

From: Jerz, Richard J <richard-jerz@uiowa.edu>
Subject: Re: Online courses and contact hour discussion
Date: December 28, 2020 at 10:42 AM
To: Rick Jerz <jerzrj@gmail.com>



Hi Jan,

You are not the first person to ask these questions, #1) "Why don't your video lectures times match in-person times?" and #2) Are there 3-hours of 'contact' in your Business Analytics course?"

I have already answered both these questions in my Quality Matters audit, specifically QM Standards 5.2 and 5.3, which involve "student interaction." The attached 9-page PDF contains my email reply to the QM Team Chair, Cal Scheidt. I describe my Time-Warped video production technique and explain how I satisfy the 3-hours of content issue. Cal, an experienced QM Chair with over 50 course reviews, accepted my response and praised me for having a model online Business Analytics course. (This PDF file, which has links to additional support materials, should only be shared with FERPA-approved people.) So not only have I answered these questions, but I also had to "prove" it to the Quality Matters audit team.

(#1) Video Length. Very simply, carefully designed, and edited digital videos provide instruction much more *efficiently* than in-person. I create my videos using my "Time-Warped" technique, which strips out all delays and errors in ordinary speech, and I carefully choose my words. On my [Time-Warped web page](#) I provide a [Bon Appetit video](#) that in less than 2 minutes shows how to make crispy skin salmon. Doing this "live" would require over an hour. Is it the same instruction? My point is that digital teaching is different than live teaching and that a one-to-one relationship no longer makes sense. We are talking about a difference between delivering education in the year 1965 versus 2021.

Recall that I might be the only instructor who has delivered the identical Business Analytics course face-to-face, as a hybrid, as a self-selected hybrid, and online. In my PDF file, [this support document](#) shows my course with 79.5 equivalent in-class lecture hours, about double face-to-face. I derive this number from delivering the same content in different formats. Yes, someone might say, "Don't students complain?" No, they do not. The power of well-designed "asynchronous" online courses is that students interact in smaller chunks of time, at their best study times, so they are never overwhelmed with continuous larger chunks, like having to sit in an evening class for over 3 hours.

Recall that I have four kinds of videos: Lecture (concept), Excel (hands-on), Reinforcement (review), and Administrative (answering specific students' questions.) And I have optional Tableau videos. Over 70 videos!

(#2) 3-Hours Contact. To pass a Quality Matters audit, "contact hours" must be strong. Adequate student-to-student, student-to-content, and student-to-instructor interactions must exist. Suppose we have online courses that, as an example, only involve watching lecture videos and writing two or three-paragraph reflection papers. In that case, it is proper for someone to question "contact" hours. "Contact" is more than just the lecture videos; it is how the instructor and students interact with the variety of instructional resources, such as discussions, quizzes, assignments, etc. My claim in my QM audit is that my 3-hour course is equivalent to a 5-hours face-to-face course. Maybe this is why students value my course.

I guess that "flimsy" online courses do exist, including some COVID-online courses. Quality Matters recognized that flimsy online courses existed, prompting them to develop "quality assurance" standards. The Quality Matters audit is the most rigorous review process that I have ever had, involving over 50 hours of my time, probably 50 hours of the QM team member's time, and having to address 42 criteria. My attached PDF file only addresses two standards, 5.2 and 5.3. Recall that I passed this audit with a 100% score and that my online Business Analytics is the only QM certified course at Ulowa.

Good quality online education requires dedicated instructors, instructors willing to experiment and invest in learning digital technologies. For me, it is a 20-year investment that also includes attending many meetings and conferences on online instruction, including many from ITS, DOE, SITA, and others. But regularly, I run into administrators (and instructors) who don't value this expertise and think that anyone can teach online. Your challenge, along with mine, is to convince others that there is a difference.

COVID put "online" education in front of everyone, making every instructor an "online" instructor. I would probably call many of these COVID-online courses "distance ed" instead of "online." Many instructors attempted to deliver the same in-class instruction instead of exploiting digital instructional resources and methodologies. I am still not sure if COVID helped or hurt online instruction. If anything, some folks might now have a better appreciation of good quality online courses, as you and I do.

Hopefully, some of this information that I pass on to you will help. Since I am the only instructor who has been through a Quality Matters audit, it might be hard to generalize my response to other courses. Let me know if you need anything else. As you know, I am willing to show people my course. Feel free to continue asking questions.

Regards,

Rick

On Dec 21, 2020, at 9:53 AM, Rick Jerz <rick@rjerz.com> wrote:

Phew! 🙄

As you know, I always try to give you my very best, which sometimes takes a little "time."

My target will be Wednesday, but this is a shortened week with Christmas on Friday, and my travels to Minnesota on Wednesday. I also have several other projects going on this week with "time" crunches.

Thanks,

Rick Jerz

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On Dec 21, 2020, at 9:43 AM, Fasse, Janaleen P <jan-fasse@uiowa.edu> wrote:

No hurry!

Jan P. Fasse (she/her/hers)

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From: Rick Jerz <rick@rjerz.com>

Sent: Monday, December 21, 2020 9:37 AM

To: Fasse, Janaleen P <jan-fasse@uiowa.edu>

Subject: [External] Re: Online courses and contact hour discussion

Hi Jan,

It is good to hear from you.

You as a good question, and as you know, I want to give you my best thoughts.

Do you need my answer quickly, or is it fine for me to give you my thoughts by Wednesday, or so.

Regards,

Rick Jerz

Rick@rjerz.com

www.rjerz.com

On Dec 21, 2020, at 9:04 AM, Fasse, Janaleen P <jan-fasse@uiowa.edu> wrote:

Rick –

The topic of contact hours within online courses continues to surface within the

MBA program. As just one example, would you be willing to provide insight into the length of your lectures in total for your online BA course and compare that to the length of in-person class time dedicated to this course?

Thanks!

Jan P. Fasse (she/her/hers)

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