of vocation around six types of personalities reflected in career choices: realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising, and conventional. This theory has been used to examine the disciplines as orientations portrayed in the professions. What is germane for this study are subsequent works which have examined how both of these theories may relate to the work of teaching expressed across the disciplines.

John Smart and Paul Umbach (2007) published a study based upon four of Holland's six vocational types given the insufficient numbers of faculty representing two of these disciplines. Results indicate that faculty in Investigative disciplines emphasize "analyzing data" as opposed to those in Artistic, Social and Enterprising disciplines who instead emphasize "understanding people" (189). They also note their own prior research which evidenced the emphases of

Investigative disciplines on examinations and analytical competencies, as well as an emphasis on vocational preparation among Realistic, Enterprising, and Conventional disciplines.

Online Teaching by Discipline

As noted in the introduction, faculty course data in this study organized around 8 soft subjects and 8 "hard" subjects (4 from within soft disciplines). Of these 4 "soft" disciplines which focused on "hard" subjects, 2 were research methods courses emphasizing quantitative analyses, 1 was an accounting course with a strong mathematics basis, and 1 was a geography course that was very technical in its orientation and its assessment.

Courses were initially selected and organized according to Biglan's categories and were evaluated as to the course's orientation, type of assessment and its uses of collaborative and/or autonomous features. Later courses were evaluated according to Holland's categories to determine whether either one of these schemata better explained the results. The variation across these categories is displayed in Table 2. A strong correlation is evident between the hard categories of Biglan and the Investigative categories of Holland. Moreover, these same categories display a stronger commitment to testing and to a content-orientation. The Social and Artistic categories of Holland, conversely display more collaborative forms of assessment and an orientation geared toward the development of the student.

The categories of *content-oriented* or *student-development-oriented* teaching divided along three major groupings across the courses in this study: 5 courses displayed a strong primary *content-orientation* (at least 70% oriented toward content), 3 courses on the other hand displayed a strong primary *student-development-orientation* (at least 70% oriented

Purposes Strategy n=16

Educational Level	Biglan	Holland	Assessment	Orientation
1. Undergraduate	H	Investigative	Testing & Collab.	In between
2. Undergraduate	(H)	Investigative	Testing & Collab.	Content
3. Undergraduate	(H)	Investigative	Testing	In between
4. Undergraduate	S	Investigative	Testing	Content
5. Undergraduate	S	Artistic	Collaboration	Student Development
6. Undergraduate	S	Social	Collaboration	In between
7. Undergraduate	S	Artistic	Other & Collab.	In between
8. Graduate	H	Investigative	Testing	Content
9. Graduate	H	Investigative	Testing	Content
10. Graduate	H	Investigative	Testing	Content
11. Graduate	(H)	Investigative	Testing & Collab.	In between
12. Graduate	(H)	Investigative	Testing & Collab.	In between
13. Graduate	S	Social	Collaboration	Student Development
14. Graduate	S	Social	Other	In between
15. Graduate	S	Social	Collaboration	Student Development
16. Graduate	S	Social	Collaboration	In between

Key:
H – Biglan's hard disciplines
(H) – hard subjects
S – Biglan's soft disciplines

Table 2. Classification Schemata

toward student development), and 8 courses fell somewhere in between (30 – 70 % on both scales). These centralizing courses were later broken into *content-moderate* – leaning more towards content, *balanced* – displaying near equal tendencies, and *student-development-moderate* – leaning more towards student development. What these data reveal is a stronger reliance on testing among courses which leaned more towards content-oriented subjects in both Biglan's and Holland's schemata, and the avoidance of such among those emphasizing student-development orientations (see Table 3).

Course Orientations n=16

Class Size / Type	C-Strong	C-Moderate	Balanced	SD-Moderate	SD-Strong	Testing
1. Small H-I			X			X
2. **Large** (H)-I	X					X
3. **Large** (H)-I		X				X
4. **Large** S-I	X					X
5. Small S-A					X	
6. **Large** S-S				X		
7. Small S-A			X			
8. Small H-I	X					X
9. Small H-I	X					X
10. **Large** H-I	X					X
11. Small (H)-I		X				X
12. Small (H)-I		X				X
13. Small S-S					X	
14. Small S-S		X				
15. Small S-S					X	
16. Small S-S			X			

Types:
Biglan's schema: "H" – hard, "S" – soft "C" – Content Orientation
Holland's schema: "I" – Investigative, "SD" – Student Development Orientation
"A" – Artistic, "S" – Social

Table 3. Course Orientations

It is significant that all 8 of the "hard" subjects relied on testing and that 7 out of 8 emphasized the acquisition of content over student development. 15 of the cases demonstrate congruence with Holland's disciplinary descriptions. Furthermore, 4 out 5 courses averaging at least 100 students also emphasized content over student development and relied on testing.

Thus, 3 exceptions were evident among these 16 cases. The first exception, labeled #1 on these tables utilized testing, though displayed an equal balance between both teaching orientations. Two factors provide possible answers for this difference. Firstly, this course was an Integrative Studies science course designed for an interdisciplinary student population. Secondly, the teacher of this course mentioned in the interview that he had participated in

ongoing professional development in areas of educational theory and pedagogy. He stated that this development had shaped his approach to teaching in significant ways.

A second exception, labeled #4 on these tables was classified as a soft discipline, though the course revealed a strong *content-orientation* and used testing in its assessment strategies. Like in the previous example, this may be explained by two possible factors. Firstly, although this course fell into Biglan's soft category, it fell into Holland's Investigative category, which is theorized to be *content-oriented* and to utilize testing. Secondly, this course was a large course of at least 100 students. As has been alluded to earlier in this work, faculty identified large online class sizes as making collaborative, threaded discussions virtually impossible (no pun intended). The professor did not specify whether testing fit his preferences or whether this matter was a practical accommodation.

A third exception, labeled #6 on these tables demonstrated a large class (at least at times), though the teacher remained slightly *student-development-oriented* and did not rely on testing. However, this professor spent considerable time in the interview describing the struggles associated with managing her pedagogical commitments to teaching in student-oriented ways within such large classes. Her solution was to automate certain grading processes and to reduce student work in the course.

Thus, these exceptions suggest that researchers exercise caution when quantifying a study of the disciplines, as a course's subject matter, educational context, and/or teacher preferences may influence the approaches adopted by the teacher. Moreover, they confirm the commonsense belief that large online classes may carry considerable implications for the ways

in which students in such courses can be feasibly assessed. Thus, it is possible to envision certain disciplines in which large class sizes may be at odds with the pedagogical preferences and disciplinary distinctions of the online teacher.

A comparative analysis of the hard versus soft subject disciplines, and the Investigative versus Artistic, Social and Enterprising disciplines as they relate to subject oriented versus student-development oriented teaching and learning reveals two important observations related to group work and autonomy. Firstly, these interviews clearly demonstrate that emphases on autonomous learning are not relegated to any of these categories in this sample of online teaching. The 3 self-paced and independent courses in this study, for example, represent 1 hard and 2 soft disciplines from Biglan's schema. Moreover, they represent 1 Investigative, 1 Artistic, and 1 Social discipline from Holland's schema. In addition, 12 courses displayed autonomous emphases via student choice, self-assessment and automated features in the learning transaction across each of these categories. Finally self-directed models geared toward the mastery of a subject or set of standards were clearly evident in 6 of these cases, though in these cases, each represented a hard discipline bearing an Investigative orientation in the course. These data correspond to Donald's (2002) observations concerning autonomous learning priorities across the disciplines. Thus she states that, "these methods are used to some extent in all disciplines" (296).

