

5-2015

Developing a Change-Process Blueprint: A Case Study of Online and Hybrid Courses at a Liberal Arts Institution

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DEVELOPING A CHANGE-PROCESS BLUEPRINT:
A CASE STUDY OF ONLINE AND HYBRID COURSES
AT A LIBERAL ARTS INSTITUTION

A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

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May 2015

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Title: Developing a Change-Process Blueprint: A Case Study of Online and Hybrid Courses at a Liberal Arts Institution

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The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of the role online education may play in the future of small, residential, liberal arts institutions and what change-related steps a liberal arts institution might take in order to offer online and hybrid courses. Online education continues to grow across the many institutions of higher education, however, its adoption at liberal arts colleges has been slow to progress. Despite their small size and the small overall total of college students enrolled, liberal arts institutions provide a unique educational opportunity and have historically shown an ability to evolve as times and societal needs change.

This case study examined a small, residential liberal arts institution that has incorporated online and hybrid course in order to examine the change process that led to the successful implementation of courses. Published higher education change models and frameworks on planned and emergent change guided the analysis of the components leading a residential liberal arts institution to successfully implementation of online courses or coursework.

The data presented is structured around four major themes from the analysis of the data collected through interviews. The four themes include the role of campus culture; motivations for faculty, administrators, and students; the process of change in a liberal arts institution community; and, the alignment of online and hybrid offerings with the institutional mission and goals. In conclusion, suggestions from the results of this study are provided for other institutions considering online and hybrid courses.