

# ADVANCING ONLINE TEACHING EXPERTISE WITH THE ESSENTIALS



**Haywood Community College (HCC) is a small institution nestled in the Great Smoky Mountains of Clyde, North Carolina.** Unlike many institutions, Haywood has been in the 'online game' for well over ten years, according to Cheryl Fulghum, Distance Learning Coordinator at HCC.

"Community Colleges have to be more flexible in their delivery methods because of our type of student," she says. "Our student population is not the typical 18-22 year old students living on campus where it's easier to do face-to-face courses. We have to address a more diverse population that need courses to be more flexible in time as well as in delivery methods."

That's why over 50% of their faculty teach at least one or more online classes or feature an online supplement – a supplement such as using their learning management system (LMS) as a repository for course evaluations or as a tool to connect with the students asynchronously.

"With online teaching," Cheryl says, "there are two ways to train faculty. First is the mechanics of the learning platform and the second is in course design."

## Creating the best possible online teaching experience

Cheryl tells us she designed HCC's online training program with a focus on the mechanics of the learning platform and "a little bit of pedagogy." But, she explained, that even if faculty are super Moodle users (the LMS they use), it doesn't mean that will translate well to their online classes.

"There are other things about teaching online that aren't instinctual, such as what it's like to be an online student and what resources can be utilized to create the best learning experience for their students," Cheryl says.

"As an accredited institution, we're required to provide faculty development specific to online teaching. Utilizing faculty development created by the Online Learning Consortium (OLC)," says Cheryl, "ensures we are providing current, industry-standard training with a sound pedagogical approach to meet federal standards."

**"The OLC program was amazing! I could not have created that environment on my own."**

**Cheryl Fulghum,  
Distance Learning Coordinator,  
Haywood Community College**





## Getting the essentials from OLC

As a longtime Institutional Member of OLC, Cheryl has been able to take advantage of the OLC Workshop Pass – an exclusive member benefit – which provides volume discount packages on workshops provided by the OLC Institute for Professional Development.

The Institute offers over 100 workshops ranging from *Exploring ePortfolios* to *Course Quality Review*. In reviewing the workshops, Cheryl decided to start with 'the basics'. In the summer of 2016, Cheryl enrolled herself and nine faculty members in the *New to Online Essentials I and II* workshops to kick-start HCC's Online Teaching Excellence Institute.

"Although most of our faculty are not new to online, they still glean much from this terrific introduction to online teaching," she says. "One of the best outcomes is the interaction between our faculty across disciplines. They share their teaching experiences, challenges, fears and successes."

## Faculty give the program high marks

In fact, Eliza Dean, HCC Instructor of Early Childhood Education, echoed the sentiment: "This workshop was an excellent introduction to the nuts and bolts of online teaching. The facilitator modeled techniques that we can use in our courses. The interaction with the facilitator and other students created a sense of community that made me feel connected to the course. I recommend this workshop 100%!"

"The feedback has been great," Cheryl says. "We are on our third cohort and have enrolled over 30 faculty to date. Our goal is to have every HCC faculty member participate in the program. As a testament to the program's success, many of our faculty have since registered to take additional OLC workshops to advance and accelerate their individual online learning initiatives."

**"An excellent introduction to the nuts and bolts of online teaching. I recommend this workshop 100%."**

**Eliza Dean,  
HCC Instructor,  
Early Childhood  
Education**



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