# eriksonline

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# It's Erikson, and it's online

**What we've learned about designing and delivering engaging and empowering online experiences**

Luisiana Melendez
Clinical Assistant Professor
Program Director, Online MSECE, B/ESL

Chip Donohue
Director of Distance Learning

Margaret Lane
Coordinator, Academic Success Center

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## About Erikson Institute

Our vision is that every adult who works with young children or on their behalf will be knowledgeable, aware, skilled, and alive to the possibilities of each child's life.

We offer master's degrees, a doctoral program, graduate certificate programs, and a wide array of professional development opportunities for those seeking to improve their practice and sharpen their skills.

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## About Erikson Institute

**Our values**

• Relationship-based education

• Commitment to social justice

• Diversity

• Complexity

• High standards and excellence

## Faculty wondered about…

- A program for experienced educators?
- Ease of transfer content to online delivery
  - Preserving academic rigor
  - Pedagogy
- Application of Theory to Practice
- Relationship based education
- Faculty preparation and support to teach online
- Strong academic support for students

## What have we learned?

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## An online program for experienced educators

**MSECE – Focal points**

- Integrate and apply critical child development theory to practice
- Develop and refine advanced practice skills
- Identify and focus on various aspects of education teaching, curriculum development, and reflective practice and supervision

**Program content and focus eased transition to online medium**

## The Course Conversion Process

- Team approach
- Support from Online Learning Team
- Availability of online prototypes and resources to inform the course conversion process
- Collaboration, collaboration, collaboration

## Moving faculty online

**What worked?**

- Collaborative planning and development process
- Course teams
- Tech support for faculty and students
- EriksonOnline design, format, features and tools
- "Sense of belonging"
- Academic Success Center
- eLibrary services
- Pairs, small groups and online presentations

## Moving faculty online

**What needs to be improved?**

- Faculty time (to develop, to learn, to teach)
- Avoid building and teaching at the same time
- Learn how to teach online – confidence & competence – mentoring, observing, teams
- Conversational tone – 1 student at a time
- Make instructions (even more) explicit
- How much is enough?  How much is too much?
- Discussion facilitation skills and strategies

## Moving faculty online

**What needs to be improved?**

- Offer a maximum of two courses at a time
- Don't try to do it all the first semester
- Provide time and support for "low stakes" practice and use of new tech tools
- Use more audio (feedback…) and video (intros, presentations, assignments, interviews…)
- Offer more synchronous opportunities
- Online writing lab instead of on campus program

## Teaching online…some personal comments

**Challenges…**

- Time demands
- The interface between technology and pedagogy
- The asynchronous nature of the interactions

**…and rewards**

- The development of quality relationships with students
- An opportunity to revise and strengthen course content
- Mastery of strategies and technology than can enhance course delivery
- An incredible opportunity to grow as an instructor

## The Integrative Seminar

- 8-10 students with a seminar leader
- Continues for the duration of the program
- A unique way to bridge theory to practice
- A forum for reflective practice
- An instrument to build community and engage in collaborative problem solving

## What Worked

- **Class Size** Small number of students facilitated student-to-student and seminar leader-student interaction
- **Intentional Community Building** First semester of Intengrative Seminar intentionally and systematically centered on building a strong sense of community
- **Capitalizing on students' experience and practice** Students professional experiences provided a foundation for applying course content to practice
- **Close Collaboration with content instructors** Working closely with content instructors allowed seminar to strenghthen understanding of key content

## The Academic Success Center

- Led by an experienced online educator
- Provides students with support regarding academic issues
    - 1-1 with Academic Success Partner (Phone, email, Skype)
    - Academic writing
    - Collaboration between instructor, seminar leader and ASC
- Modules and resources tailored to the particular needs of students:
    - Essential skills for learning online
    - Essential academic skills
    - Core course content and assignments
    - Individual academic needs

## What Worked

**An effective and sympathetic ASC leader** Margaret Lane's own experience as an online instructor and former Erikson online student was instrumental in making ASC successful

**Anticipating students' needs** Close collaboration with online faculty allowed the ASC to create modules and support strategies that anticipated the students' academic needs

