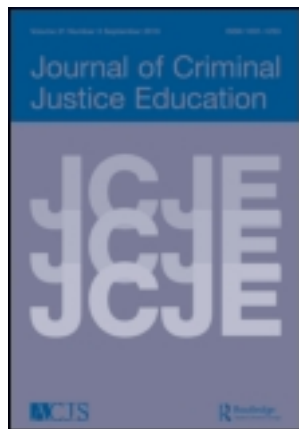


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Considerations for Faculty Preparing to Develop and Teach Online Criminal Justice Courses at Traditional Institutions of Higher Learning¹

Don Hummer, Barbara Sims, Alese Wooditch and K. S. Salley

Criminal justice programs at traditional institutions of higher learning have been moving toward offering courses online and, in some cases, placing entire programs online for the better part of the past decade. In competition with for-profit institutions, many traditional colleges and universities have expanded their distance education programming to include online courses and programs to attract students. As a result, the number of criminal justice students has increased, as have the profits for home institutions. With this growth in the online education market, the criminal justice faculty member has been thrust, willingly or unwillingly, into the world of online teaching—a method of instruction foreign to many instructors. From the authors' experience at their current (and in the case of the lead author a second) institution, this paper addresses many issues that must be considered by faculty members before embarking on this type of time-intensive initiative.

Introduction

With the saturation of new technologies permeating everyday life, the public is increasingly interested in receiving and transmitting information as quickly and efficiently as possible (Ko and Rossen 2004). According to Ko and Rossen (2004, p. 3), "[t]hat's what drives people to shop, invest, and converse online, and it is the same force that is propelling them to learn online as well." The impact of the virtual world hits home especially hard for instructors in higher education who see the landscape as they once knew it changing before their eyes. Most

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educators are now familiar with and use the World Wide Web, PowerPoint, or course management systems such as Blackboard or Angel. For some of them, transitioning to totally online teaching may not be that much of a reach. For others, however, the transition to the online teaching environment could be a difficult task.

Students, on the other hand, associate online learning with a great deal of freedom, appreciating the fact that they can find a course, register for it, order textbooks, and participate in the virtual classroom without leaving home (Ko and Rossen 2004). According to Gurak and Duin (2004, p. 194), "Students take the Internet for granted as their access point for community building." With the saturation of technology (cellular phones, text messaging, global positioning systems, etc.) among today's youth, the students of today, and into the future, can be expected to pursue online courses; or, at the very least, they will be familiar with the format. The virtual classroom is defined by Ko and Rossen (2004, p. 3) as "any online area in which instructors and students meet via their computer connections, for course activities." Students from all ages and backgrounds, as alluded to above, are driven to online learning no differently than they are driven to the Internet or other forms of technology intended to serve as mechanisms for communication. While that may not have been true of the adult learner just a few short years ago, the landscape has changed drastically with the influx of faster, less expensive computers, reduced costs in high speed Internet connections, etc. (Dykman and Davis 2008a). In fact, some have argued that online learning is a way to deliver education "to the masses" and to better prepare workers for an ever-expanding global economy (Dykman and Davis 2008a, p. 12). In the field of criminal justice, this can be especially true for those individuals who, for one reason or the other, did not complete their undergraduate degree and now have a desire to do so, either because of a personal educational goal or as a means through which to advance in their careers.

There is no mistaking that online learning has becoming widespread in higher education. The Sloan Consortium, whose purpose is to monitor quality in online programming, reported in 2007 (Allen and Seaman 2007) that the number of students taking at least one online course per year is increasing at a rate of about 20%, with 3.2 million students enrolled in online courses in Fall 2005. In Fall 2006, 20% of students were taking at least one of their courses online (Allen and Seaman 2007). New teaching or delivery options mean more challenges, but all indicators point toward continued growth of online degree programs in higher education (Snell and Penn 2005; Stout and Dominey 2006).

With the proliferation of technology and the increase in online education comes the need to carefully consider the impact of this new frontier in higher education on not only the institutions themselves, but, and to a greater extent, on those who teach and learn within that environment. We suggest that a good place to begin is to examine the dynamics behind online offerings by traditional institutions. We then move to an exploration of the extent and nature of online programming in criminal justice; in other words, how widespread is it to date

and how likely is it that it will continue to expand into the future. Beyond the question of where criminal justice programming might be at this time, we also make suggestions for issues that should carefully be considered before criminal justice programs or departments move head-on into the virtual teaching and learning environment. These suggestions are grounded not only in our personal experiences as members of a faculty group that put its residential B.S. in Criminal Justice online in Fall 2006, but also in the literature on the subject.

The Dynamics Associated with Online Offerings by Traditional Institutions

Dynamic #1—Online Education Taps an Underserved Student Population

The leading institutions in online education initially marketed themselves to a large demographic of individuals who desire a postsecondary degree but are unable, for numerous reasons, to pursue a degree by traditional means. The concept is the same as distance education from the past with correspondence courses as the means through which many individuals acquired college course credits or degrees. What is different, however, is the marked change in the delivery of courses. Students engaged in the virtual classroom can sign on to the course from anywhere and at any time as long as they can access the World Wide Web. Through the uploading of course content to a course management system, including written comments (e.g., lectures) from the instructor, Power-Point slides, streaming videos, pod casts, etc., and through asynchronous communications with faculty and student peers via discussion boards, the virtual classroom is much changed over the old days of distance education (Bejerano 2008). A student who is working full time, in the military, a stay-at-home parent, taking care of an ailing and aging parent or some other family member, and who would find it difficult to attend the residential classroom, can now sign on to the course at a time that is most convenient for him or her. In our online criminal justice courses, all of these are examples from our own experience and these students have proved to be a great asset to our program.

On the other hand, institution administrators and program faculty groups discovered that *traditional* students also enjoy the flexibility and the format of online learning. In one study by Wilkes, Simon, and Brooks (2006, p. 133), flexibility and the “organized and systematic presentation of materials” were among the top five issues reported as being important factors when deciding between a residential and online course (the remaining three were receiving timely feedback to questions, the accreditation status of the institution, and access to information). Consider also the traditional student who is faced with being locked out of a core course because the course has reached its maximum, established cap. Being able to take that course online could allow that student to make progress in the major and not have to possibly delay his/her educational goals.

Dynamic #2—Online Courses Could Be More Cost-Effective

The lower cost of taking courses online, as opposed to becoming a residential student, may be a deciding factor for some students. Although there may not be a difference in tuition and fees for online learners than those paid by residential students, online classes can assist in some savings to students with, in some cases, those costs being quite substantial. In most instances, any costs associated with transportation are eliminated when the course comes to the student. This issue becomes more important for those students who have to commute some distance to get to the classroom. In fact, Wilkes et al. (2006), in their study of undergraduate students, found that travel expenses were listed as a major characteristic of a residential course that is associated with online learning. Further, some students may be forced to take off work to attend a class and thus risk the reduction in one's pay, or they may have to obtain childcare for small children. For the traditional student, the idea of saving money for room and board can sometimes be appealing; this could be especially true for the parents of these students and particularly with the current economic problems faced by many of them.