Secondly, faculty interviews displayed certain differences related to the uses of collaborative, group work online. Unlike autonomous learning, these approaches were only used in 1 case in a hard course, namely, the first exception from the integrative sciences noted

above. Thus, this priority in teaching appeared to be more characteristic of disciplines emphasizing student development as specified by both Biglan and Holland. However, forms of group work resulting in collaborative, team projects created significant challenges for online faculty, challenges which they described as qualitatively different than similar collaborative projects in their face-to-face classes.

As might be expected, collaborative team projects often involved small group dialogue as teams communicated together about how to go about creating a team product. However, the actual producing of a group project and the teacher's role in these processes varied considerably. 2 teachers mentioned focusing on the content of group projects while 1 teacher specified that he focused on the processes of group work and problem solving. Furthermore, 3 teachers described their role in this process in terms of consultation. This was especially true when teams were required to submit multiple drafts demonstrating a progression of learning by incorporating teacher feedback into the process. However, group work in the form of collaborative projects was also portrayed as representing something very different online than it is face-to-face. The experience of one professor powerfully illustrates the difficulties he experienced with adult learners struggling to establish effective collaborative projects online:

> *A major reason why I use collaborative projects is that it requires [students] to develop collaborative relationships with one another. And that is a really important part of my teaching beliefs, my pedagogy. If we do anything, we should be helping students learn to get along. We should be helping students to learn to work across difference … I mean a major goal of [these projects] is to foster team work and interpersonal communication, and collaboration, working together to produce a product, working for the common good. That's what collaboration is about. And students are having a devil of a time doing that … For whatever reason there is a real strong reaction among many students, not all, but among many to working collaboratively … Students have a love-hate relationship*

> *with group work. I think they like working in groups so long as they're not held accountable as a team. I think that's what it is. As long as they can go off and do their own thing, then the group thing is okay. But as soon as you require them as a group to produce something together, it is a recipe for disaster.*

This professor decided to implement collaborative projects despite their being at odds with the preferences of his adult students. He went on to stipulate why he believed collaborative work is more difficult online:

> *The mechanics and logistics of consensus groups are worse online … They're magnified in the online environment because, you know, a student will send a note posted to the forum saying, "I know we were supposed to meet tonight at 9:00 o'clock, but I'm going to take my daughter to piano lessons because my wife can't do it," or whatever. "I'll have to meet another time." So a meeting that was scheduled now takes two or three more days, because people are checking their e-mail and the discussion forums every other day, or whatever. So there's a whole set of mechanical and logistical issues that just seem to magnify the inherent difficulty that students have in working in groups.*

These reflections would seem to encourage teachers working in disciplines which give added weight to the processes of collaborative group work to carefully consider the strategies they employ in the adoption of these approaches, especially given their problematic nature in an online environment. Moreover, they suggest that online teachers who desire to implement consensus group work recognize the added work that such commitments entail online.

Influencing the disciplines through online teaching

One unexpected discovery in these analyses lay in the strong reformative ideologies evident among many of those interviewed for this study. For several stated reasons, faculty purposed to extend their fields in new directions, or to push back against certain conventions in their disciplines via their online teaching. Although teachers did not specify outright whether

their experiences of teaching online had elicited these reformational ideals, or whether these ideals had simply found more conducive pathways for expression in online environments, what was clear in these interviews was the commitments of many faculty to envision their online teaching as *opportunity* to extend or reform something or some things about their disciplines.

3 faculty revealed their desire to push back against specified conventions within their disciplines. 1 professor's words are illustrative of these desires:

> *You know, I've been teaching this subject forever. I mean, even before I came here, I taught it at [another] University. I was there for 8 years and I taught it at least once or twice a year there, too. So I had been thinking how we need to go back and sort of in a sense, revisit this course and maybe inject some new energy into it. I also had had this long-standing interest in problem-based-learning, ever since I had worked in the medical school, in medical education I was convinced that we should be doing more problem-based stuff than what we were doing. We are not a social science. And when I say "we" I mean education. So I don't know why we're teaching courses as if we were social scientists in the manner that we're teaching them. We're educating people to work in a profession. It's a practice-based discipline. In one way or another people are supposed to go and get a job when they get done here and do something constructive with their lives. Hopefully we have something to do with that, right? (laughter). And so problem-based learning is ideal in one sense, and just like in medicine, where your big job is to sort of help figure out what's wrong with patients and then bring about constructive resolutions, the same thing could be said in a looser way in education. It turns out to be a lot more complicated than that, but anyway that was my interest.*

In addition to this teacher's desire to bring about some level of change in how his discipline was understood, 2 others indentified how online teaching provided similar opportunities to challenge conventional thinking in their disciplines. In one case, a professor expressed his decision to teach against the conventions in his discipline as practicing a kind of "heresy," though a heresy students found both engaging and educationally satisfying. A third professor spoke of the increasing specialization of his discipline and thus of his resulting

interest in extending instruction to those outside of the discipline through his online course. He described this decision in terms of offering less to his discipline, though more to the university.

Approaching the idea of reform from a different vantage point, 4 other faculty identified work they had done in order to redesign their discipline's curriculum through a process of consultation with professionals in their fields. In each of these cases, teachers desired to extend practical dimensions of their subjects in new ways. Interestingly, 2 of these disciplines are categorized as *pure disciplines* according to Biglan's (1973) schema, perhaps indicating an increased interest in transforming the common understandings of their disciplines.

In addition, 5 of the 7 undergraduate teachers in this study mentioned their growing interests in creating entry into their subjects in cross-disciplinary ways. This commitment was understood by these faculty as representing the means by which students outside of their disciplines might be able to make connections with the subjects they were teaching. These faculty noted that such a desire also provided an opportunity for teachers to reconnect with their subjects in novel ways, and in so doing to discover a new sense of motivation and a growing interest in expanding their own understandings.

Kenneth Eble suggested in his 1988 edition of The Craft of Teaching that graduate education had become too specialized, so that "in most disciplines, the training for men and women whose lifetimes will be engaged largely in undergraduate education is unnecessarily narrow" (198). However, what these undergraduate examples suggest is that online learning may be providing a foray for faculty to create a broader practice of teaching. Faculty spoke with excitement about the challenges of helping non-majors understand distinctions in their

disciplines, and about how these students were helping them see their disciplines in fresh ways. Thus, these trends raise additional questions as to whether online teaching and learning may be encouraging a growing emphasis or presence in cross-disciplinary education, especially at the undergraduate level.

Finally, 5 professors identified their commitment to teach what one called "the second subject of online learning," that is, a focused attention on how learning via new ICT may be influencing the nature of a student's learning and thinking. 2 teachers noted having worked to provide their students with authored guidelines designed to assist them in their course work in the online environment. These authored documents address subjects such as communication, navigation, search, and habits of mind in computer-mediated environments. Another teacher addressed the subject of how new technologies are influencing changes in his discipline with students in his class. In each of these cases, this work of teaching represented an authored, textual set of resources used in conjunction with the central learning objectives in the course. The remaining 2 teachers addressed these subjects in more extensive ways, as introductions to what it will mean for teachers and students to engage in learning in an online context. In both of these final examples, a goal was to assist students by encouraging them to examine their own learning in these environments, or to think metacognitively about learning in these ways. One teacher explained his approach in the following way:

> *I would say the other big change that's come about is I'm more aware of the need to introduce into every course the problem of teaching and learning online. So I do that in the elaborate introduction in the courses, and wherever I can in the units and in communicating with students about it. I've really come to believe in what I call the second subject of online learning in any online course, namely, the problem of online learning itself and the value of making that explicit to students. So each course becomes*

a little lesson in the applications of technology to teaching and learning, even if it means alerting students to the significance of the very different format I use. I think that's a good by-product of any student taking an online course, how much thinking they do about the nature of online-ism.

