PEDAGOGIC ORIENTATION TO COLLEGE STUDENTS IN THE DISCIPLINE AT DISTANCE: EXPERIENCE REPORT

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Graziella Batista de Moura – Universidade de Fortaleza – graziella@unifor.br

Vandalina Julião C. de Alencar – Universidade de Fortaleza – vandac@unifor.br

Higher Education

Macro Level Theories and Models

Meso Level Student Support Services

Micro Level Characteristics of Learners

Description of Ongoing Project

Innovative Experience

RESUME

This article aims to describe the experience of implementing a mentoring service to university students in a particular higher education institution in the state of Ceará. From meetings between the administrative and pedagogic managements were established three macro actions: action of pedagogic orientation, follow-up actions of teacher's activities and actions of assessment of teachers to the students.The presented actions were conducted at the Fortaleza University, in a period of 01 year (12 months). The university has seventeen the distance learning courses offered in undergraduate level (Bachelor's courses), and with an average of five thousand students per semester with thirty-five teachers (mentors and tutors). The pedagogic mentoring work has shown to be significantly positive, showing a lower dropout rate and high satisfaction rate of students who participated in these courses.

Keywords: Pedagogic Assistance,Distance Learning, Higher Education, teaching in Distance Learning.

Introduction

Currently, Online Education /Distance Learning (EAD) in the world and Brazil has shown visible growth, full of controversies and challenges [1] [2]. From these challenges we sought new references and new mediations to meet the diversity presented.

One of the great challenges of Higher Education Institutions – IES in this context is to facilitate actions by a pedagogical quality education [1].

The University of Fortaleza – UNIFOR since the beginning of this new century, is gradually developing action in the distance learning modality. The Fortaleza University began this work by proposing extension courses in EAD to IES students, with a number of 30 participants per course and is currently developing not only extension courses, both for the academic community, and for the external public, as well as expertise in the area of education distance, giving the teacher a moment of reflection and deepening of an open education, flexible and distance.

In order to establish a framework to consolidate the management of programs and activities organized for Distance Learning courses at UNIFOR, together with the Center for Distance Learning -NEAD has proposed the creation of a management plan, integrating agents in the area of technology and education in a collaborative and interactive perspective.

UNIFOR strategic planning entails changes in curriculum and teaching in undergraduate, graduate and extension, and here highlights three central guidelines for such an organization: the integration of knowledge as a pedagogical principle of organization theoretical development of practical sciences; research and methodological principle of curriculum development and significant learning, the paradigm of learning approach that break with the contents and non-reflective learning. The guidelines directs planning strategic actions, also subsidizes disciplines development curriculum of UNIFOR courses.

Such assumptions, also guides the management of EaD programs, and are a reaffirmation of the benchmarks of quality for distance disciplines/courses [3] .

> The techniques, technologies and methods of distance learning education have been incorporated by leading universities of the world. At a near future it indicates a strong tendency of growth for combined education - which harmonizes presence and distance, balancing them according to the nature of the course and students needs. In other words, at some time, we will use this distinction no longer so common today in our vocabulary: talk education, knowing that it embodies learning activities and classroom activities distance learning.

At the undergraduate level the UNIFOR faculty, consists mostly of prominent professionals who work in their specific areas (dentists, lawyers, economists, and etc.), but not all were prepared for teaching online classes. Most of them have Master's or doctoral degree,but little was discussed about the functions of online educational aspects.

In accordance [4], it is clear today that the concern with the quality of the results of higher education, especially in the undergraduate, points out to the importance of preparation of teachers, both in the specific area and in the educational area.

This article aims to describe the experience of implementing a mentoring service - SOP to university students of a private Ceará university.

The initiative came from administrative and teaching at the Distance Learning Education Center – Fortaleza University NEAD (UNIFOR), who decided to deploy the service to receive mentoring, monitoring and rescue the enrolled undergraduate Distance Learning, according to [4], one of EaD characteristics, the teacher's is no longer alone with the student, there is a team that includes author, mentor, monitor, graphic artist, educators etc. Consequently, opening new employment opportunities at IES.