Dynamic #3—Increased Acceptance of Online Degrees by Employers

While it is true that some employers might not readily accept online degrees, the evidence seems to be pointing toward a greater acceptance of potential employees who have online degrees (Carnevale 2007). For some employees, the mention of online programming "conjures up images of those spam email messages that promise a Ph.D. in exchange for \$5000 and a bit of life experience" (Carnevale 2007). As reported in Carnevale (2007), however, roughly 41% of respondents to a survey of would-be employers from various organizations said that they would consider applicants with either a residential or online degree. Too, as more degrees become available online and as the number of online learners increases, it follows that there will be an increase in the work force, including managers, supervisors, etc., in individuals who have earned online degrees and thus will have an even greater appreciation and respect for the online degree. Some evidence today suggests further that it is the identification of a well-respected institution that matters more than whether the degree was received in the traditional classroom or in the virtual classroom (Halstead 2008).

As we graduate more online students from our own program here at Penn State Harrisburg (PSH), we will be better able to judge whether having an online degree has hindered or helped those graduates in the job market. To date, however, we have not heard of such accounts by our online students. For those who are Penn State students making the switch to the online program it appears that they are confident that doing so will not negatively impact their employment possibilities. The same is true for our adult, degree completers, many of whom will use the degree to move up in their current agency or organization.

For some of these individuals, they may be working within agencies with tuition reimbursement programs. Thus, we are convinced that if an online degree is developed and taught by qualified instructors who are determined to hold fast to the “quality matters” motto, and are part of an institution brand that is recognized and respected, then the lines between the online and the residential degree will increasingly become more, not less, blurred by criminal justice personnel who hire our graduates.

Dynamic #4—Some Students Prefer Online Courses

To some faculty members, the realization that students enjoy online learning is contrary to those accustomed to teaching and learning in a face-to-face environment. Assessments of students who have completed online coursework, however, demonstrate that they are as satisfied, if not more so, with online courses over traditional courses (Johnson, Aragon, Shaik, and Palma-Rivas 2000; Stanley 2006). As pointed out long ago by Baath (1982), some students may benefit from the individuality of undertaking collegiate education from a remote location as it is a solitary endeavor that offers them anonymity. We would argue, however, that in the classroom discussion space, it is a sense of comfort as opposed to anonymity that is the issue. As pointed out by Braun (2008, pp. 65-66):

Student inhibitions can actually be lowered by removing any psychological or social barriers existing between student and teacher. Instructors report a growth in the levels of quality interaction with their online students as the students have the opportunity to think at a deeper level ... as opposed to typical classroom response situations where students might feel anxious when attempting to contribute to classroom discussions.

It is now a widespread belief that many people will communicate via an email message in a way that they would not in a face-to-face interaction. For either the unusually shy individual or the individual who socially prefers communication through technology (text messaging, emailing, twittering, etc.), there could be a preference for online learning over residential learning. Prensky (2001) coined the term *digital native* to describe today’s student. These students are “native speakers of the digital language of computers, video games, and the Internet” (Prensky 2001, p. 1). He further points out that today’s instructors, or digital immigrants, often remain with their “foot in the past” (Prensky 2001, p. 2). That is to say, they may now turn to the Internet and use it as a communication and/or research tool, but they retain old world thinking, e.g. that their students must learn the same way that students of their generation learned. Prensky (2001) concludes that it is way past time for digital immigrant instructors to realize that they are dealing with a generation of digital natives, whether they agree with it or not, and that they must begin changing the methods they are using to educate today’s students.

Online learning appeals to students for a variety of reasons, some of which have already been or will be discussed here in greater detail. In sum, the most often cited reasons include: lifestyle choices by learners (especially adults), flexibility, individuality, and educational costs (Braun 2008; Wilkes et al. 2006). For the student who is already in a career or who is working full time, many of them working shift work that varies from week to week, the option of online learning is appealing. Although there may not be a cost savings when it comes to tuition, as pointed out above, there are other expenses that are greatly reduced.

Dynamic #5—Expanded Number of Students Majoring in Criminal Justice and Increasing Course Enrollments

The introduction of an online degree program could greatly expand the number of criminal justice majors and course enrollments. Online programming takes place in a university without borders whose growth is only limited by the capacity and/or resources of the delivery unit. One argument against online programming, however, stems from it being seen as just a way for university officials to enhance their coffers. As noted by Simonson (2005, p. 40), however, “the organization that offers instruction—quality instruction—at a distance may possess a competitive advantage over other institutions,” stating further that “Competitiveness and competitive advantage works in business; why not education?” Some criminal justice programs, for example, may find themselves as no longer being the only show in town with the proliferation of the degree in surrounding institutions that have not, at least up to this point, shown much interest in offering it. In our experience, the local community college used to have very few (if any) articulation agreements with any four-year school beyond PSH. This is no longer the case and students who are finishing up the associate degree at the community college now are bombarded with a plethora of choices from which to choose when it comes to transferring into a four-year school. Too, those first- and second-year students at the community college are taking an increasing number of their courses online. If they do transfer to us, they are looking to do the same. One way, then, to compete for those students is through our online programming.

To the point of expanding the number of majors and enrollments in courses, we offer our own “case in point”; whereas we have maintained about 70-100 majors over a 10-year period in our residential criminal justice program, seeing no real growth over time, and primarily because of both internal (Penn State has offered the criminal justice degree on six of its 24 campuses) and external competition, we have tripled our number of majors by way of delivering our program online (as of Summer 2009, we have approximately 220 online majors, an increase from 120 at this time in 2008). To us, a student is a student; regardless of whether he/she is studying with us in residence or online. Thus, we did

try to get out ahead of the competition and, by doing so, greatly increased our number of majors and enrollments in our courses.

Extent and Growth of Online Programming in Criminal Justice and Criminology

We now turn our attention to a discussion on the extent and nature of online programming in criminal justice. We seek to determine how widespread online teaching and learning in criminal justice programs might be and also to better understand what type of programming is being offered (e.g., type of degree or concentration). We do so by two means: (1) an examination of job ads in criminal justice and whether an interest in online teaching experience is mentioned, and (2) a review of the 379 institutions of higher learning that conferred criminal justice degrees in 2007 to determine whether they offer any type of online degree programming. Although this is a perhaps less-than-perfect means through which to examine how far reaching online criminal justice programming might be, we think using these two methods of examination gets us closer to what the true nature of online teaching and learning in criminal justice might be. We recognize that there is a difference between offering some residential courses online and putting an entire program online. Thus, the lack of congruence between the institutions is listed in Tables 1-3. Too, some institutions may actually have an online component to their criminal justice programs, but failed to mention that in the job ads. Finally, it could be that our search of the websites of the 379 institutions that conferred criminal justice degrees in 2007 failed to identify some online programs; this could be the case if, for example, the online component of the program is not sufficiently posted or advertised on the department's or institution's website.