These final illustrations offer insight into some of the ways in which faculty are making uses of online teaching, ways which suggest a potential reformative effect on the disciplines, or at least on the online representation of them. For some faculty, online teaching provided a means by which to extend their disciplines, or their own learning and growth as teachers. For others, online teaching created opportunity to challenge certain conventions even within their own disciplines. And finally, teaching in these ways suggested to some faculty, the need to attend to how online teaching and learning may be shaping the nature of their disciplines, and transforming the ways in which people learn, think and communicate.

Transformation in the disciplines: Gains & losses

Although institutional influences are important to consider in any attempt at conceptualizing the nature of teaching presence in online education today, it is at the intersection of technology and the disciplines that teaching presence appears to be most significantly affected. Gunther Kress (2005) points out in his work which explores the growing use of multimedia in teaching and learning that such design decisions carry necessary consequences which can be described in terms of gains and losses. In this study, faculty depicted several ways in which they recognize the significant influences of technology on their disciplines, and especially its influences on the nature of their online teaching. Thus, faculty described this influence in terms of both gains and losses in their disciplines, connecting these understandings with the nature of their presence as teachers in an online environment.

Chapters 2 and 3 examined how faculty were often confronted with the visual qualities of online teaching and learning and thus with how these aesthetic characteristics might contribute to the ways in which they design engaging and deeply meaningful learning experiences for students. Faculty perspectives suggest that this new "visuality" may be transforming the understandings of their disciplines and the ways in which they are communicated in the learning transaction. Therefore, this section begins by briefly highlighting 3 examples which depict how the visual nature of online teaching and learning may be influencing the nature of these disciplines in ways faculty identified as net gains.

In a first example, Haley who teaches in the discipline of geography noted certain gains from her perspective on the impact of teaching her courses online. She stipulated, "I think, in some ways I like this class better online because it's so visual … I think its content works really well in an online format." Thus, Haley went on to specify how the visual aspects of her profession had been enhanced via new ICT, and especially by the increasing volume of Open Educational Resources related to the field of geography. Tools like Wikimapia and Google Earth were making her discipline accessible to increasing numbers of people. She specified, "So, in terms of how [online learning] changed my teaching, it's kind of almost forced me to be more visual in trying to convey a concept to the students." In addition, she explained how her work of teaching online had greatly influenced the way she taught her face-to-face courses.

In a second example, Faye revealed how the availability of a growing collection of visual resources on the Web and in new learning object repositories was shaping the nature of medical instruction today. Once again, these changes were viewed as a net gain related to her

discipline's capacity to train students in more exacting ways, through a preponderance of real-life images, video and simulations. However, Faye qualified this gain noting that one of the challenges facing those in the medical profession was how to integrate these various and growing sets of available resources into an educationally coherent whole. Navigating between a host of web resources, course-based resources, and digital archives can make "searchability" and logical and visual continuity a real challenge. It is for this very reason that the medical college has continued to increase its support staff, in its attempt to support the increasingly complex features associated with online course design in these fields.

A third example comes from a team of faculty working in the natural sciences within a course which has a strong mathematical emphasis. Over a six-year span of time, this team recognized the need to make their online course increasingly visual in order to more effectively facilitate student learning. As a result, they decided to incorporate real life examples, illustrations, interfaces communicating the course's organization, and various animations connected to mathematical concepts and in the portrayal of equations. During the first offerings of their course, the team became convinced that these visual elements had tremendous value to the professionals who were taking their courses online. One instructional designer associated with the team specified that the visual elements had helped to make the learning much more interactive and engaging for students in the course.

These illustrations highlight several ways in which online education may be shaping certain disciplines both inside formal educational settings and outside of them via the proliferation of resources on the Web. As previously mentioned, these examples were almost

exclusively framed by faculty in terms of net gains in the educational endeavor. However, Chapter 4 offered a balancing perspective, namely that faculty at times struggled with new feelings of isolation in their lack of a physical connection with students in their classes. Given the highly asynchronous nature of the courses represented in this study, these characteristics are significant. One professor addressed his own struggle as it related to teaching online in terms of his inability to see the visible responses of students in his course. Bill explained:

> *It's that light bulb going on that teachers tend to get really jazzed at. And it's a little harder to see that in the online format.*

However, even during synchronous video conferencing these non-visual or invisible aspects of human connection were disconcerting from a faculty point of view. Julie summarized her feelings of loss in this way:

> *The live, synchronous exhibition at the very end of my course, where everybody's giving their presentations, in my mind, what I wanted was everybody in one system, where video is going, you can see faces, people can talk. But the constraints were that that can't happen because Adobe Connect can't handle all of that. So then we had to do a conference call in Skype for audio and use Adobe Connect for video. But the other crazy thing was, well I said to our [ed. tech person] while we were sitting there watching somebody's presentation, I said, "That other person is frozen. Is there something wrong?" And she said, "No. That's what students do. They'll put a frame of their face up, but you don't really know if they're there." And she said, "They've done that before." And I was like, "Really? I had no idea." So, for me I just felt more limited … I'm not enamored with the tools. I just want the tools to work for what I want them to do.*

Other feelings of gains and losses were identified by faculty in these interviews. Several spoke of the opportunities found in new connections to a vast and growing set of available resources in the development of their courses. However, faculty also identified how new distractions represented losses, both in terms of the expectations and preferences of students

for a more entertaining approach to learning, and in the capacities of the students to concentrate on their learning. Oscar identified his growing uncertainty as to the gains and losses associated with the uses of hypermedia in his online courses:

> *In the last, say, 18 months to two years, I have felt chastened on my hypermedia question. And this is come about via my attention to some very forceful critics of reading and writing on the Web. I'm a big partisan of Nicholas Carr's work and Mark Bauerlein's and Sherry Turkle's, and a whole cast of people now who've become very nervous about the impact of digitalization on reading and writing. And many of them are critical of hypermedia as what they call "distraction machines." That's what they say the Web is designed to do, with all of its linking … So I began to wonder, now that I've been working at making my courses so rich in hypermedia, have I fallen into the very trap that is killing the reading of long texts? Really this has made me very nervous in the last year or two, that I'm maybe my own worst enemy, here. So I've tried to correct for it by revising the introductory material to the course, which originally was designed to introduce students to hypermedia and make them enthusiastic about it. Now I haven't had quite to recant on this, but I've taken a different tact, that is to guide the students' understanding to the problem of hypermedia and the danger of fragmenting our reading by the distractions that the hypermedia format presents.*

These examples highlight how new ICT and online teaching and learning are shaping the nature of the disciplines in significant ways. An ever-expanding set of digital resources offers a seemingly endless number of pathways by which to examine various subjects online. Although not all disciplines have experienced the same levels of influence related to how the Web and online learning may be shaping them, 11 of the faculty in this study (≈ 70%) identified specific ways in which teaching online had exacted changes in their disciplines. Thus, this chapter concludes with a look at a single case from this study, which illustrates the kinds of changes that new technologies, the influence of the Web, and online education may be exerting on the disciplines and thus upon the ways in which teachers are carrying out their work of teaching.

Transformation in the disciplines: Proficiency, professionalism & more?