In planning meetings promoted between the administrative and teaching faculty with pedagogical advisers were established three macroactions mentoring evaluation, follow-up actions of teacher's activities and actions of evaluation of teachers towards students. The monitoring results were discussed in biweekly meetings of the coordination with the advisers, aimed at the socialization of the actions undertaken and a report by the end of each semester.

The actions apresented were conducted at the Fortaleza University - UNIFOR in Fortaleza, in the period of 01 year (12 months) following the

discipline of Institutions of Public and Private Law, a required course belonging to the structure of the curriculum course of Business Administration and optional for Law course. With total of sixty students, a teacher mentor and a tutor. The university has offered distance seventeen disciplines in undergraduate classroom (bachelor's), with an average of five thousand students per semester with thirty-five teachers (mentors and tutors).

1- Pedagogic Orientations Actions

In tutoring actions we tried to answer the following question: How can we improve student's participation in on-line classes/ distance learning? In theory, we reached a few proposal actions: welcoming students, monitoring student's activities and evaluating of student's in relation to discipline.

1.1- Host to Students

When starting a course in EaD, the student needs special attention in order to adapt smoothly. Welcoming the students at the beginning of the course was done through pedagogic actions from the teaching staff for an initial student guidance.

Through information contained in Virtual Learning Environment - AVA pedagogical staff identified students with low access and participation in five initials. With this information, we started contact with the student by phone or virtually.

At the first was detected the first difficulties, such as specific questions on technical issues of environment and schedule of activities. At that time a screening was done where the students with greatest difficulties were asked to arrange meetings with teaching staff to be able to evaluate them and propose actions to minimize complexities.

After this, the teacher of the discipline was informed of the actions taken through to keep the team informed about the student's educational development.

1.2 - Monitoring of student activities

The UNIFOR offers classrooms available to students to attend individual or group in order to support the pedagogical sphere. This monitoring is done by pedagogical staff and the teachers involved in teaching process and student learning. At the time of service, the teaching staff performs individual work taking into account participation in the activities and communication with their teachers. If it is necessary, is prepared a study plan that fits the times and characteristics of students.

By observing the non-participation of students in the discipline, we began monitoring in three phases:

Phase 1ª: meeting with teachers to analyze individual non-participation cases. Gathering up details students situations, checking why these absences. Many times the student tells the teacher the reasons for not participating.

Phase 2ª: aiming contact with the student guides and motivates their participation. Once a detail information is gathered the teachers can, approaches the student to hear and guide the student. If necessary, guidelines scheduling occurs where the student conducts classroom activities in the LMS under the supervision of members of teaching staff.

Phase 3ª: A virtual monitoring of students performance. This monitoring is continuous until the end of the course, with development of reports where the teacher is informed of the work of pedagogical staff so that they have sufficient allowances for the final evaluation.

1.3 - Assessment of students in relation to discipline

The students answered an online questionnaire evaluating the course, also envisaged that the pedagogical activity developed during the semester. Through the following questions:

- Question 1: Did you use, as a communication channel, the tutoring service?
- Question 2: What is your overall satisfaction rate regarding the service offered by the virtual tutoring service?
- Question 3: What is your overall satisfaction rate regarding the service offered by face tutoring service?

From the above overall evaluation, the population of 60 students, where 25 (41.6%) responded, we obtained the following results:

	20- Yes (80%)
Question 1	5 – No (20%)
	18- Satisfied (72%)
Question 2	5 – Indifferent (20%)
	2 - Dissatisfied (8%)
	20- Satisfied (80%)
	4 – Indifferent (16%)
Pergunta 3	1 - Dissatisfied (4%)

Table 1. Survey Responses

2 - Following-up of teacher's activities aimed at students

2.1 - Planning

The monitoring of teaching aimed at students planning permeates the activities to be undertaken during the semester. Calendars, content, evaluation activities and meetings were planned taking into account the profile of students enrolled. At this point pedagogical actions were discussed and teaching methods were defined for the following semester.

