

Preparing Faculty to Deliver Academic Continuity during and after a Disaster

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Abstract : Political pressures, financial restraints, and recent legislation has led to administrators' at academic institutions to rely upon online education as a viable means for delivering education to students anytime and anywhere. Administrators at academic institutions have utilized online education as a way to ensure that academic continuity takes place while campuses are physically closed or are recovering from damages during and after disaster. There is a gap in the research as to how to best train faculty for academic continuity during and after disasters occur. The lack of available research regarding how faculty members at academic institutions prepared themselves prior to a disaster served as a major rationale for this study. The problem that was addressed in this phenomenological study was to identify the training needed by faculty to provide academic continuity during and after times of disaster. The purpose of the phenomenological study was to provide further knowledge and understanding of the training needed by faculty to provide academic continuity after a disaster. Data collection from this study will help human resource professionals as well as administrators of academic institutions to better prepare faculty to provide academic continuity in the future. Participants were recruited on LinkedIn and were qualified as having been faculty who taught traditional courses during or after a disaster. Faculty members were asked a series of open-ended questions to gain understanding of their experiences of how they acquired training for themselves for academic continuity during and after a disaster. The findings from this study showed that faculty members identified assistance needed including professional development in the form of training and support, communication, and technological resources in order to provide academic continuity. The first conclusion from this study was that academic institutions need to support their students, staff and faculty with disaster training and the resources needed to provide academic continuity during and after disasters. The second conclusion from this study is that while disasters and other academic institution incidents are occurring more frequently, limited funding and the push for online education has created limited resources for academic institutions. The need to create partnerships and consortiums with other academic institutions and communities is crucial for the success and sustainability of academic institutions. Through these partnerships and consortiums academic institutions can share resources, knowledge, and training.

Keywords : training, faculty, disaster, academic continuity

Conference Title : ICHRM 2017 : International Conference on Economics and Human Resource Management

Conference Location : London, United Kingdom

Conference Dates : January 19-20, 2017