A Review of Job Ads for Criminal Justice Positions

The advertisements for faculty positions in criminal justice and criminology posted on three web sources most often used by prospective candidates and employers were reviewed: the *Chronicle of Higher Education's* Chronicle Careers job postings for criminal justice/criminology (2007), the American Society of Criminology's Employment Exchange (2007), and the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences' Employment Bulletin (2007) (see Tables 1 and 2). The advertisements represent faculty positions between 1 June 2007 and 21 December 2007, during which institutions recruited for the new academic year commencing Fall 2008. The sample population has been dichotomized into those institutions whose advertisement specifically mentions an online teaching component, expectation, or possibility (see Table 1), and those not mentioning online instruction (see Table 2). Each institution's advertisement is included in the tables only once. If the school posted its ad on all three websites, the

Table 1 Institutions advertising open faculty positions between 1 June 2007 and 21 December 2007 specifically mentioning an online teaching component

Nos.	Date of post	Web Source	Institution	No. of positions	Tenure-track
1	11/16/2007	CHE	Florida Gulf Coast University	1	N/A
2	10/11/2007	CHE	Kaplan University	1+	N/A
3	10/29/2007	CHE	Northern Michigan University	1	N/A
4	10/2/2007	ACJS	Saint Louis Community College at Meramec	1	N/A
5	10/19/2007	CHE	South University (Florida)	1	N/A
6	8/23/2007	CHE	Southern New Hampshire University	1	N/A
7	10/18/2007	ACJS	Texas A&M University at Commerce	1	N/A
8	11/14/2007	CHE	Texas Wesleyan University	1	N/A
9	11/28/2007	CHE	The Sage Colleges	1	N/A
10	11/1/2007	ACJS	Lock Haven University	1	NTT
11	9/13/2007	ACJS	Penn State Harrisburg	1	NTT
12	9/27/2007	ACJS	University of Maryland, University College	1+	NTT
13	11/16/2007	CHE	Austin Peay State University	1	TT
14	9/25/2007	ACJS	California State University Fresno	3	TT
15	12/11/2007	ACJS	Dixie State College of Utah	1	TT
16	11/12/2007	CHE	Fort Hays State University	1	TT
17	11/6/2007	CHE	Gannon University	2	TT
18	11/1/2007	ASC	Grambling State University	2	TT
19	11/26/2007	CHE	Jacksonville State University	1	TT
20	11/13/2007	ACJS	Lewis University	1	TT
21	10/9/2007	ACJS	Mesa State College	1	TT
22	9/19/2007	ACS	Metropolitan State University	1	TT
23	10/23/2007	CHE	Missouri Southern State University	1	TT
24	10/12/2007	ASC	Missouri State University	1	TT
25	9/18/2007	ACJS	New Mexico State University	1	TT
26	9/11/2007	ACJS	Northern Kentucky University	2	TT
27	10/24/2007	ASC	Ohio University Zanesville	1	TT
28	10/18/2007	ACJS	Penn State Fayette	1	TT
29	12/20/2007	ACJS	Plymouth State University	2	TT
30	9/13/2007	ACJS	Salem State College	1	TT
31	10/23/2007	ACJS	Slippery Rock University	1	TT
32	10/4/2007	ACJS	Southern Oregon University	2	TT
33	11/2/2007	ASC	Texas A&M University, Kingsville	1	TT
34	8/21/2007	ACJS	University of Alabama at Birmingham	2	TT

Table 1 (Continued)

Nos.	Date of post	Web Source	Institution	No. of positions	Tenure-track
35	10/25/2007	CHE	University of Alaska, Fairbanks	1	TT
36	10/9/2007	ACJS	University of Houston Downtown	2	TT
37	9/27/2007	ACJS	University of West Florida	2	TT
38	10/8/2007	CHE	Utica College	1	TT
39	10/3/2007	ASC	Western Carolina University	1	TT
40	12/13/2007	ACJS	Western North Carolina	1	TT
41	11/12/2007	CHE	Western Oregon University	1	TT

Note. Codes: CHE, Chronicle of Higher Education Chronicle Careers; ASC, American Society of Criminology Employment Exchange; ACJS, Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences Employment Bulletin; TT, tenure-track position; NTT, non-tenure-track position; and N/A, tenure eligibility of position not available.

"Web Source" column in Tables 1 and 2 indicates the source in which it appeared first. Those institutions with multiple advertisements over the seven-month period were checked for consistency and the job advertisement was relisted if it had changed substantively. For advertisements that omitted specific of the position (i.e., tenure eligibility of the position, number of positions available), the listing was checked on the institution's homepage to determine if more detailed information was available. In some cases, an exact number of available positions was not stated. These advertisements stated "one or more" or "multiple positions dependant on funding," and are depicted in the index as "1+."

Of the 249 institutions that advertised open positions, there were 41 that specifically mentioned an online teaching component. This represents 16% of all institutions recruiting new criminal justice faculty for Fall or Spring 2008. Of those institutions advertising online instruction, there were 29 that advertised for tenure-track positions. Conversely, 186 of the 241 advertisements not incorporating an online teaching were tenure-track positions. Thus, while the number of positions *without* an online component outnumbered those *with* roughly 5 to 1, a similar proportion of positions are tenure-track (77% versus 70%, respectively).

A few words of interpretation are warranted for these tables. First, the list of advertisements is not exhaustive. Despite this limitation, it may be argued that these findings are representative of the number and type of positions available. Second, although some institutions failed to specifically reference an online component, it is likely that some institutions have online programming, and simply were not hiring for an online instructor. Therefore, it is possible that these findings are an inaccurate count of institutions with online programming in criminal justice and criminology. Third, institutions without online programming may be hiring with the expectation that new faculty

Table 2 Institutions advertising open faculty positions between 1 June 2007 and 21 December 2007 *not* mentioning an online teaching component