A single case from this study—a course in *photography*—offers a fertile place in which to consider the potentially transformative nature of contemporary online teaching, and so it is given specific attention here in this final section of Chapter 5. These areas of change are visible in part and by degree across the majority of the other disciplines in this study making this case a fruitful area for additional attention and thus warranting the extended treatment of this single case. Although photography is a discipline, which in the teacher's words "is part-and-parcel" with the technologies that define its presentation, this discipline nevertheless provides a vivid illustration of the *kinds* of changes unfolding across many disciplines today. Three extended quotations provide the basis for this final consideration.

A first quotation illustrates how the influences of technology may be shaping the nature of a teacher's craft today. Thus, Neil highlighted his own struggles to keep abreast of these changes, including a new technology he had only just discovered that he believed would render another facet of his craft, obsolete:

> *I find myself spending a lot more time thinking about whether I'm being effective in the classroom and looking for new resources and trying to keep up with the changes, no less, not just in photography, which are mind-boggling. I mean it just seems like every six months there's something new that's made everything else obsolete. I just learned about a new system where you can shoot a picture right now. If you want control, depth of field, which is deciding on a particular focus point, and saying, "How much closer and how much farther away, do I want in relatively good focus? That's a really important decision for photographers to make. Right now you basically have three ways to effect that. And they're all camera-related. It's usually a different f-stop, choose a different lens, or move in closer or farther away. That's it. So, now some jerk has invented something where you can take one picture and then with some software manipulation, make anything the sharpest focus point. And then you can choose: do you want it three*

feet this way, six feet that way, what's going to be the depth of field - an infinite array of choices related to that. So how is that going to affect my teaching and my students' work, and my own work as an artist going forward? It's mind-blowing. Just like the transition from film to digital alone is a mind-blowing thing. How it affects your work and no less trying to be a professor, which means you're able to profess and be proficient and professional, and all of those words, it is really hard to keep up on photography. Now you throw into the mix Camtasia, Flicker, ANGEL. Stuff that I don't even know about that I probably should, you know. It's literally overwhelming.

These words illustrate some of the implications associated with what it may take a teacher to stay current in respect to new technologies. However, a second quotation illustrates how the effects of technology may extend beyond the influences they pose for a teacher's craft. Technology is also exchanging the ways in which students are thinking about specific disciplines, ways that are intrinsically different from how they may have been understood in the past, ways that are redefining notions of competence in the discipline:

I think, because [students] are doing digital now instead of film, there seems to be a satisfaction with their initial efforts, rather than looking at the initial efforts as something they have to improve on. And I don't know if that's because they see the picture right away in the digital camera, whereas previously they would shoot 36 photographs and then have to go in the darkroom for 2-3 hours before they could process their film, and then make a print, that they're thinking about their image-making in a different way. In the past if I were to say, "Okay, I want you to shoot 36 pictures by next week. Class just ended, it's Thursday, it's 1 o'clock, and next Thursday at 11:00 when we get together again, I want you to have shot and processed 36 photographs. They would look at me like I was an ogre. You know, just like I was the meanest person. It was such a tremendous amount of work, because they had to take each and every photograph so carefully, because there were 36 [photographs] on that roll of film. And if you were lucky, you might even get 37 out of it. But it was not going be 40. And so each picture had a care given to it that was really different from what I see now. Some students will shoot 300 photographs in a week. And as a general rule, they're not as good, because it's just like, "Okay, I see it." There used to be a "specialness" to photography, right? – especially if you were processing the film and prints yourself – it

was more of a craft. And I think with the advent of cell phone cameras now, that photography is becoming even less special, more offhanded, less nuanced.

The transformation inherent in the pervasive growth of new technologies in photography is startling, and even more so for faculty who must consider what it means to teach, or to prepare students to think and act as photographers. Thus for Neil, these new pathways in his discipline have also created new uncertainties as he considered his teaching:

10-15 years ago, even as few as 5 or 6 years ago, in film photography, I could keep up by looking at "Popular Photography" or "American Photographer Magazine." You know, you could keep up with everything that was current in photography. This is true also for the art world. There used to be a cohort of people who were the preeminent critics: museum directors, who pretty much defined what the fine art world of photography was. And today, with so many different venues for photography, online and little museum galleries like some little museum in Podunk-[*ville, USA*]*, but because it has a web presence it's profound. It has more importance. And the stream of images is really just enough to drive you out of your mind. It used to be, you made a pilgrimage to the museum of modern art and you dropped your portfolio off there and they passed their noses over it and you brought it to Pace Gallery, you brought it to Light Gallery, or to wherever. There was a certain route that you could take as an artist in photography to get your own work seen. Or that you could tell a student, "You want to grow up and be a famous artist? Here's what you're shooting for. You're going to start off with the magic silver show, in Murray, Kentucky. And that's a show that's juried, but they have a really good juror there and maybe he'll notice your work. And if he puts his imprimatur on your work and says, "Good work," even though it's in a show with a hundred other people, that's good for your resume. And then you'll build up to more selective venues. But now the venues are multiplied by thousands of places for your work to be seen. And there's no arbiter of taste in the way that there was in the past, I mean the very recent past, for a venue that had value and was a stepping stone. Once you reached that step, then this step up here was achievable. Well, who knows what the step up here is anymore? You know, I mean, the Museum of Modern Art's still the ultimate venue no matter what time period you're talking about. But the route to get there now is – well, it's inscrutable … It's becoming more perplexing to me in guiding students to know how, when, and where they ought to share their work to achieve those kinds of goals.*

One wonders what may be gained and what may be lost given the potential of such profound changes. “More” certainly appears to be at stake at this critical intersection of teaching, technology and the disciplines, especially as it relates to the nature of a teacher’s presence in the work of teaching online. These thoughts raise a number of significant questions, one of which is how the uses of new technologies, the Web, and the rise of online education may be affecting the nature of teaching in higher education today.

Summary

Chapter 5 explored how certain external influences are shaping the nature of teaching presence in online education today. Faculty identified how unrealistic expectations in relation to the institution or in the mind of the teacher can affect motivation and the success of an online program. Moreover, insufficient real-time support has the potential to impact the sustainability of online programs over the long-haul. However, perhaps more significantly are the data suggesting the influence found at the nexus of the teacher, the discipline, and technology. These interviews reveal how disciplinary purposes appear have a formative affect on a teacher’s presence online. In addition, teaching via technology opens pathways for teachers to reform learning, their subjects, or even their disciplines, though such uses create both gains and losses from a teacher’s point of view. Perhaps most significantly of all, teaching via the uses of new ICT may seriously shape how students understand a discipline, and may have a transformational affect upon both the teacher and the ways in which the work of teaching is carried out both online and face-to-face.

Chapter 6 – Conclusion

Significance

The purpose of this final chapter extends beyond simply rehearsing the findings of the previous chapters. Although summarizing what has been learned is important to what is written here, my intentions are that these pages will offer a more integrative approach in depicting the significance of this study as a whole. Certainly the Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework is central to this work. The utility of its three-fold description of online teaching and learning in terms of social presence, cognitive presence and teaching presence (see Figure 1 in the introduction) makes it a useful framework for studying the work of online teaching. Thus, although the call for needed conceptual work relating to the nature of teaching presence suggested a rationale for this research, it was the literature on teaching that provided a way in which to carry it out.

