

## RESEARCH ABSTRACTS

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***Army Distance Learning: Potential for Reducing Shortages in Army Enlisted Occupations. Shanley, Michael G.; Leonard, Henry A.; Winkler, John D.***

The potential of distance learning (DL) to expedite the U.S. Army's efforts to redress personnel shortages in Army enlisted occupations was studied by evaluating how DL-based training strategies might affect skill shortages in the following occupations: helicopter repairer; electronic switching system operator; microwave systems operator/maintainer; and signal support systems specialist. The criteria used to assess the effectiveness of DL-based training strategies were changes in shortages and changes in costs per shortage filled. The study established that, with proper support and monitoring, DL could make basic noncommissioned officer course and advanced noncommissioned officer training possible earlier in the select-train-promote sequence. DL could begin before scheduled residence training courses are available, be taken in small pieces on a "continuous" basis, and occur at trainees' home station. Furthermore, modularized DL courses could allow "testing out" of already mastered material and enhance the type of self-

development training that can accelerate the institutional training process. The study also indicated that using DL in the contexts identified could significantly lower the marginal cost of reducing skill shortages. (Information on measuring the effects of DL-based and non-DL-based strategies on shortages and the length of reclassification courses under DL is appended. Thirty tables/figures are included. Contains 19 references.) 2001. 106pp. ED453393

***Effect of Instructional Delivery Method on Student Achievement in a Master's of Business Administration Course at the Wayne Huizenga School of Business and Entrepreneurship. Moorhouse, Dian R.***

The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of instructional delivery method on student achievement by examining the application of two different delivery methods to separate groups of students enrolled in different sections of the same Master's in Business Administration course at Nova Southeastern University, Florida. For each section, instructor, text, assignments, and examination were

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identical. One group of 20 students received traditional, face-to-face instruction in a classroom setting, with classes delivered in a week-end format. The other group of 15 students received electronically mediated instruction, with instruction delivered online and discussion transpiring between student and instructor via e-mail and online discussion group. Student performance was operationally defined as the score on a midterm examination. Findings reveal that there was no statistically significant difference in the mean test scores for the two groups. (Contains 18 references.) 2001. 20pp. ED453728

***Fall Term 1999 Nova Southeastern University Students Respond to a Broad-Based Satisfaction Survey: A Comparison of Campus-Based Students and Distance Education Students.***  
**MacFarland, Thomas W.**

This study used data originally gained from a survey in 1999 to study student satisfaction at Nova Southeastern University, Florida. Survey findings were reported elsewhere. More than 2,300 students responded to the survey. The perspectives of campus-based students were compared with those of students participating in distance education. Survey results indicate that students generally had positive opinions about the university and its many services, but there were a few areas where levels of satisfaction were significantly different. Areas of concern were the relatively lower perception of academic reputation by distance education students and the reported frequency and levels of use of the university's libraries and library services by distance education students. There was a disparity in the use of technology-based media in courses, with campus-based students indicating a greater level of use of contemporary computer-based media such as electronic mail and the World Wide Web. Campus-based students were better satisfied with issues related to training, adequacy of computing resources, technology-based access to information, instructional support, and general

issues related to the infusion of information technology into the curricula. However, campus-based students indicated a lower level of satisfaction than distance education students about the overall quality of the academic program. (Contains 17 tables and 17 references.) 2001. 69pp. ED453732

***Online Tutoring: Networking Preservice Teachers and K-12 Students.***  
**Bryde, Beverly R.**

This study compared the attitudes of preservice teachers toward using online tutoring versus face-to-face tutoring with K-12 students. California Lutheran University (CLU) developed a service learning, tutoring project within the teacher preparation foundations of education course in the summer of 2000. The CLU school of education purchased an Internet video-conferencing system, Clearphone, to provide student teachers with the capability to connect with their K-12 magnet schools in real time. Clearphone partnered with Education-talk.com, a Web-based educational service, to develop the concept of online tutoring for K-12 students. A group of 16 preservice teachers participated in the service learning project, with 6 using online and face-to-face tutoring, 6 using online tutoring only, and 4 using face-to-face only. All 16 participants completed pre- and post- intervention surveys on their attitudes toward online and face-to-face tutoring. Data analysis indicated that there were no significant differences among the groups regarding attitudes and feelings of success. Participants were comfortable with both types of tutoring. Comfort levels and attitudes toward both types of tutoring increased after participation in the project. Strong relationships were established through the online tutoring. (Contains 13 references.) 2001. 15pp. ED453205

***Building a Revolutionary Way of Learning: A Study of a Competency-***

***Based Online Environment. Jiang, Mingming; Shrader, Vincent.***

This study investigated factors that might be related to successful academic progress and students' satisfaction with a competency-based graduate program in an online environment. It offers an in-depth look into the structure and operations of a Master of Arts Program in Learning and Technology at Western Governor's University, Utah. At the time of the study, the number of students actively engaged in e-mail correspondence with their mentors and in working on the degree was 80. All were teachers at various levels, managers of training, and technology facilitators; all held bachelor's degrees. Results of the e-mail survey indicate that the students' overall satisfaction is high. Students were most satisfied with the flexibility of time and place provided by an online degree program and the academic services provided by the mentor. The area in which students felt the need for examination and improvement was demonstrating competencies through domain assessments. Among the variables selected for the study, only "contacts with a mentor" had a significant relationship with students' satisfaction. "Student-mentor interaction" was a strong predictor for students' academic progress. Courses and hours for studies were significantly correlated with academic progress but not powerful enough to predict the variance of the academic progress. Pre-assessment did not have any significant correlation with academic progress. The survey questions are appended. (Contains 3 tables and 17 references.) 2001. 24pp. ED452276

***King John's Christmas: Developing Leadership Communities On-Line. Crawford, Megan.***

This paper examines how online communities provide space for educational leaders to reflect on and share the affective side of lead-

ership, discussing implications of online communities in leadership and relating it to Wenger's concept of a community of practice. Using research conducted at the United Kingdom's Open University, the paper argues for the use of online conferences as part of headteacher support and development. It examines influencing factors in such an online conference facility, the role of group interaction and participation, and the role of moderators in leadership discussions. The University's Leadership Programme for Serving Headteachers included an information communication technology component. Participants had access to a dedicated Website and conference facility. The study examined use of and attitudes toward online conferencing. Data collection involved technical records generated by the University's servers, telephone surveys, online surveys, and an online conference. Respondents appreciated the ability to maintain contact with other course participants. Headteachers liked being able to conference at their convenience with people who experienced similar issues. They considered the conferencing easy to use and useful. Most respondents logged onto the site weekly (generally from home in the evening). The conference moderator helped facilitate personal learning. (Contains 12 references.) 2001. 19pp. ED453213

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