Nos.	Date of post	Web Source	Institution	No. of positions	Tenure-track
1	10/26/2007	CHE	Albany State University	1	N/A
2	10/1/2007	ASC	Arcadia University	1	N/A
3	10/1/2007	ASC	Augusta State University	2	N/A
4	11/14/2007	CHE	Bay Path College	1	N/A
5	11/6/2007	ASC	Buffalo State College	1	N/A
6	9/10/2007	ACS	Cabrini College	1	N/A
7	10/19/2007	ASC	California State University, Long Beach	1	N/A
8	10/15/2007	ASC	Canisius College	1	N/A
9	11/19/2007	ASC	Capital University	1	N/A
10	10/3/2007	ASC	College of New Jersey	1	N/A
11	11/14/2007	CHE	College of the Southwest	1	N/A
12	12/11/2007	ASC	DeSales University	1	N/A
13	9/28/2007	ASC	Dordt College	1	N/A
14	11/12/2007	CHE	Ferrum College	2	N/A
15	8/29/2007	ASC	Fitchburg State College	1	N/A
16	8/21/2007	ASC	Georgia Southern University	2	N/A
17	10/19/2007	ASC	Grant MacEwan College	1	N/A
18	10/15/2007	CHE	Hamline University	1+	N/A
19	9/28/2007	CHE	Indiana University—Bloomington	1	N/A
20	9/21/2007	ASC	Indiana University South Bend	1	N/A
21	10/1/2007	CHE	International College (Ft. Myers)	1	N/A
22	10/10/2007	ASC	John Jay College of Criminal Justice	2	N/A
23	11/19/2007	CHE	Lee College	1	N/A
24	10/10/2007	ASC	Louisiana State University, Shreveport	1	N/A
25	9/24/2007	ASC	Marquette University	2	N/A
26	9/14/2007	ACS	Mercyhurst College	1	N/A
27	11/9/2007	ASC	Minot State University	1	N/A
28	11/8/2007	CHE	New England College	2	N/A
29	11/26/2007	CHE	Ohio Dominican University	1	N/A
30	10/12/2007	ASC	Rutgers University	1	N/A
31	9/13/2007	ACS	Saint Louis University	2	N/A
32	10/4/2007	ACJS	South College	1	N/A
33	11/5/2007	CHE	South Texas College	1+	N/A
34	9/24/2007	ASC	Southeastern Louisiana University	2	N/A
35	9/26/2007	ASC	Southern Illinois University Edwardsville	1	N/A
36	10/24/2007	ASC	St. John's University	1	N/A
37	11/5/2007	CHE	SUNY Institute of Technology at Utica-Rome	1	N/A
38	10/1/2007	ASC	Tennessee State University	1	N/A
39	9/6/2007	ACS	University College of the Fraser Valley	3	N/A
40	10/16/2007	ACJS	University of Central Florida	2	N/A

Table 2 (Continued)

Nos.	Date of post	Web Source	Institution	No. of positions	Tenure-track
41	12/1/2007	ASC	University of Georgia	1	N/A
42	9/26/2007	ASC	University of Illinois at Chicago	2	N/A
43	11/1/2007	CHE	University of Macau	1	N/A
44	9/19/2007	ACS	University of Memphis	1	N/A
45	12/11/2007	ASC	University of North Texas Dallas	1	N/A
46	9/21/2007	ASC	University of Ontario Institute of Technology	1	N/A
47	11/2/2007	ASC	University of Sioux Falls	1	N/A
48	9/28/2007	CHE	University of South Carolina	1	N/A
49	11/27/2007	ACJS	University of Texas—Pan American	1	N/A
50	10/11/2007	ACJS	Virginia Wesleyan College	1	N/A
51	10/17/2007	ASC	Weber State University	1	N/A
52	10/16/2007	ACJS	Boston University	1	NTT
53	12/13/2007	ACJS	Johnson & Wales University	1	NTT
54	10/8/2007	CHE	Saint Leo University	2	NTT
55	10/1/2007	CHE	Troy University	2	NTT
56	9/11/2007	ACJS	American University	1	TT
57	10/25/2007	ACJS	Andrew College	1	TT
58	10/1/2007	ASC	Appalachian State University	2	TT
59	8/21/2007	ASC	Arizona State University	3	TT
60	9/13/2007	ACS	Arkansas State University	1	TT
61	10/15/2007	CHE	Armstrong Atlantic State University	1	TT
62	11/1/2007	CHE	Avila University	1	TT
63	9/20/2007	ACJS	Ball State University	1	TT
64	9/27/2007	CHE	Bethel College	1	TT
65	10/9/2007	ACJS	Boise State University	1	TT
66	9/18/2007	ACJS	Bridgewater State College	1	TT
67	9/4/2007	ACJS	California Lutheran University	1	TT
68	9/24/2007	CHE	California State University at Los Angeles	2	TT
69	9/11/2007	ACJS	California State University at Sacramento	1	TT
70	8/28/2007	ACJS	California State University at San Bernardino	1	TT
71	10/24/2007	ASC	California State University, East Bay	1	TT
72	10/2/2007	ACJS	California State University, Los Angeles	2	TT
73	10/2/2007	ACJS	California State University, Stanislaus	1	TT
74	10/16/2007	ACJS	California University of Pennsylvania	1	TT
75	10/2/2007	ASC	Central Connecticut State University	3	TT
76	9/24/2007	ASC	Central Michigan University	1	TT
77	10/8/2007	ASC	Christopher Newport University	1	TT
78	11/29/2007	ACJS	Clarion University of Pennsylvania	1	TT
79	9/24/2007	CHE	Cuesta College (California)	1	TT
80	11/1/2007	CHE	Delta State University	2	TT

Table 2 (Continued)

Nos.	Date of post	Web Source	Institution	No. of positions	Tenure-track
81	9/13/2007	ACS	Drury University	1	TT
82	10/16/2007	ACJS	East Carolina University	2	TT
83	10/2/2007	ACJS	Eastern Kentucky University	1	TT
84	10/1/2007	ASC	Edgewood College	1	TT
85	9/25/2007	ACJS	Elmhurst College	1	TT
86	10/18/2007	ACJS	Fayetteville State University	4	TT
87	9/11/2007	ACJS	Florida Atlantic University	2	TT
88	9/14/2007	ACS	George Mason University	2	TT
89	10/1/2007	CHE	Georgia College & State University	2	TT
90	11/5/2007	CHE	Grand Valley State University	1	TT
91	9/27/2007	ACJS	Humboldt State University	1	TT
92	10/23/2007	ACJS	Illinois State University	2	TT
93	10/10/2007	ASC	Indiana State University	1	TT
94	10/22/2007	CHE	Indiana University—Northwest	1	TT
95	8/16/2007	ACJS	Indiana University of Pennsylvania	2	TT
96	11/1/2007	ASC	Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis	1	TT
97	10/19/2007	CHE	Iowa State University	2	TT
98	9/19/2007	ACS	Ithaca College	1	TT
99	9/11/2007	ACJS	James Madison	1	TT
100	12/20/2007	ACJS	Kent State University	1	TT
101	11/12/2007	CHE	Kentucky State University	1	TT
102	12/11/2007	ACJS	La Salle University	1	TT
103	10/2/2007	ACJS	Lakeland College	1	TT
104	10/11/2007	ACJS	Lamar University	1	TT
105	8/27/2007	ASC	Longwood University	1	TT
106	11/20/2007	ACJS	Loyola University Chicago	1	TT
107	9/6/2007	ACJS	Lycoming College	1	TT
108	9/11/2007	ACJS	Manhattan College	1	TT
109	10/22/2007	CHE	Mansfield University at Pennsylvania	1	TT
110	10/12/2007	ASC	Marist College	2	TT
111	11/7/2007	ASC	Marywood University	1	TT
112	11/5/2007	CHE	Metropolitan State College of Denver	1	TT
113	9/6/2007	ACJS	Michigan State University	1	TT
114	10/3/2007	ASC	Middle Tennessee State University	1	TT
115	8/16/2007	ACJS	Minnesota State University Moorhead	1	TT
116	9/6/2007	ACS	Montclair State University	2	TT
117	9/13/2007	ACJS	Morehead State University	1	TT
118	12/11/2007	ACJS	Mount Saint Mary College	1	TT
119	11/1/2007	ACJS	Murray State University	1	TT
120	10/29/2007	ASC	Niagara University	1	TT
121	10/15/2007	CHE	Nicholls State University	1	TT