Chapters 2 - 5 focused attention on a four-fold organization of faculty ideas on *teaching presence* online. These areas included the 3 proposed dimensions of teaching presence outlined in the CoI framework: *design*, *facilitating discourse*, and *direct instruction*. In addition, the literature on teaching in face-to-face contexts suggested additional areas for research related to both the inner-world of the teacher, and external influences which may affect the nature of online teaching. Although faculty responses often conveyed a wide range of interrelated and at times disparate subjects, they were analyzed via the common lens of what it means for teachers to demonstrate presence in their work of teaching online. In the end, these data

displayed that faculty answers to this question ring true in familiar ways, though also at times can take us by surprise.

This study sought to demonstrate that the literature on traditional approaches to teaching can provide a fruitful way to engage the subject of teaching presence online. Terry Anderson (2008) specifies in the conclusion of his essay on online teaching, that the "primary" quality defining "an excellent e-teacher is [that she or he] is an excellent teacher" (360). This study argues that an understanding of online teaching presence ought to begin, and to some degree reside within the understandings of teaching extending back before the advent of online education. Therefore it argues, as mentioned in the introduction, that educators exchange the question, "How can we do online what we do in the classroom?" for, "What lies behind successful teaching and learning, and how can we accomplish that online?"

Moreover, faculty data suggest that the literature on traditional forms of teaching also provides a useful vocabulary for articulating the nature and applications of teaching presence online. This description assumes, along with the examples from the literature on teaching scattered throughout these pages, that these expressions of effective online teaching and learning vary significantly based on differences surrounding a host of variables including the subject, educational purpose, students, teachers, discipline, and institution.

However, faculty not only identified that the presence of an online teacher bears certain continuities with teaching in other educational environments, it also displays significant discontinuities that need to inform the ways in which teachers prepare for and carry out their work of teaching online. These unexpected qualities of online teaching appear to exhibit a

powerful influence upon effectiveness and success, or ineffectiveness and failure of online education. Positively, these problematic and disruptive experiences may lead faculty to reexamine the nature of their teaching, compelling them to grow and learn in unanticipated ways. Negatively, unchecked and systemic frustrations and problems can lead to discouragement or even burnout. Thus, although these data inform faculty as to their approaches in online teaching, they also speak to the institutional and disciplinary structures seeking to embrace new technologies in the extension of their programs.

Turning to the first dimension of teaching presence in the CoI framework, *design and organization*, faculty perspectives situated this feature of their work within the context of a growing demand and heightened expectations of students coming to online learning. They portrayed their work in the creation and development of these courses as quite distinct from later improvisational *organization* carried out in situ, speaking of four primary priorities of design. Like the original definitions of the CoI framework, faculty identified the first priority of instructional design in their selection and organization of resources in an online course. However, faculty strongly emphasized another priority that differed in many respects from the teaching of face-to-face courses, namely, their attention to composition – or the authoring of textual content representing a variety of kinds of resources for work online.

For many teachers, this act of fixing their lecture along a formalized and less flexible teaching pathway engendered pedagogical growth as they thought about the entirety of their teaching before day one. For others, this act of composition was very rewarding, allowing faculty to create a lasting or durable artifact of their instruction. Some faculty, however, found

this environment more restraining, lacking the cognitive flexibility of their face-to-face teaching. Moreover, as a digital act of teaching, this representation was different than simply writing an article or a book in that it connected other resources and became a place for faculty to continue to tinker with their prose from semester to semester. Although the skills associated with composing a digital representation of their instruction were familiar to faculty, the extent of this commitment was unforeseen and at times not afforded appropriate recognition within traditional work and reward structures.

Faculty also identified the priority of multimedia design in their work of teaching online. Unlike the responsibility of authoring text, these responsibilities often carry necessary skill sets unfamiliar to teachers, or requiring additional time or learning. For a few, the designing of multimedia resources took on new life as they engaged themselves in learning the new sets of technological skills required for composing in these media. These faculty added “techie” to a growing list of online roles they enjoyed fulfilling in their teaching online. However, for most of those in these interviews, multimedia design was more cumbersome, requiring inordinate amounts of time and was very often problematic. It was within these priorities that faculty voiced the greatest frustrations in their work, and their greatest desires for ongoing support. It was also in this domain of online course design that most faculty felt the greatest sense of instability as the technologies seem to be perpetually changing. Nearly half of all those interviewed mentioned having to seek out their own help in working in these new ways, while the same number identified existing resources that they could turn to for help, though not always available at the times they most needed them.

Finally, faculty identified a fourth set of priorities in online course design, though for most this was an afterthought. Thus, they identified the aesthetic qualities of online learning that required another set of skills for effective online course design. Faculty identified their desire to engage students in meaningful and deep learning experiences and how their attention to design played a significant part in this. Furthermore, they spoke of the highly visual qualities of online education and their ongoing challenges associated with crafting a visually appealing and meaningful experience for students. Issues such as clear navigation, organization of content, and even the uses of space were identified as important. However, like multimedia design, the vast majority of faculty felt ill-prepared to craft an aesthetically meaningful representation of their teaching online.

All in all, these works surrounding the design of online courses were described as quite time consuming, and increasingly as a set of tasks requiring a team to effectively manage. Several seasoned teachers identified this in terms of its transformative effects on the nature of teaching, ushering in a new expected approach to teaching. The teacher could no longer manage the responsibilities of teaching alone. In their best senses, these responsibilities encouraged a growing sense of collegiality in teaching as teams of educators worked together in new ways. Although the bulk of the time in these design tasks took place up front, faculty identified the ongoing need for support in the maintenance, adaptation and improvement of their courses from semester to semester. It was this need that faculty identified as the most overlooked area of support from those administrating online programs.

Unlike design, where faculty identified an expanded understanding of this dimension of teaching presence online, faculty data did not clearly organize around the two final dimensions of teaching presence, *facilitating discourse* and *direct instruction*. Rather teachers spoke of these aspects of their teaching as composite parts of a whole, or as integrated features of their work of teaching online. These data suggest that the proposed final two dimensions of the CoI framework appear to be a product of the trend over the first decade of research to focus exclusively on transcription analyses of online threaded discussions and courses adopting collaborative, constructivist models of online education.

Faculty, however, outlined a much fuller array of work associated with the implementation of their teaching in these environments. Communication was carried out via e-mail, announcements, feedback mechanisms, audio-visual tools, and in assessment. Moreover, faculty spoke of their varied roles in these environments. Thus, these data organized around the roles faculty adopted in carrying out the learning transaction. These roles were expressed in terms of consultation, supervision, professional orientations, assessment, blended approaches and finally individualized approaches to teaching and learning. In essence, faculty spoke of their teaching in nuanced ways, depending on a host of variables such as educational purpose, disciplinary purpose, teaching preferences, student levels, and the subject matter. Their online teaching was portrayed as offering the same rich possibilities as in their face-to-face teaching, though expressed in new ways via the mediated spaces of online education.

Faculty depictions of individualized approaches utilized in their online teaching were equally as diverse, displaying orientations of self-directed, self-paced, and even automated

features in the learning experience. Faculty organized these learning components around avenues of student choice, allowing for student preferences, interests, and diversity of levels of prior learning. Some crafted self-assessment tools within a number of different interactive learning mechanisms. Finally, a few faculty organized the bulk of their courses to leverage the flexibilities of online learning via self-paced approaches. These approaches resembled more of a Brittish tutorial model of individualized interaction between teacher and student, though one also sought to automate portions of the learning through crafted, prefabricated responses. Thus, once again, online teaching presented through a wide range of possibilities depending upon the varied contexts of learning.

