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# Overcoming barriers:

How to increase faculty and staff buy-in for online programs

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## Overview

The first step in overcoming resistance to teaching online is to understand the obstacles and objections.

Explore three key reasons that faculty and staff give for not wanting to make the move to online and learn about a framework that can help overcome the objections.

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"It ought to be remembered that there is nothing more difficult to take in hand, more perilous to conduct, or more uncertain in its success, than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things.

Because the innovator has for enemies all those who have done well under the old conditions, and lukewarm defenders in those who may do well under the new.

This coolness arises partly from fear of the opponents, who have the laws on their side, and partly from the incredulity of men, who do not readily believe in new things until they have had a long experience of them."

—Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*

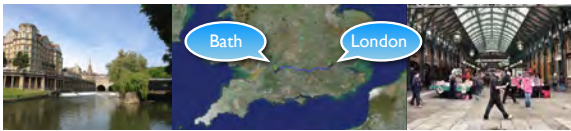
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In case you were wondering...



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Hometowns: Bath & London



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But I live in Chicago



I Work At DePaul



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By Day...

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**James Moore**

Director of Online Learning - College of Business

- 1999: Office of Distance Learning  
Webmaster
- 2002: Lifelong Learning & Suburban Campuses  
Web development manager
- 2005: ITD / IDD  
Instructional technology / instructional design  
consultant
- 2007: College of Business  
Director of Online Learning



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## By Night...



MKT595: Internet & Interactive Marketing  
11-Week MBA Course  
Taught entirely online

[condor.depaul.edu/jmoore/mkt595/](http://condor.depaul.edu/jmoore/mkt595/)



Practical Internet Marketing  
6-Week Certificate Course  
Taught both online and flipped/hybrid

[condor.depaul.edu/jmoore/pim/](http://condor.depaul.edu/jmoore/pim/)

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## Study



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Hello  
my name is

JAMES MOORE

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- Email: [jmoore@depaul.edu](mailto:jmoore@depaul.edu)
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Your current reality probably looks like something along this spectrum...

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*From*

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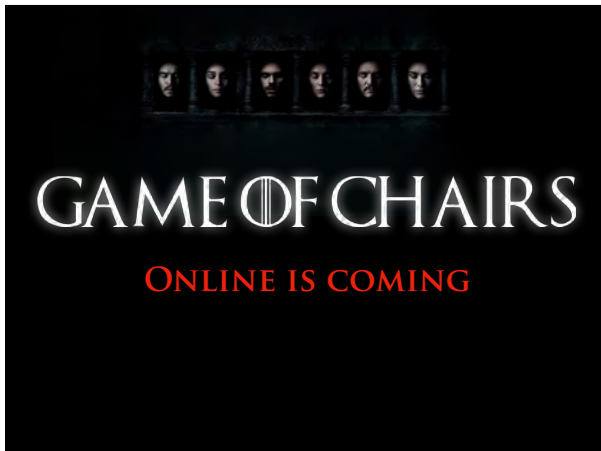
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*To*

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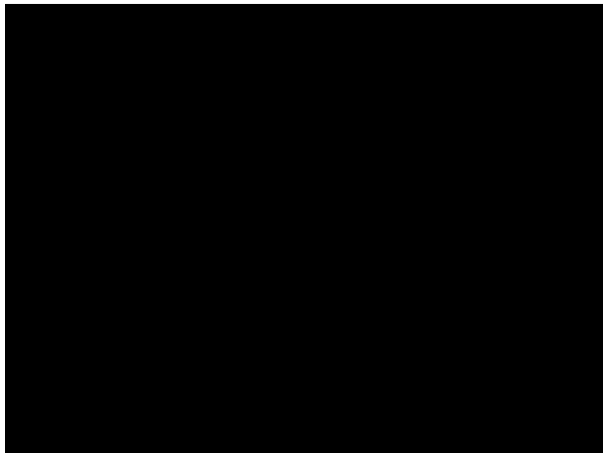
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## Defining Terms: Buy-in

- Internal commitment:
  - Defining work objectives
  - Specifying how to achieve them
  - Setting stretch targets
- Teaching online is faculty development

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## Compliance Is Not Commitment



**"You have 20 seconds to comply"**

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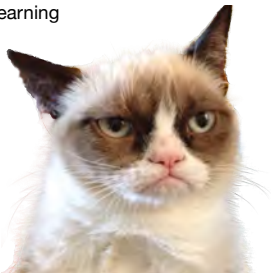
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## Reasons For Reluctance

- Skepticism towards online learning
- Workload
- Individual reasons



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Education is an evidence-based practice.  
Scientific skepticism and rigorous enquiry are core to education.

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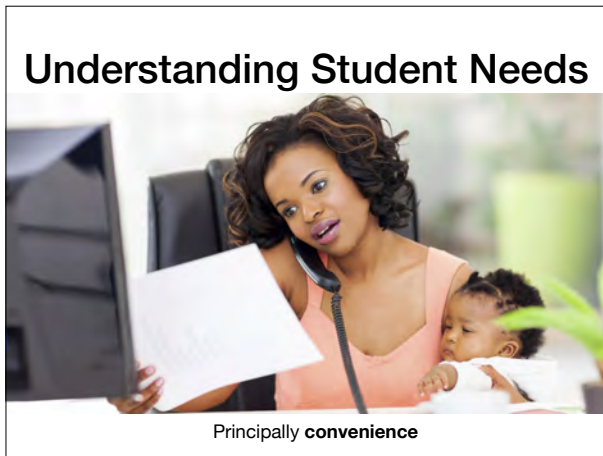
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## Understanding Student Needs