Table 2 (Continued)

Nos.	Date of post	Web Source	Institution	No. of positions	Tenure-track
122	9/25/2007	ACJS	Norwich University	1	TT
123	8/17/2007	ASC	Old Dominion	1	TT
124	9/11/2007	ACJS	Penn State Altoona	2	TT
125	10/8/2007	CHE	Penn State Schuylkill	1	TT
126	8/30/2007	ACJS	Richard Stockton College of New Jersey	1	TT
127	10/24/2007	ASC	Roosevelt University	1	TT
128	10/15/2007	ASC	Ryerson University	5	TT
129	10/2/2007	ACJS	Saginaw Valley State University	1	TT
130	10/11/2007	ACJS	Saint Anselm College	1	TT
131	10/17/2007	ASC	Saint Xavier University	1	TT
132	9/11/2007	ACJS	Sam Houston State University	1+	TT
133	8/30/2007	ACJS	San Diego State University	2	TT
134	10/24/2007	ASC	San Diego State University, Imperial Valley	1	TT
135	9/21/2007	ASC	San Jose State University	1	TT
136	10/1/2007	ASC	Sonoma State University	1	TT
137	11/5/2007	ASC	Southeastern Oklahoma State University	1	TT
138	9/25/2007	ACJS	Southern Illinois University Carbondale	2	TT
139	10/29/2007	CHE	St. Ambrose University	1	TT
140	10/17/2007	ASC	St. Joseph's College	1	TT
141	9/14/2007	CHE	St. Thomas Aquinas College	1	TT
142	10/22/2007	CHE	State University of New York College at Oneonta	2	TT
143	10/10/2007	ASC	Stonehill College	1	TT
144	10/1/2007	CHE	SUNY—Brockport	1	TT
145	10/10/2007	ASC	SUNY—Geneseo	1	TT
146	9/28/2007	ASC	SUNY—Plattsburgh	1	TT
147	8/27/2007	ASC	SUNY—College at Old Westbury	1	TT
148	9/11/2007	ACS	SUNY—University at Albany	3	TT
149	12/20/2007	ACJS	Tarleton State University	1	TT
150	9/11/2007	ACJS	Texas A&M University at Corpus Christi	1	TT
151	10/19/2007	ASC	Texas Christian University	1	TT
152	10/10/2007	CHE	Texas Lutheran University	1	TT
153	9/18/2007	ACJS	Texas State University at San Marcos	2	TT
154	9/24/2007	CHE	Towson University	1	TT
155	11/26/2007	CHE	Truman State University	1	TT
156	10/9/2007	ACJS	University of Alabama	1	TT
157	10/8/2007	CHE	University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa	1	TT
158	10/12/2007	ASC	University of Alaska Anchorage	1	TT
159	10/24/2007	ASC	University of Colorado, Denver	1	TT
160	11/1/2007	ACJS	University of Florida	1	TT
161	9/27/2007	CHE	University of Houston—Victoria	1	TT

Table 2 (Continued)

Nos.	Date of post	Web Source	Institution	No. of positions	Tenure-track
162	9/4/2007	ACJS	University of Houston at Clear Lake	1	TT
163	8/21/2007	ACJS	University of Illinois at Springfield	2	TT
164	10/5/2007	ASC	University of Maryland	1+	TT
165	11/7/2007	ASC	University of Maryland Eastern Shore	1	TT
166	9/26/2007	ASC	University of Massachusetts Boston	1	TT
167	11/5/2007	ASC	University of Massachusetts Lowell	1	TT
168	8/17/2007	ASC	University of Nebraska at Omaha	1	TT
169	11/1/2007	ACJS	University of New Haven	2	TT
169	11/1/2007	ACJS	University of New Haven	2	TT
170	9/11/2007	ACS	University of New Mexico	1	TT
171	8/21/2007	ASC	University of North Carolina Wilmington	2	TT
172	9/18/2007	ACJS	University of North Texas	2	TT
173	10/24/2007	ASC	University of Northern Colorado	1	TT
174	9/4/2007	ACJS	University of Northern Florida	2	TT
175	11/5/2007	CHE	University of Northern Iowa	1	TT
176	10/4/2007	CHE	University of Regina	1	TT
177	9/6/2007	ACJS	University of Rhode Island	1	TT
178	10/2/2007	ACJS	University of South Alabama	1	TT
179	9/29/2007	CHE	University of South Dakota	1	TT
180	10/3/2007	ASC	University of South Florida	2	TT
181	10/9/2007	ACJS	University of Southern Indiana	1	TT
182	10/1/2007	CHE	University of Southern Mississippi	1	TT
183	10/22/2007	ASC	University of Tampa	1	TT
184	11/27/2007	ACJS	University of Texas-Pan American	1	TT
185	9/19/2007	ACS	University of Texas at Brownsville	2	TT
186	11/19/2007	ASC	University of Texas at El Past	1	TT
187	8/22/2007	ASC	University of Texas at San Antonio	1+	TT
188	11/13/2007	ACJS	University of Texas at Tyler	1	TT
189	10/15/2007	ASC	University of Texas Permian Basin	1	TT
190	8/14/2007	ASC	University of Western Ontario	1	TT
191	10/8/2007	CHE	University of Wisconsin at Platteville	2	TT
192	10/2/2007	ACJS	University of Wisconsin Oshkosh	1	TT
193	11/6/2007	ACJS	University of Wisconsin, Parkside	1	TT
194	9/24/2007	CHE	Valdosta State University	2	TT
195	10/22/2007	ASC	Virginia Commonwealth University	1+	TT
196	9/14/2007	ACS	Washington State University	2	TT
197	11/1/2007	ACJS	West Chester University, Pennsylvania	1	TT
198	10/18/2007	ACJS	West Virginia State University	2	TT
199	9/3/2007	CHE	Western Connecticut State University	2	TT
200	8/27/2007	ASC	Western Illinois University	1	TT
201	10/22/2007	CHE	Western Illinois University	1	TT