What this research suggests is missing in the current representation of teaching presence within the literature on the CoI framework are the influences of the inner qualities of the teacher in the processes of teaching and learning online. Once again, these perspectives naturally connect with an historic understanding of teaching displayed across this literature. Thus, faculty identified how teaching—and by implication learning—displays differences based upon the dispositions, perspectives, preferences, and pedagogical understandings of the teacher. Teachers specified how these kinds of qualities give shape to the learning experience and by extension to the willingness or motivation of students to engage in these processes.

Turning to the literature on teaching, Elaine Showalter's use of types of anxiety in teaching provided a useful tool for organizing faculty perspectives surrounding the inner-worlds of the teacher and its impact on teaching presence online. These six types of anxiety offered points of comparison and contrast between traditional face-to-face and online environments,

suggesting important differences. Showalter's types of anxiety—*isolation, coverage, performance, a focus on teaching, lack of training* and *evaluation*—provided windows into the struggles associated with teaching and the solutions faculty embraced in reconciling these tensions with who they are as teachers.

In addition, faculty data surrounding the inner-life of the teacher organized around two meta-themes of the teaching *self* and teacher *growth*. In examining faculty perspectives on the *self* in teaching, three of Showalter's types of anxiety, namely, *isolation, coverage,* and *performance* were useful tools in explicating how these tensions play out in online teaching and learning. Addressing *isolation,* some faculty identified new sources of camaraderie and collegiality in team approaches to the teaching endeavor, though others expressed increasing senses of isolation, especially in their connections with students.

Desire for *coverage* became more satisfactory among several faculty who noted the value of crafting instruction in more holistic ways up front, while for others the tension of communicating textually proved more difficult than via oral interactions in the classroom. Other challenges included the effective uses of multimedia in covering the subject matter and the need to increase the curriculum to include the development of technical skills and / or technological understandings of what it means to learn online as components in the course.

Finally, *performance* took on new meaning from faculty points of view, who recognized various implications associated with crafting aspects of instruction as semi-fixed representations of teaching. These more fixed kinds of "performances" alleviated certain performance anxieties of the classroom allowing for greater precision in communication.

Moreover, faculty re-envisioned performance using the creative processes of teaching in a new environment to spark innovative approaches in their teaching. These innovations in teaching performance were often greatly appreciated by students in the online courses in this study.

Turning to faculty perspectives on *growth* in teaching, Showalter's final 3 types of anxiety, namely, the *teaching versus research* dilemma*,* a *lack of pedagogical training,* and *evaluation* provided a helpful set of lenses for examining the significance of faculty learning, growth and development. Related to the *teaching versus research* anxiety, a common consequence among those in this study, related to faculty decisions to teach online was the perceived need to reconsider the priority of teaching. In essence the disruptive effects of teaching in innovative ways provoked this attention to teaching. Moreover, this attention to teaching engendered certain curiosities related to teaching in these digital environments that led to teacher research and even scholarly publication.

Anxieties surrounding a teacher's *lack of pedagogical training* were evidenced among online teachers in their preparations to teach online. Although certain faculty may not have had specific pedagogical training prior to their decision to move their teaching online, this decision confronted them with issues of pedagogy in rather profound ways. Thus, the need to carefully consider and craft the entirety of a course prior to its first day became a kind of practical training on issues of pedagogy. And an unexpected consequence of these experiences became evident in the ways in which these new skills and understandings transferred back into a teacher's face-to-face teaching.

Finally, Showalter's final type of anxiety, *evaluation*, proved to be a significant resource for faculty learning and professional growth for many in these interviews. Supplemental feedback tools designed by faculty or by educational teams involved in the processes of online teaching provided avenues to explore online teaching, as well as opportunities for experimentation in a teacher's online teaching. In addition, these sources of feedback also became motivational resources in the lives of several faculty in this study.

Chapter 4 concluded with a look at certain data which extended beyond Showalter's framework for understanding the inner-worlds of a teacher. Thus, faculty data evidenced how personal preferences, personalities, and teaching styles also influenced the nature of their presence online. Furthermore, teachers articulated how certain educational priorities gave shape to the ways in which they demonstrated presence as a teacher online. For a couple of faculty in this study, these preferences raised the question of whether all teachers were best suited to teach online, or perhaps better stated, whether online teaching was suitable for all kinds of teachers. Thus, the very personal nature of teaching was evident via these windows into the heart of the teacher and into the varied ways that teaching was manifested through an array of dispositional, values-based, and disciplinary variables. For some, these opportunities to teach online provoked questions about the possible transformational affects on teachers working in these environments, especially over the accumulation of years spent teaching online across a teacher's career.

Chapter 5 transitioned to the affects of two kinds of external influences which give shape to the ways in which teachers are present in online teaching and learning, namely,

institutional conditions and disciplinary contexts. In discussing institutional influences surrounding online teaching, faculty identified two conditions affecting the nature their work, both of which were framed in terms of support.

The first condition specified was a lack of technical support for the ongoing maintenance, adaptation and improvement of their courses from semester to semester. Although faculty identified adequate to excellent support structures in the initial development of their courses, the same was not true for these subsequent needs. Nearly half of those interviewed specified their need to find the technological support they needed for these facets of their teaching via their own personal networks. This condition of their online teaching was a frustration for many, especially those who were just entering their teaching careers and those who had been navigating these struggles for many years. Interviews displayed the very personal and emotional nature of these thoughts, leading to questions of sustainability in online teaching and learning and the possibility of teacher burnout.

Faculty also identified a second support issue related to their work of teaching online, namely, expectations surrounding the academic rewards system. Faculty perceptions were pervasive that decisions to teach online required greater attention to teaching and thus less to research and service-related work, especially early on in a teacher's experiences. However, even seasoned online teachers identified the greater time commitments associated with continuing to teach online. This reality of online teaching appeared to carry significant risk in the minds of assistant professors still pursuing tenure. Thus, these teachers hoped that their sizeable investments devoted to the work of designing and implementing online courses would

receive comparable recognition alongside other forms of academic work. This dilemma for tenure-track professors raised additional questions related to growing numbers of reluctant adopters of online teaching who are being asked to do so by their departments or colleges.

Faculty also identified the changing distribution of their work when compared with face-to-face teaching. Thus, the priority of teaching in teams, including the work of educational technologists and information technologists require different faculty work schedules including the availability of greater preparation times and chunks of time during normal business hours, given the tendencies of faculty to work in the evening when such support may not be readily available. In addition, the changing availability of the teacher for students in online environments redistributes ideas about personal boundaries and the work-life balance in contemporary work online. The primary issues surrounding these changing conditions of online teaching and learning is the issue of appropriate expectations and sustainability.

However, of greater immediate influence on the nature of a teacher's presence online were disciplinary contexts giving shape to teaching. An examination of the disciplines represented in this cross-section of online teaching, using the lens of Biglan's (1973) framework and later Holland's (1973) framework, revealed clear disciplinary differences in how teachers approach their work of teaching online. BIglan's hard disciplines and Holland's Investigative disciplines demonstrated content-oriented teaching, focusing on analytical competencies and the uses of testing in assessment strategies. Biglan's soft disciplines and Holland's Artistic and Social disciplines, on the other hand displayed student-development-oriented teaching, with greater emphases on collaborative approaches to learning.

Distinctions between soft disciplines and "hard" subjects, alongside three exceptions to these tendencies suggest caution in simply applying quantitative analyses to the study of disciplinary influences in online teaching. In these cases, teacher preferences, class sizes and the natures of distinct subject matter offer probable solutions to questions surrounding these anomalies. Moreover, Biglan's and Holland's schemata differ in certain respects, especially in certain disciplines categorized as hard and Investigative respectively. These qualifications aside, classification schemata such as Biglan's and Holland's appear to offer useful ways in which to examine disciplinary differences in online education.