## The Students' Experience

**What worked?**

- **Support** – *"We received incredible support from everyone." "They heard our concerns and responded quickly." "Getting comfortable and learning HOW to learn online was a big accomplishment."*
- **Tools** – *"The assignment roadmap and checklists are very helpful."*
- **Format** – *For me, one of the main things that "worked" was having each class set up into the Modules. The similar organization of each course helped me to figure out how to follow the courses properly.*
- **Skype** – *"It really is nice to hear my classmates' voices and I feel more connected to my peers." "I was surprised how much the Skype conversations gave us a nice sense of community"*

## The Students' Experience

**What worked?**

- **Integrative Seminar** – *"…helped us look for solutions rather than just focus on the challenges."*
- **Relevance** – *"I'm living each experience as it unfolded [in class]."*
- **Reflective practice** – *"My constant reflection has had a positive influence on my teaching."*
- **Peer-to-peer learning** – *"I have so much enjoyed the professional camaraderie that we have developed. It is wonderful for me to hear what you all think about the ideas we have been learning…hearing all of your opinions has certainly made me think more deeply about a lot of issues we've discussed!"*

## The Students' Experience

**What worked?**

**Interactions > Relationships > Community**

- *"We learned how to trust, respect, listen, speak up and challenge each other."*
- *"…we've grown not only in our knowledge and practice of early childhood education, but also in our ability to form connections in an online learning space."*
- *"The peers that I have met and the professors and support staff I have encountered have proven that Erikson helps to create a caring learning environment."*
- *"The caring community we've just begun to experience."*
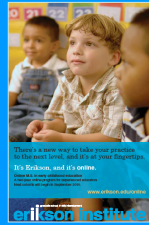
## The Students' Experience

**What needs to be improved?**

- Allow access to modules in advance
- More instructor feedback and presence
- More real time experiences – Skype calls
- More required pair and group work
- More video of instructors
- Fewer…discussion questions to respond to at one time, separate assignments, within module deadlines, places to post, new technology tools

## If we build it…will they come?

There's a new way to take your practice to the next level, and it's at your fingertips.

It's Erikson, and it's online.

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Effective
Engaging
Enabling
Inspiring
Empowering

*It's not about the technology…*

**eriksonline**

Authentic
Intentional
Reflective
Presence
Rhythm

*It's about teaching and learning…*

**eriksonline**

## Intentional Design

- Understand the context
- Engage in a collaborative process
- Reflect on vision, mission, goals, approach
- Remove barriers to expand access/extend reach
- Increase enrollment and add to diversity
- Deliver an Erikson education at a distance

## Innovative Design

- Introduce a customized environment
- Provide interactivity with interactions
- Enable and encourage communication, interactions, relationships, collaboration, community
- Offer asynchronous and synchronous options
- Support a variety of content formats
- Integrate Web 2.0 tools

## Instructional Design

- Deliver high tech with high touch
- Make the technology transparent
- Provide a friendly and intuitive user interface
- Offers simple, "always there" navigation
- Ensure that "helpful help" is one click away
- Promote a "sense of belonging"

*This is my Erikson!*

## Learning by Design

- Tech training and support
- *Learning with EriksonOnline* orientation activities and resources
- Learn how to learn online
- Easy online access to the library, advising and student services
- Online writing program
- Academic Success Center

## Teaching by Design

- Tech skills & support
- Course development
- Content conversion
- Instructional design
- Instructional technology
- Effective practices – *The guide on the side* and a *learner-centered approach*

- Presence and voice
- Facilitating discussions
- Building community
- Integrative Seminar
- Faculty community of practice, *Teaching with EriksonOnline,* hands-on and 1-1 training, peer-to-peer support, EriksonOnline team

## Teaching by Design

- Module format
- Course materials & resources
- Online readings
- Audio and video introductions
- Narrated PowerPoint & notes
- Video clips
- Interviews, Guests & Team Members
- Links to websites and resources

- Discussions
- Pair & group activities
- Collaborative learning
- Presentations
- Learner-generated content
- Learning community
- Synchronous – Skype
- Web 2.0 tools

## Top Ten Lessons Learned

1. To thine own self be true
2. Keep it in context
3. Rome wasn't built in a day
4. It takes a village to build an online program
5. Show me the money

## Top Ten Lessons Learned

6. We're not in Kansas anymore
7. If you build it, students will come
8. Embrace new approaches
9. Leverage emerging Web 2.0 tools
10. Identify your effective practices

### It's for…

Children
Parents
Families
Professionals
Communities

*It's Erikson, and it's online.*

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