Table 2 (Continued)

Nos.	Date of post	Web Source	Institution	No. of positions	Tenure-track
202	11/1/2007	ASC	Western Michigan University	1	TT
203	11/6/2007	ACJS	Westfield State College	1	TT
204	10/2/2007	ASC	Widener University	2	TT
205	10/19/2007	ASC	William Paterson University	2	TT
206	9/26/2007	ASC	Worcester State College	1	TT
207	9/21/2007	CHE	York College of Pennsylvania	2	TT
208	12/6/2007	ACJS	Youngstown State University	1	TT

Note. Codes: CHE, Chronicle of Higher Education Chronicle Careers; ASC, American Society of Criminology Employment Exchange; ACJS, Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences Employment Bulletin; TT, tenure-track position; NTT, non-tenure-track position; and N/A, tenure eligibility of position not available.

members will contribute to the development and implementation of an online curriculum.

A Review of the Online Environment in Criminal Justice

To shore up our argument that the online criminal justice market is expanding, we examined the websites of the 379 institutions who reported conferring criminal justice degrees in 2007 in order to determine whether those institutions had online programming in criminal justice. These institutions were identified by marketing staff of Penn State's World Campus who accessed the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) of the U.S. Department of Education.² If information about online programming in criminal justice at these institutions was not readily available on the web, a phone call was placed to the institution. The results of those efforts are reported in Table 3. As indicated, and all total, 80 institutions offer some type of online criminal justice programming, about 21% of the degree-granting institutions examined. A majority of those 80 institutions (about 66%) offer the entire degree online (53 offering the undergraduate degree, 22 offering the master's degree, and four offering both the undergraduate and the master's degree). Four institutions report that they offer a hybrid or degree-completion online program, and two report that they offer an associate degree online. Two institutions report offering an online

2. An effort was made to determine whether any of these 379 institutions were not accredited through the U.S. Department of Education. It was discovered, however, that IPEDS does not make such a file available to the public. Too, we discovered that not all institutions report data to IPEDS. Thus, although every effort was made to develop a comprehensive list of accredited institutions through which criminal justice degrees are conferred, that was not possible to achieve. We believe, however, that most readers of *JCJE* have some knowledge of the issue and are aware of so-called "diploma mills" that exist in today's world of higher education such that they are able to discard any information reported here that does not directly relate to an accredited institution.

Table 3 Online programs in criminal justice (all programs listed are totally online unless otherwise noted in italics)

Undergraduate degree	Master's degree
American Intercontinental University Online	Albany State University
Ashford University	Arizona State University-Tempe
Bemidji State University	Boston University
Buena Vista University	Delta State University
<i>Bluefield College (hybrid program)</i>	East Carolina University
California State University-Sacramento	Faulkner University
Chaminade University of Honolulu	Fayetteville State University
Concordia University-Saint Paul	Florida International University
DeSales University	Florida State University
Endicott College	Fort Hays State University
Everest University-Lakeland	Michigan State University
Everest College-Phoenix	Northeastern University
	Northern Michigan University
Everest University-Tampa	Nova Southeastern University
Florida International University	Sacred Heart University
Florida Metropolitan University-North Orlando	Saint Cloud University
Florida Metropolitan University-Pinellas	Sam Houston State University
Fort Hays State University	Troy University
Fort Valley State University	University of Arkansas at Little Rock
<i>Gannon University (associate degree)</i>	University of Central Florida
Governors State University	University of Great Falls
Grand Canyon University	University of Louisiana at Monroe
Hannibal-Lagrange College	University of Massachusetts at Lowell
Herzing College	
Hodges University	
Indiana Wesleyan University	
<i>Jacksonville State University (emergency management degree with a public safety concentration)</i>	
<i>Judson University (certificate program in criminal justice)</i>	
Kaplan University	
La Roche College	
Liberty University	
<i>Lindsey Wilson College (last two years of the program are online)</i>	
<i>Metropolitan State University (offers a legal studies degree with a criminal justice concentration)</i>	
Mount Olive College	
Mountain State University	
National University	

Table 3 (Continued)

Undergraduate degree	Master's degree
<i>New Mexico State University-Main Campus (offers a hybrid program with the last 2 years completed online)</i>	
North Carolina Central University	
<i>Northeastern University (criminal justice concentration offered in the Political Science online degree)</i>	
<i>Northwestern State University of Louisiana (associate degree)</i>	
Ottawa University-Phoenix	
Penn State Harrisburg	
Peru State College	
Pfeiffer University	
Plymouth State University	
Post University	
Remington College-Honolulu Campus	
Saint Cloud University	
Saint Leo University	
Saint Joseph's College of Maine	
Saint Thomas University	
Southern Oregon University	
Southern University at New Orleans	
SUNY College at Oswego	
<i>Taylor University-Fort Wayne (last two years of program are online)</i>	
<i>The University of Texas of the Permian Basin (last two years of program are online)</i>	
University of Arkansas at Little Rock	
University of Maryland-University College	
<i>University of Northern Colorado (hybrid program)</i>	
University of Texas at Arlington	
University of Toledo-Main Campus	
<i>University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh (hybrid program)</i>	
Western Carolina University	
Western New Mexico University	
Westwood College-Dupage	
Westwood College-O'Hare Airport	
Westwood College-River Oaks	

concentration in criminal justice as part of some other online degree (e.g., emergency management or political science). One institution reports offering an online certificate in criminal justice.

Thus, we believe that we have more than made our case that there is a proliferation of online programs in criminal justice, or a closely related field, in higher

education. Too, we have discussed the dynamics associated with moving to the online environment, all of which can be applied to criminal justice programs and their home institutions. It is important, then, to recognize that online programming is here to stay and is likely to continue to expand. With that idea in mind, we next move to discuss some of the critical issues that are associated with this type of teaching environment, primarily with the faculty member in mind.

The Impact of Online Teaching and Learning on Faculty Members

Appropriately enough, much of the academic discussion regarding online education in criminal justice has focused on assessment and pedagogy (e.g., Johnson 2005; Katz 2008; Thomas 2000), curricular development (e.g., Snell and Penn 2005), and student satisfaction with distance learning (e.g., Maki, Maki, Patterson, and Whittaker 2000; Mayzer and DeJong 2003). There is limited literature available that provides an in-depth discussion on the impact of program development on faculty members. This is an important fact since many colleges and universities are seeking new revenue streams due to an uncertain economy. The funds associated with online programs are extremely attractive, and in the rush to turn potential profits into real profits, many faculty members get caught in an enterprise for which they are ill-prepared.