Interviews also suggested that commitments to autonomous features in approaches to online learning did not vary according to these disciplinary categories. Each distinct categorization of the disciplines engaged these approaches to learning in a variety of ways. However, the uses of collaborative group work were a distinguishing feature as noted previously. Faculty in the soft disciplines, or Artistic and Social disciplines made the greatest uses of these educational preferences. Moreover, only faculty within these disciplinary categories made use of collaborative projects, as distinct from collaborative learning. Faculty who sought to incorporate these teaching and learning priorities noted heightened difficulties with the uses of these educational tools in online environments.

The most surprising finding in the study of the disciplines, from my own perspective in this research, was the pervasive attitude among this sample of online faculty to use the opportunities of online teaching and learning to press the boundaries in their disciplines. For several, this meant reforming aspects of their disciplines via their teaching online. Others,

especially among undergraduate faulty, sought to extend their disciplines to students outside of their disciplines, in essence providing a cross-disciplinary quality in their teaching. Finally, several faculty identified how the opportunity of online teaching had led to creating greater practical emphases in their discipline's curricula, even in the case of two pure disciplines not typically identified in such ways. Thus, faculty were using the innovation of online teaching to teach in new ways, to reform or even transform the natures of their disciplines.

Finally, Chapter 5 concluded with a more focused examination of this final idea, namely, that online teaching and learning may be encouraging certain transformational affects in the lives and teaching of online teachers. Several examples explored faculty perceptions of gains and losses in the uses of new technologies, highlighting how the new "visualities" of the online environment appear to be changing the nature of certain disciplines. This was especially evident among four disciplines in this study, one significantly affected by the development of Open Educational Resources, a second in a medical field, a third in a highly automated professional-development course, and finally in a field in which technology is an integrated facet with the discipline. This final case offered the clearest evidence of the transformative effects of teaching with technology and so was addressed in a more extended way. What these quotations suggest, is that the uses of new ICT, the Web and online learning appear to be shaping the disciplines as a whole in significant ways, though not necessarily individual disciplines in the same extensive or comprehensive ways.

Implications & Future Research

Re-conceptualizing online teaching presence

Together these data offer a fuller vision of the nature of online teaching than currently offered in the CoI framework. Online teaching presence would appear to reflect a far richer endeavor than suggested in the framework's dimensional categories, varying in significant ways across a number of variables. The implications of these variations in online teaching argue for the crafting of a more complete representation of the dimensions of teaching presence. In addition to *design and organization*, this study supports the findings of Shea, et al. (2006) that the CoI framework's proposed two final dimensions of teaching presence be combined and designated *directed facilitation* representing the varied roles adopted by online teachers in their facilitation of the learning transaction.

Data from these interviews support the addition of another dimension of teaching presence, one reflecting the internal influences emerging from within the teacher affecting the nature of teaching presence. These differences represent varied educational philosophies, pedagogical preferences and styles, and even teacher dispositions or personalities evident in the learning transaction. These additional characteristics influencing the nature of teaching presence may be entitled *teacher preferences*, thus adding a third dimension in this re-conceptualization of online teaching presence. External influences, while certainly giving shape to each of these proposed three dimensions, do not directly embody the work of teaching presence and so are represented as influences rather than another dimension (see Figure 4).

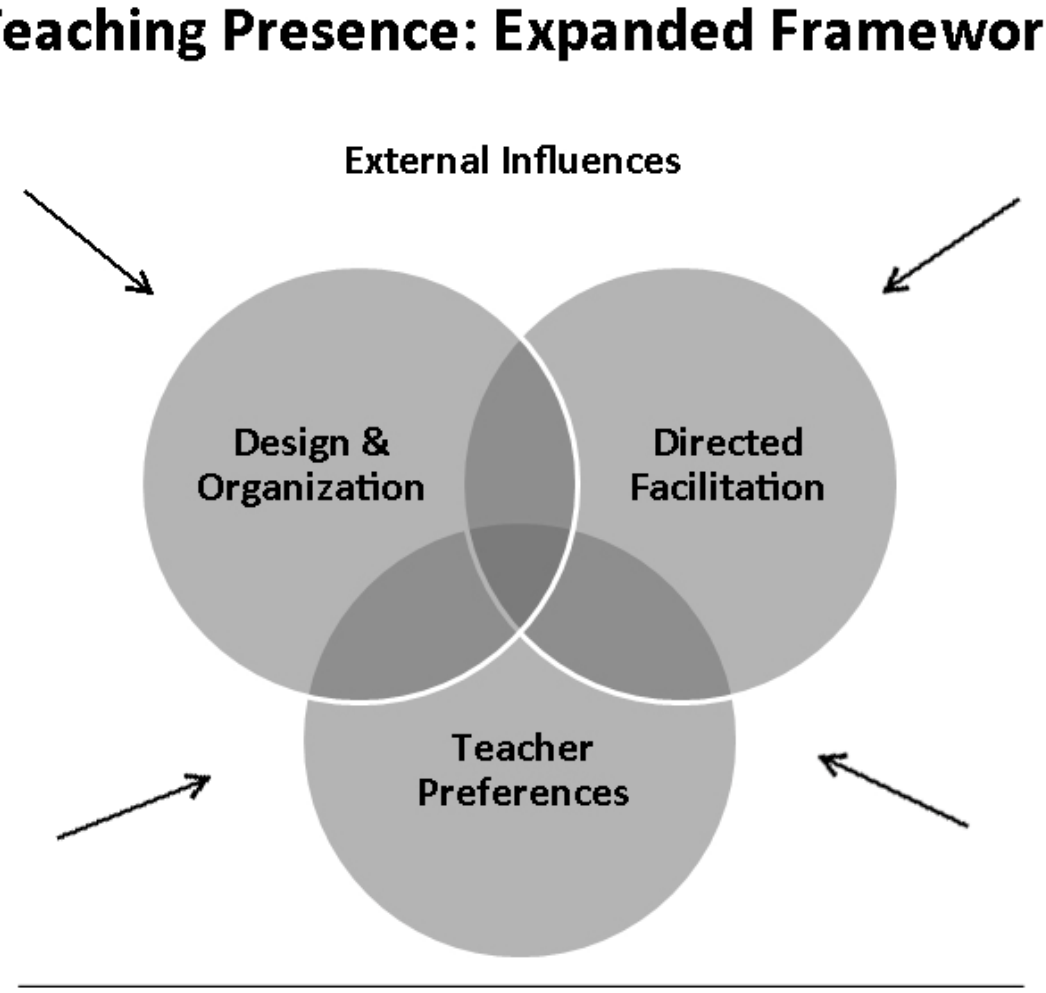

Figure 4. Reconceptualized Model of Teaching Presence

Representing online teaching presence in this fuller way is significant in that it provides a connection with the literature on teaching generally, offering online faculty as well as departments, colleges, and universities a familiar way in which to dialogue and differentiate between varying models of online teaching and learning. Moreover, extending the CoI framework to include the varied roles and inner-influences of online teachers provides researchers with a framework that is capable of subsuming all of the work of online teaching, including evidence of teaching presence which extends beyond the work visible in threaded forum discussions.

Implications for online teaching

The variation in online teaching evident in this study suggests the strategic value of seeking to differentiate between differing models of online education. The re-conceptualized framework mentioned previously would seem to support the study of varied models such as those emphasizing unique disciplinary distinctions as well as the variation evident across the preferences of online teachers. Given the momentum of the CoI framework in the literature on online education, expanding the framework to account for the variation in online teaching would not only facilitate further research into the nature of teaching presence, but it could allow for more realistic expectations in the development of online programs for faculty and administration alike.

