

Emergency LMS Training During COVID-19 at an African University of Technology

Leanri van Heerden

Central University of Technology, Free State, Bloemfontein, South Africa

[https://doi.org/10.35609/gcbssproceeding.2020.11\(113\)](https://doi.org/10.35609/gcbssproceeding.2020.11(113))

ABSTRACT

After the #FeesMustFall strikes that have been haunting South African universities since 2015, Instructional Designers felt pretty confident that they can drive their institutions through any dilemma. Along came the 2020 COVID-19 epidemic and they realised they have been playing in the kiddie pool all along. On 23 March 2020, President Cyril Ramaphosa announced a national lockdown level 5 to start on 26 March 2020 (Department of Health, 2020). Three days head start for a three-week lockdown (which was eventually extended till the time of writing) was a logistical nightmare for even the most technology driven universities. All staff were sent home with only enough time to grab their office plants and laptops and no idea how they were going to move forward. The issue with staff and students all working from home is that the lecturers working at the Central University of Technology (CUT), being primarily a face-to-face delivery university, was completely unprepared for moving their traditional and blended approaches to completely online. In their study, Mogeni, Ondigi and Mufo (2020) found that most of the investigated teachers were not empowered enough to deliver instruction fully online and either needed to be retrained, receive further specialised training or be trained completely from scratch. A lack of confidence in the delivery mode of instruction will cause even the most knowledgeable subject specialist to fail in their task. At the CUT lecturers needed a way of quickly acquiring the necessary skills to deliver their content and assessments on the institution Learning Management System (LMS). The aim of this paper is to measure participant perspectives of an emergency intervention to facilitate the process of online delivery skills acquisition quickly and online. To ensure relevant results a systematic process of designing an intervention and recording participant perspectives is necessary. This extended abstract will take a look at the methods used to drive the paper, briefly discuss the results and findings, and lastly explore the implications and significance of the research for the use of higher education institutions for emergency LMS training.

Keywords: LMS training; e-Learning; Online Instruction; Instructional Design