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Are You Ready? Assessing the Impact of Online Professional Development on Health Professions Educators' Readiness and Knowledge for Online and Blended Teaching

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Are You Ready? Assessing the Impact of Online Professional Development on Health Professions Educators' Readiness and Knowledge for Online and Blended Teaching

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<https://doi.org/10.32873/unmc.dc.ihsej.0042><https://digitalcommons.unmc.edu/ihsej/>Tanya Custer¹

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic forced over 20 million college students and faculty to abruptly transition from face-to-face learning to remote course delivery, representing a paradigm shift in higher education. While many academic health science centers had resources and infrastructure to support this transition, faculty soon discovered that quality online teaching requires more than simply replicating the face-to-face classroom. An opportunity exists to pause and reflect not only on best practices related to course delivery methods but also on how to effectively prepare health professions educators to teach within an online or blended educational environment. A mixed model of online and blended courses may be the most beneficial in maximizing the benefits for health professions education. To better understand the educational effects of the pandemic and to ensure the implementation of best practices, it is essential to gain a deeper understanding of the successes, challenges, and barriers associated with the integration of online and blended learning in health professions education. Assessment of faculty readiness is the first step in this process. Faculty readiness to teach can be defined as the state of faculty preparedness to teach in an online or blended learning environment. In this session, we will explore the outcomes of a mixed methods study examining the impact of an online professional development course designed to instruct health professions educators in delivering instruction within a blended or online learning environment. The study investigated faculty health professions educators' readiness to teach in an online or blended learning environment, as measured by the pre-post Faculty Readiness to Teach Online (FRTTO) instrument and a pre-post knowledge test. Focus groups were conducted to understand better faculty perceptions of utilizing the online professional development course to improve readiness to teach and enhance teaching in an online or blended environment.

¹University of Nebraska Medical Center

Corresponding Author: Tanya Custer

Email: tcuster@unmc.edu