

OLTD 503 - REFLECTION 1

Learning Outcome - Become familiar with common terms, definitions and elements related to online environments

I have chosen one piece of evidence, which was created in February of 2015, to demonstrate support for the above learning outcome from the course OLTD 503 - Online Communication. This evidence piece is a presentation that was created using the free version of the online tool, Prezi. This was an individual activity, and the goal of this assignment was to demonstrate my learning in OLTD 503, including terms, definitions, and elements related to online environments.

This assignment had a bit of a learning curve, since I chose to use Prezi, a 'new-to-me-online tool, to document my learning. I found that Prezi worked well for this activity, and I also found the tool quite easy to use, and quite easy to share. The presentation was organized around the 5 student-led sessions from the course. All of the sessions contained elements, terms, and definitions related to online environments. In my Prezi, each session was summarized to allow for clarity and to focus on the topics of online tools for communication, the benefits and problems of online communities, the issue of information overload, and supporting and building communities. The assignment also required that I reflect upon my learning, so there are several 'reflection' slides included in the presentation.

As part of this reflection here, I need to ask myself an important question. How could what I experienced while becoming familiar with common terms, definitions and elements related to online environments, help me in my job now, to help me further develop my existing courses, and to help me create new courses that are engaging, structured well, and supportive? To answer this question, I am able to say that this evidence piece has provided me with several very beneficial products. First of all, I learned about many online tools thanks to my cohort group, under the guidance of the Session 1 team, who compiled a very useful list of technology tools. Secondly, I actually learned how to use one of these tools, well enough to suggest it as a presentation tool in my online courses. In addition, I learned about the benefits and problems of online learning communities. I now feel more comfortable including support for an online community, within individual courses and within our DL school, so that we can all take advantage of the connection between thriving online communities and improved student learning. Finally, in this course and this presentation, I reflected on how important it is to realize that being a digital native is not synonymous with being able to maneuver easily through an online course, or manage new information systems. This realization impacts how I structure my online courses, to support my students and enrich their learning experiences.