Delivering education in a medium outside the traditional means brings the need to refocus the perception of the faculty group that is involved in such an effort. It is critical that faculty interested in developing and teaching online courses be properly oriented and trained (Kelsey 2000; Moore 1994) and that they consider the following issues.

Issue 1: The Time Commitment for Online Course Development and Instruction

A primary consideration for online course development and teaching is the time commitment. Prudent course development is essential since one of the main reasons students drop online courses is because they were poorly designed (Frankola 2000). How work load issues are handled will vary from one institution to another; in some cases, faculty might receive a course off during the semester the online course is being developed. In another scenario, the instructor may be paid extra compensation for course development while maintaining the current teaching load. Either way, it is our experience that individuals who are not aware of the work involved in developing a course for online delivery will find themselves in a rather difficult situation once development begins. While some faculty may equate online course development with posting PowerPoint slides on a website, uploading a quiz or test to the course management system, etc., a dedicated approach to online teaching requires an instructor to consider the material to present for students to master, devoid of face-to-face interaction. Perhaps the

most difficult aspect of online instruction is translating a traditional course to the virtual environment without the assistance of context and tone. In the classroom, instructors facilitate learning in subtle ways (e.g., group discussion, tone of voice), and these methods must be re-conceptualized for online students. In terms of attaining set goals and objectives, developing an online course that is comparable to the residential classroom experience takes considerable effort.

As pointed out by Dykman and Davis (2008b, p. 157), "when there is a failure to communicate expectations and the student is not doing what the teacher intends, the situation can deteriorate without either party realizing that there is a problem until it is too late." They suggest that when a student contacts an online instructor about an assignment that he/she does not understand, then the instructor communicates to the entire class that a student has raised an issue and that he/she would like to further clarify the instructions for the assignment in question. This gets to the basic point being made here about sufficient attention to online course development: assignment instructions will need to be extremely clear to students, even to the extent of providing several examples. Think about the first day of class in the residential classroom. Much of that time is spent going over the expectations for the course with an opportunity for students to ask questions about anything they do not understand. This is not the case in the online learning environment, however, and thus the additional time is needed to construct clear assignments and to allow students an opportunity to raise their questions and get them answered (Conaway, Easton, and Schmidt 2005).

In the same vein, instructors in the online environment must be prepared to put time into interacting with students. Deliberate, well-planned opportunities for communications between the student and the instructor and among students themselves are crucial for the online classroom, no less so than for the residential classroom. How this is accomplished is up to the individual instructor and he/she has several options. While this issue may be partially resolved by using one of a number of software programs to connect virtual users (Adobe Connect, Elluminate, Wimba, etc.), synchronous discussion has its shortcomings. First, designating a set time for group discussion restricts the flexibility of an online course. Time differences and work schedules may preclude some students from taking advantage of this course feature, thus placing certain students at a disadvantage. Second, the lead author employed an early form of synchronous chat, a propriety form of instant messaging. The program was found to be cumbersome given the lag time between messages, which rendered real-time conversations disjointed and difficult to follow. This limitation was especially problematic with larger classes. Therefore, in our experience, discussion boards, blogs, and email are the preferred means of communication. Continuous opportunities for communication, however, are the key. Although, as stated above, one way to clear up misunderstandings is via group messages to all the students in the course, there will need to be several instances of one-on-one communication between individual students and the instructor. According to Conaway et al. (2005), the professor must take a proactive approach here. Only through some one-on-one interaction can the student begin to trust that the

instructor is paying attention to him/her; in essence, students get the sense that the teacher is an active, as opposed to passive, player in the virtual classroom. As pointed out by Dykman and Davis (2008b, p. 160), "Structured, regular communication is a basic principle behind teaching online. Friendliness, diligence, and empathy all play a role with students."

At the authors' present institution, new course development takes place over two academic semesters to ensure course content can be developed and edited for final delivery. Additionally, the university has allocated funds for an instructional designer to assist faculty in creating courses for online delivery.³ Along with the instructional designer, the faculty member builds into the course several "thought provoking-type" exercises to which students must respond. In some cases, students work together on problem-solving exercises, using their group space for discussion before posting the final solution to the problem to their "official" group assignment drop box. The instructor grades the posts and provides feedback to the students individually or to the group as may be the case. Further, and this is an equally crucial issue, the instructional designer is on hand to correct any problems related to technology and there is a help desk, complete with a 1/800 phone number that students can call, including evenings and weekends, for assistance with those types of problems. The faculty member, then, is free to focus only on the course content and interactions with students.

This method of course development and delivery produces a superior product overall and provides crucial assistance to instructors and students, most of whom are new to the online teaching and learning arena. Ko and Rossen (2004) refer to this type of support as high tech. They caution would-be online instructors to consider the type of support available to them at their institution before deciding to develop an online course. They do not, however, suggest that instructors with low- or mid-tech solutions not move forward with online course development; rather, they merely give suggestions that individuals might follow if they are at a place with somewhat limited resources. All of the issues that we have discussed here play a role in those suggestions. To summarize, online course development and teaching is quite an undertaking and if such efforts are successful, faculty must consider the time and resource commitment.

Issue 2: Incorporating Online Instruction into Existing Course Load

One consideration for faculty members considering online teaching is whether those courses will be taught as part of the regular teaching load or in an over-

3. The unit that bears the costs of an instructional designer is determined up front via communications between the delivery unit (in Penn State's case that would be the World Campus; in other institutions it most probably is the instructional or technology support units) and the academic department. This is another one of those issues that will vary from one institution to another and faculty interested in online course development will need to get these questions answered early in the process.

load situation. It is our experience here at PSH that online teaching is much more time intensive than teaching in the residential classroom. We point that out here because of some anecdotal evidence that faculty believe the opposite to be true. Some instructors might fail to recognize the importance of carefully considering the issue when deciding whether to take extra compensation for an online course as part of a teaching overload or whether to negotiate with the administration for online courses to be part of the regular teaching load. It is our suggestion, based on putting an entire program online, that while some upfront teaching overloads may be necessary in order for revenues from the program to be realized by the unit (thus allowing, as we have, additional faculty lines, both non-tenure-track and tenure-track, to be established), the better scenario is to move as is reasonably possible to the point where online courses are built into the normal teaching load of a faculty member. This is especially true for non-tenured faculty members who are just beginning their careers in academe.