Firstly, an expanded framework portraying a broader perspective on the nature of teaching presence not only does a more suitable job accounting for the variables evident in this study, it also provides a more realistic understanding of what online teaching may entail. Such understandings are important for faculty who are preparing to enter into the work of online teaching. These data reveal that faculty envision each of these dimensions of their work in multifaceted ways, allowing teachers the opportunity to enter into online teaching with eyes wide open. Thus, an expanded framework would seem to offer a platform for portraying online teaching in more real-to-life ways, influencing expectations about online teaching and therefore corresponding with greater satisfaction for those who take up teaching in such environments.

Secondly, Faculty in these interviews specified that organizational and/or institutional reward structures need to recognize certain inherent differences associated with online course

design and the processes of its implementation, making adequate affordances for meeting these challenges. This is especially important for departments, colleges, or universities desiring to create sustainable models of effective online education. Faculty identified their desire for such structures to encourage greater sharing, collaboration, real-time help—especially related to the uses of technology, and the recognition of work that is qualitatively different than more traditional forms of teaching.

Avenues for future research

Although a large number of potential avenues for future research are within the scope and imagination of these interviews, six areas seemed to rise to the top in my own analyses of the data. These six areas will be briefly addressed here in the order in which they emerge in the body of the dissertation:

1. The intersection of course design and team approaches to teaching (Chapter 2)
2. The problem of assessment (Chapter 3)
3. The growth of self- & co-regulated approaches in online education (Chapter 3)
4. Exploring models of effective online education which vary according to educational philosophy and/or teacher preferences (Chapter 4)
5. Implications of growing numbers of reluctant teacher adopters (Chapter 4)
6. Exploring models of effective online education which vary according to disciplinary difference and/or educational level of instruction (Chapter 5)

Chapter 2 identified the increasingly complex nature of online course design, and thus the increased tendency for team approaches to design processes. Thus, faculty spoke strongly

regarding what they perceived as a major shift in their teaching, namely, a move toward team approaches as it relates to the multifaceted nature of online course design and ongoing course improvement. For most in this study, such teams appeared to evolve over time rather than evidencing a clear strategic plan for effective implementation. Moreover, the great diversity of these team approaches suggests the value in studying how different team approaches or configurations may lead to more effective teaching presence and thus to greater successes online. In addition, these data would seem to encourage such research to consider how differences in disciplinary priorities may influence the nature of teamwork in online education.

Chapter 3 noted how recent research surrounding the CoI framework has suggested that the work of *assessment* in online education be afforded a place as another dimension of teaching presence. Although this study neither confirmed nor denied the veracity of such a claim, questions surrounding this significant feature of online education was center stage in these interviews. Faculty stipulated that the nature of assessment in online environments needs additional attention. Guaranteeing student learning is a complex endeavor, seemingly gaining additional challenges within the anonymity afforded in online education. Among several disciplines noted in this study, the priorities of testing remains a challenge, especially for those who desire to leverage the flexibilities afforded in online education. Furthermore, among those disciplines seeking to emphasize the development of the student, challenges inherent in group work online remain an ongoing frustration. Thus, work remains in adequately addressing the challenges associated with assessment online. Such challenges call for evidenced-based research examining how educators may improve the effectiveness of online assessment.

In addition, Chapter 3 revealed faculty perceptions surrounding the growing interest in or affinity towards experimentation with self- and co-regulated forms of teaching and learning. Given the pervasive nature of these forms of online education across the disciplinary categories of both Biglan's (1973) and Holland's (1973) schemata, these approaches need to be better understood. Much of the theory undergirding these approaches seems to rely on the related and growing fields of adult learning. Once again, the variation in this study would seem to indicate that these approaches represent a fruitful place for additional research. Some suggest that online educational models exploiting both collaborative and independent values in two concurrent tracks in the learning endeavor represent a place for ongoing experimentation (cf., Anderson, 2008). Finally, questions remain as to whether increased student satisfaction in such models corresponds with increased successes in achieving educational outcomes.

Data depicted in Chapter 4 evidenced significant differences among the inner-worlds of online teachers, differences influencing the nature of teaching presence and thus the effectiveness of various approaches online. It is significant that these varied approaches were all deemed exemplary despite their differences. Research to date surrounding how these variables—located in the minds of teachers and reflected in their activities—may influence a teacher's presence and thus the effectiveness of teaching and learning is lacking. Can differing educational philosophies be expressed effectively in an online environment? Are there any correlations between various educational preferences, pedagogical styles, and disciplinary differences in effective approaches online? Moreover, as noted research suggests that different teachers teaching the very same course with similar educational philosophies can demonstrate

very different presences online (Ke, 2010). Thus, how might these differing preferences, strategies, and purposes be classified for the edification of faculty seeking to teach online?

In addition, the data connected with Chapter 4 and revealing the inner-worlds of online teachers suggest another potential area for ongoing research. Returning to Terry Anderson's (2008) claim that one of the qualities of great online teachers, especially during these early years of rapid proliferation and adoption of online learning, is "resilience" or a kind of "innovativeness … typical of all pioneers" (360), questions remain as to whether certain kinds of educators are better suited to teach online during these initial years of development. These interviews suggest that some teachers do not thrive in their online teaching, and that the push for growing numbers of reluctant adopters may have serious consequences in the lives of teachers and in the sustainability of online programs. Certainly, Anderson's statement would benefit from further research into the preferences and dispositional qualities evident in the lives and teaching of online educators.

Finally, the data in Chapter 5 argue that further study is warranted related to how different disciplines and even various educational levels are making use of new ICT, the Web and online education. In addition, they suggest attention to how these adaptations may be influencing the disciplines themselves, and especially how they may be affecting the ways in which teachers teach their subjects. For example, is there evidence that specific disciplines are beginning to take on greater visual qualities or change in significant ways as a result of the influences of these media? The expressed sentiments of several faculty in these interviews would encourage commitments to compiling historical documentation across various

disciplines, documentation which could give evidence to how these rapid changes are shaping the ways teachers must approach their subjects. Such studies might also seek to stipulate both potential and realized gains and losses associated with these changes.

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Open-Ended Interview Protocol:

Seek permission to explore faculty's online course prior to interview

Introduction:

- greet faculty participant, introduce researcher
- briefly describe study
- give informed consent; answer questions; get signed form
- fill out descriptive statistical info
- begin recording

Throughout this interview, references to "teaching online" or "the work of teaching online" are intended to communicate the full range of work you do related to your online course(s). This includes all of your course preparations before, during, and after the time dedicated for your course as well as its implementation.

Interview Questions:

1. Describe the development (or evolution) of your course. How did your course get to where it is today?
2. What do you believe are the strengths of your course? What do students like best?
3. What are the biggest challenges you face in your work of teaching online?
4. How would you describe your relationship with the students in your class?
    - What do you expect of the students who take your class? – and what do you expect from yourself?
5. How have the technologies you use online influenced your approach to teaching?
6. Has the teaching of your online course changed over time? If yes, how? - and why?
7. How would you describe the nature and substance of your communications in your online course?
8. How would you compare your work of teaching online with teaching in face-to-face classrooms?
9. Do you assess the effectiveness of your work of teaching online? If so, how?
10. Do you find the work that you do in online teaching satisfying? Why or why not?
11. Are there resources that have helped you improve your work of teaching online? Explain.
12. Is there anything else that has come to mind during our conversation that you would like to share with me ***about your work of teaching online***?

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