

Rebecca Brown

My experience since 2000 as an online instructor has convinced me that online instruction and on-campus instruction are not that different. Certainly the goal is the same for both kinds of instruction, we have the student, we have a body of instruction out here and our task is to bring that body of information into the student's mental and behavioral repertory so that it can be useful. When you start to prepare a class there are similarities to find the best materials that you can to present the information that you want to present. It's on the first day of class that I see more differences start to emerge than what I actually do as an online instructor than what I did as an on-campus instructor. I see my role as the website is already up and all the information is there for the students to use; so on the first day of class my role switches to being more of a facilitator of the whole process than as a presenter of that instruction and I facilitate the course materials according to the course because you need to help the students really process the information so that it becomes theirs. I facilitate their pace through the course and that requires contacting students who aren't doing something that you expect them to do when they do it. I think that effective learning takes place online the same way that it takes place on-campus through the interaction of the student and the instructor as they address the learning material.