

## Introduction to the June 2025 Issue of Online Learning

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This issue of *Online Learning* presents a robust collection of fifteen articles that reflect current themes in online education, including leadership perspectives, innovative instructional design, faculty development, and the learning experiences of diverse student populations. The studies span K–12, undergraduate, and graduate settings, offering both national and international perspectives on pressing challenges and solutions in online learning.

### Administrative Perspectives

"Academic Leadership Perceptions of Online Program Quality and Course Design" by Amanda Goetzke (Abilene Christian University) and Andrew Lumpe (Relay Graduate School of Education) examines how institutional leaders perceive the quality and design of online programs. Their quantitative study finds that leadership support, quality assurance practices, and faculty development are key to program success.

### EADTU Conference Special Issue

"Integrity and Motivation in Remote Assessment" by Henrietta Carbonel, Angelo Belardi, and Jean-Michel Jullien (UniDistance Suisse, Switzerland) and Jen Ross (University of Edinburgh, UK) explores how students and instructors navigated integrity and motivation challenges during the shift to remote assessment. Their qualitative findings highlight the role of ethical assessment design, transparency, and institutional policies in maintaining engagement.

### Faculty, Professional Development, and Online Teaching

"Examining Faculty Perceptions of Distance Course Quality Review Feedback" by Kristy Plander, PhD, and Renee Hathaway, PhD (Bryan College of Health Sciences), and Deb Maeder, EdD (Western Governors University) examines how faculty experience and respond to quality review processes. Findings show that constructive, actionable feedback fosters meaningful course improvements and instructor growth.

"It's a Situationship: How Online Contingent Faculty Talk About Their Needed Support" by Yvonne Earnshaw (Kennesaw State University) and Mary Ann Bodine Al-Sharif (University of Alabama at Birmingham) presents a qualitative analysis of the support needs of contingent online faculty. The research underscores the importance of equitable access to resources, recognition, and clear communication.

"An Exploration of Dynamic Decision-Making That Supports the Design of Authentic Learning Experiences in Online Environments" by Jill E. Stefaniak and Fan Yang (University of Georgia) and Meimei Xu (University of Houston) investigates how instructional designers make decisions when creating authentic online learning environments. The study reveals that iterative, flexible, and collaborative approaches are central to effective design.

## **Instructional Support of Online Student Interactions**

"Design of Interactive Spaces for Promoting Parental Involvement: Strategies Used by EFL Teachers" by Dongni Guo, Roberto L. M. Ramos, Yingru Zhao, and Qi Sun (University at Albany) examines how EFL teachers use digital spaces to engage parents. Their findings point to the value of visual tools, interactive platforms, and regular communication in enhancing parental involvement.

"Enhancing Online Mathematics Learning: The Cohesive Work of an Instructional Platform and an Instructional Team" by Sarah Hoffman, Madeyo Darnell, and Patricia Moreira (University of Arizona) used a descriptive-correlational research design to explore this connection in the context of an online asynchronous math course across eight semesters. Results showed improved student participation and performance in their online asynchronous course.

"We're All Squares on a Screen": Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Opportunities and Limitations of Online Intergroup Dialogue" by Grant R. Jackson (Texas Tech University), Sarah M. Schiffecker (Texas Tech University), and Oleksandra Poquet (Technical University of Munich) explores student experiences in online intergroup dialogues. Results highlight gains in reflective thinking alongside challenges in building deep interpersonal connections.

## **Qualitative Perspectives**

"A Qualitative Study of Kindergarten Through Grade 6 Tutors' Experiences Implementing Synchronous, One-On-One Online Tutoring as Literacy Intervention" by Valarie Algee (American College of Education) explores the experiences of tutors delivering online literacy support. Tutors emphasize the importance of building rapport, adapting instructional strategies, and ensuring technological ease.

## **Students, Community, and Online Learning**

In "Using an Online Engagement Framework to Redesign the Learning Environment for Higher Education Students: A Design Experiment Approach" by Melissa Fanshawe, Alice Brown, and Petrea Redmond (University of Southern Queensland) describe the redesign of two online Initial Teacher Education courses, using the Online Engagement Framework (OEF) for higher education. Results demonstrated that students highly valued the cognitive, behavioural, and emotional elements of their redesigned online courses.

"Offline versus Remote Teaching: Exploring Cultural Minority Student and Teacher Perceptions of Inclusive Learning Environments in Higher Education" by Rinotha Senathirajah, Avans University of Applied Sciences, Breda, the Netherlands and Jana Vietze and Marieke Meeuwisse (Erasmus University Rotterdam) investigated how cultural minority students and teachers perceived changes in the inclusiveness of their HE learning environment during the transition from offline to remote teaching. Thematic analysis revealed four teaching principles that contributed to the perceived inclusiveness in both the offline and remote learning environment.

In "New Normal in Higher Education for the Post-COVID-19 World: Reimagining and Reexamining Factors for Student Success in Online Learning" by Hungwei Tseng and

Chris Inman (Jacksonville State University) online survey data were collected from 182 undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in at least one fully online course. Findings indicated that a student's online learning experience was a critical factor in determining the students' attitudes when facing future online courses that were diverse and required autonomy.

In "Gamifying English Proficiency: A Needs Analysis for EFL Student Course Design" by Yazid Basthomi, Francisca Maria Ivone M. Kharis and Joko Slamet (Universitas Negeri Malang, Indonesia) the study applied a cross-sectional survey methodology to comprehensively gather data on the goals, preferences, and challenges faced by the EFL students across various academic levels. The findings reveal valuable insights into learner motivations, preferred learning methods, and the potential impact of gamification on language acquisition.

"Impact of Laboratory Exercises on the Achievement of Undergraduate Learning Outcomes in Online STEM General Education Courses Among Working Adult and Returning Students by Kristen A. Millera, Shelli N. Carterb, and Joseph Marrac (American Public University System) explored identical science classes, with or without an online laboratory to determine gains in content mastery. Results indicated astronomy and physics students in online laboratory courses showed significant gains in mastery of learning outcomes, while biology students in online courses showed more mixed results.

Finally, "Impact of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy on Black Learners Enrolled in Online Undergraduate Mathematics Classes by Alexandra Schindel and Lauren Hennings (University at Buffalo), investigated Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP) as a way to improve the experience of Black learners in mathematics classrooms. Results show that as a result of the use of culturally relevant problems as part of the online course, specifically in weekly discussion boards and written reflection assignments, participants showed improved engagement, confidence, and motivation towards learning mathematics.

We thank the authors, reviewers, and the OLJ editorial team for their contributions to this issue. Together, these articles offer valuable insights into the practice, innovation, and scholarship of online learning today.