Principally **convenience**

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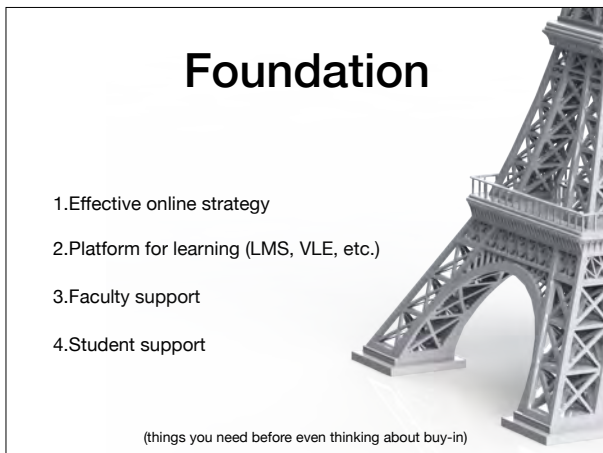
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## Foundation

1. Effective online strategy
2. Platform for learning (LMS, VLE, etc.)
3. Faculty support
4. Student support

(things you need before even thinking about buy-in)

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## Effective Online Strategy



- Reduce costs
  - Consolidate campuses/ sections
  - Working remotely
  - Reduce physical plant
  - Reduce attrition
  - Online to complete program
- Increase enrollment
  - Online to complete program (consideration)
  - Competitive advantage

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## Platform For Learning



"It just works"

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## Faculty Support



- Instructional designers
- Multimedia specialists
- Recording studio
- Quality assurance



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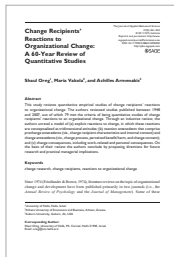
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## Management Research

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- 1948-2007
- Create a supportive and trusting culture
- “If perceived risks/costs outweigh benefits, change recipients will understandably tend to resist change”

Oreg, S., Vakola, M., & Armenakis, A. (2011). Change Recipients' Reactions to Organizational Change: A 60-Year Review of Quantitative Studies. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 47(4), 461.

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1. State goals plainly
  - Role of CFO (loss aversion)
2. Listen (survey)
3. Share accomplishments
4. Find advocates

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## State Goals Clearly

- There is a clear and current problem
- Strategic use of online will fix
- There will be costs & adjustment
- There will be milestones (& review)




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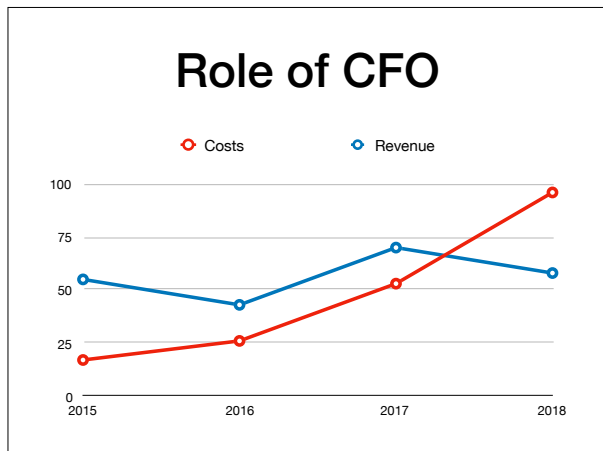
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## Listen

- Survey students, faculty, & staff
- Schedule online open houses
- Solicit feedback



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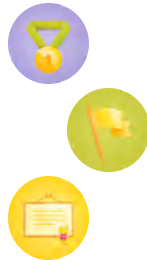
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## Share Accomplishments

- Publish student success stories (and their struggles)
- Online teaching awards
- Online design awards
- Lunch & learn
- Conference presentations
- Highlight in internal communication



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## Find Advocates

- Former adversaries are the best advocates
- Look for problems, and ways they can be fixed
- Students and employers can be advocates too



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## Reward Structure

- Time to develop online courses
- Don't cancel courses in development
- Frequent offerings
- Contract (with additional student bonus)
- Recognition of ownership (faculty & ID)
- Tools for teaching: Equipment & training



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## Support Program

1. Mentor
2. Embed instructional design
3. Extend helpdesk
4. Faculty development



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## Mentor

- Faculty will be more responsive to advice from others who walked the same route
- Again, online is faculty development - It is preparing your faculty to teach in new (better) ways to adapt to a changing environment



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## Embed Instructional Design

- ID's office within department
  - Avoid burnout though:
    - Limit hours / two locations
- Avoid the “us & them”
- Team structure



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## Extend Helpdesk

- Online students are looking for convenience, and may be studying at “unsocial” hours
- Online students will contact the most convenient person they know to be available - you don't want this to be only your faculty
- Online faculty will be working at “unsocial” hours, and will need technical support
- Helpdesk and support staff can work remotely



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## Faculty Development

- The landscape is changing, and the future is uncertain
- Online is faculty development
- Prepare faculty to adapt to this new environment (so they don't get left behind)
- Specialized training
- Certification (Quality Matters)



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# Conclusion

- Faculty and staff buy-in for online programs is possible
- Two core requirement:
  - Supportive and trusting culture
  - Benefits outweigh perceived risks/costs
- Framework: Communicate, reward structure, support program

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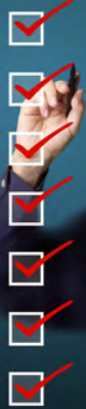
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## Checklist



- ☐ Baseline infrastructure
- ☐ Supportive and trusting culture
- ☐ Communicate
- ☐ Reward structure
- ☐ Support program

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## Questions?



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