2.2 - Pedagogical Encounters

The educational meetings occurred periodically with the team's mentoring and faculty with the overall objective of promoting the integration of teaching practices and their impact on student's learning. The rationale for conducting these actions is the fact that the teacher must be ready and motivated to convey students and host security, as well learn from the interaction moments that EaD provides.

These meetings was designed to report teacher experiences , aiming through the experience of each one, bring out moments of reflection on the teaching posture. In a second step, teachers were students of a distance course, which these were close to reality.

2.2.1 - 01 Educational Meeting

The first meeting was important for the welcoming of new teachers, and for integrating educational activities, presentations of research work carried out by teachers presented external scientific meetings and application of a questionnaire to evaluate satisfaction and perspectives.

At this meeting, teachers were placed in a distance training which lasted 03 weeks, where issues were discussed such as planning and teaching in EaD and pedagogical tutorials.

2.2.2 - 02 Educational Meeting

This meeting is held for educational debates, role plays followed by discussions in order to make the teacher think through experienced situations during the course. Researcher's lectures in the field of distance education were followed by a discussion and delivery of survey results conducted in the previous meeting.

After completion of all activities held in the meeting the teachers through experience report, evaluated qualitatively the activities throughout the process. The result was very positive because the integration of information exchange has enriched the knowledge of everyone. In response, through a questionnaire, several teachers reported that they felt valued by the University and motivated to seek different methods to share their knowledge with students.

2.3 - Management of teacher's activities

It was concluded that the teaching management activities is important in the sense that we can anticipate situations and thus anticipate steps to avoid or minimize future discomforts.

Management activities used:

- Observation and control of responses to questions from students and Interventions content in asynchronous tools;

- Supervision of teacher evaluation activities;

- Monitoring of the teachers in person meetings;

- Analysis of students' academic performance.

3 – Actions of evaluation of teachers

It is suggested [5] a teaching program parallel to teaching practice must be performed by teaching staff to monitor the teachers early university work, it may be through monitoring activities and promoting the dissemination experiences from the raised needs.

To maintain quality it is necessary a systematic teachers evaluation of professionalism, skills and abilities. Evaluation is a key tool for implementing actions to improve the teaching-learning process.

This evaluation is essentially a qualitative process and with the objective of the professional performance of teachers per share to reflect on their practice.

This methodology used evaluated teacher's performance the implementation was on-line questionnaire which students's opinions were collected [6]. After the collection an analysis of the responses was presented for group discussion in order to give teachers an opportunity to the time of construction and a detailed interpretation of time their work.

This moment is always very enriching, because through student responses (the online survey reached 90.6% satisfaction) the teacher felt confident for one more successful semester and Educational Guidance Service - SOP from this research is been develop a monthly on-line monitoring , thereby having a faster feedback to students and teachers.

We understand that this is an ongoing effort as we aim to transform the extent that teachers understand the process, it is then the moment where transformation begins.

Concluding Remarks

The actions of the tutoring service were based on a planning built with the administrative and pedagogical. All the actions described in this report were carried out, and although they have not achieved a higher percentage of participation, we believe that continuous work will contribute to the creation of a

cultural organization that values both teaching and support a work-oriented support to students.

The participation of the student's tutoring in the service to provides a greater integration with the university creating trust where students understand that distance learning does not mean you are alone.

It is observed a culture change among teachers and the importance of their work have, after two meetings the teachers have come to acknowledge the support received NEAD and are always seeking more information about their own work.

From this perspective, continuation of this work will be teaching paramount importance to the quality of teaching, learning and relationships built in the distance learning discipline.

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