Issue 3: The Effect of Online Programming on Faculty Productivity

There is no doubt that a decision to put a program online, or developing and offering a few courses, has the potential to negatively impact faculty members' research and scholarship productivity. This is the primary reason for the caution expressed in the previous section about putting a new tenure-track faculty member in the position of course development. Although two of our tenure-track faculty members were not tenured and promoted at the time we began developing courses in our program here at PSH, they did have a number of years under their belt toward tenure (both have now been tenured and promoted). The best case scenario is to negotiate for a course off during the semester in which most of the faculty member's time will be spent on course development. Some junior faculty may wish to accept extra compensation instead of a course off, and if he/she is at an institution with somewhat lower expectations for research and scholarly output, that would not be problematic except for one sometimes overlooked point: teaching could suffer in all courses, residential or online, if the load is too severe. Too, the instructor could face burnout very early in his/her career. Finally, the students themselves could suffer due to an overly burdened instructor who simply does not have enough time to put into any single course. These issues should sound familiar to all who teach at institutions of higher learning, but we would like to underscore our argument here that online teaching will be more, not less, time intensive if it is done right. We feel, however, that at this point we would be remiss if we did not also recognize the impact of online teaching on senior faculty, especially those who continue to be productive scholars. Careful consideration and negotiations will need to take place regardless of the instructor's rank, that is the key point being made here.

Issue 4: Recognition of Faculty Online Development by Administrators and Colleagues

The way a university defines itself, or is defined by outside stakeholders, may provide insight into how online instruction will be viewed by administrators. Traditional universities actively solicit faculty involvement in an online program for a number of reasons, but most notably for the generation of revenue. In this view, administrators often value the efforts of the faculty member and would view the responsibility as carrying appropriate scholarly weight given the time commitment involved.

This appreciation does not always extend to the instructor's faculty colleagues, however, and this is especially important when considering the make-up of promotion and tenure committees. We suggest here that careful mentoring will need to take place to ensure that scholarly productivity is not down due to online development and/or teaching commitments. However, unit heads will need to make the case for the value of the work that has gone into online course development and teaching, no less so than when a faculty member is asked to develop a new residential course, but with a need to underscore the fact that online course development and teaching is more time intensive. This assumption is due to our experience with online teaching as well as backed up by the literature (Ko and Rossen 2004, for example). Consider the time it would take to respond to approximately 30 students in the residential classroom who were required to speak up and offer a solution to a posed problem. Or, consider the time it would take to respond via email to half of those students who did not quite understand the assignment as explained in class or as written into the syllabus? The realization that online teaching is time-consuming has lead some who write on the subject matter to devote a great deal of time on providing suggestions for online instructors as to how they can better manage their time in the virtual classroom (see Ko and Rossen 2004). Unfortunately, however, many criminal justice instructors are not convinced of the value of online teaching and learning and thus may not be willing to see online course development and teaching as part of the overall scholarship of teaching. It will be critical, then, for department heads to keep a close watch on the matter to ensure that instructors who engage in online teaching are seen as valued members of the department.

Issue 5: Copyright and Questions of Course Ownership

With the high-tech support that we have received here at PSH, our instructional designers take care of any copyright issues related to course materials. Those instructors with mid- or low-tech support will need to attend to these matters, most of which turn on the questions of whether instructors are using materials that are in the general public domain (e.g., much of what is available on the web) or if they are assembling several works into some sort of course packet, etc. The same general rules of thumb that attach to the residential classroom apply here.

Before agreeing to develop and teach an online course instructors will need to find out what the policy related to intellectual property is and whether they can accept it. Ko and Rossen (2004) remind us that universities often cede rights to faculty that they do not have to. They argue that “most faculty members are under the impression that the intellectual work they produce or publish automatically belongs to them” (Ko and Rossen 2004, p. 172). This is incorrect, however, and the truth is that many institutions grant these rights to faculty because they believe that doing so will bring in revenues to the institution through grants and contracts. Or, in the case of online courses, revenues would come from tuition. Because this is such a gray area, faculty members must find out what the policy is and in the absence of one, create one, in consultation with the senior administrator. This issue needs to be worked out up front and before any development begins.

There are other issues that are important to consider before moving forward with online course development but space does not allow too much elaboration beyond that already provided. We will quickly add, however, that we recommend that all program faculty members are involved in discussions about these issues and come to some agreement on the general “look” of the courses. Students will see a more streamlined approach to online delivery of courses if all courses within a specific discipline at least have a similar background or format. In fact, we have had comments from students via student evaluations of teaching that criminal justice courses are easy to navigate through and that they are impressed that they all have a common background color and layout. Simple steps can be taken that can, in turn, instill in students the sense that careful thought and planning has gone into online programming. We would also suggest that courses be developed such that other instructors within the program could easily teach the course in subsequent semesters. We have moved instructors around within our online courses and it works well, thus providing the program greater flexibility when it comes to scheduling courses. Too, it spreads the workload around somewhat; we have argued that online teaching takes up more time than does the residential classroom. Rotating faculty with expertise and teaching experience in the course in question between online and residential coverage has been a win-win situation for us. At least somewhat, this gets back to the question of course ownership and those instructors who see the courses they teach as exclusively theirs will need to be persuaded otherwise if such an approach to scheduling is going to work.

Summary and Conclusions

We argue here that online programming in criminal justice is alive and well and is likely to expand beyond where it is today. We also hope to have established the importance of considering several key issues before embarking on such a journey. These considerations have been presented primarily for the benefit of the faculty member since most of the extant literature has focused on students’

experiences in the online environment. Criminal justice instructors must consider the positives and the possible negatives of online program development based on a number of criteria. Ultimately, an individual's decision is dependent upon whether online instruction meshes with their personal academic plan in terms of teaching, research, and scholarship. Institutional commitment to online education may vary and it behooves the instructor to find out up front just what resources are available to him/her. A program with an established structure, complete with both design and technological assistance, is the preferred method of development and delivery of online programming.

Without a doubt, online teaching is a productive means of furthering the profile of a criminal justice or criminology program by expanding the student base, even within a market where numbers of incoming students could be stagnant or on the decline. Stepping up to the plate and agreeing to engage in online course development and teaching signals to the program or the unit that the instructor is engaging in a collegial effort that could promote goodwill between themselves and their colleagues, especially for the untenured faculty member. Caution should be applied, however, given all of the issues that have been raised here.

Distance learning has entered a new phase. While the data reviewed in this study are by no means conclusive, there is sufficient evidence that suggests that online program growth is more than just a passing trend. That being the case, online teaching and learning creates a set of challenges for the discipline that criminal justice faculty must address while simultaneously placing student needs at the forefront. This can be accomplished without sacrificing quality teaching and course structure, but it will be necessary for there to be open lines of communication between senior administrators and faculty. Many elements of classroom instruction transfer well to the online environment; however, faculty must recognize that long-held pedagogical views are less applicable with this new platform. With sufficient resources and a commitment to put in the necessary time and preparation, the criminal justice faculty member can readily embrace web-based learning and incorporate online instruction into their everyday academic routine.

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