

Student Perceptions of Defense Acquisition University Courses: An Explanatory Data Collection Approach

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Abstract : The overarching purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between the current format of online delivery for Defense Acquisition University (DAU) courses and Air Force Acquisition (AFA) personnel participation. AFA personnel (hereafter named "student") were particularly of interest, as they have been mandated to take anywhere from 3 to 30 online courses to earn various DAU specialization certifications. Participants in this qualitative case study were AFA personnel who pursued DAU certifications in science and technology management, program/contract management, and other related fields. Air Force personnel were interviewed about their experiences with online courses. The data gathered were analyzed and grouped into 12 major themes. The themes tied into the theoretical framework and spoke to either teacher-centered or student-centered educational practices within Defense Acquisitions University. Based on the results of the data analysis, various factors contributed to student perceptions of DAU courses, including the online course construct and relevance to their job. The analysis also found students want to learn the information presented but would like to be able to apply the information learned in meaningful ways.

Keywords : educational theory, computer-based training, interview, student perceptions, online course design, teacher positionality

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