



RAISING THE BAR for ACADEMIC VIDEO



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As academic videos have become mainstays in college classrooms, faculty are increasingly turning to instructional designers to help them engage a generation of students who have grown up watching YouTube.

The popularity of academic videos has risen as the number of online, blended and flipped classes has soared on college campuses, fueling the demand for instructional designers.

At least 13,000 instructional design-

ers now work on U.S. college campuses, according to a 2018 report by the Online Learning Consortium. That number is expected to grow as enrollment in online and blended courses continues to climb. Instructional designers guide faculty in converting their face-to-face courses to online formats. State-of-the-art academic videos are a critical piece of that transition.

“In online courses, videos roughly hold the spot that textbooks used to hold,” says Malcolm Brown, director of learning initiatives for Educause. That is

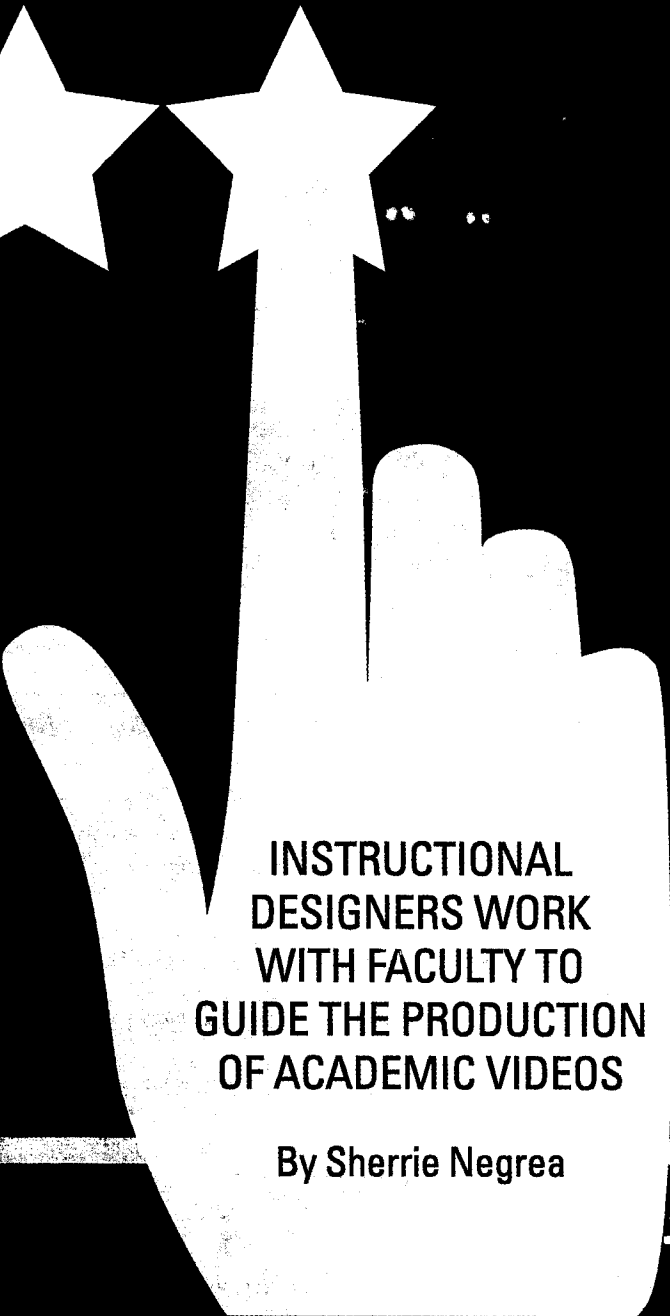
also the case for many traditional courses, he adds, because of “the sinking boat of classic textbooks,” which are often being replaced by open educational resources, he adds.

Here’s how instructional designers are advising faculty on academic video content and production.

Ensuring they understand instructional video basics

The best technique for creating instructional videos is now considered tried and

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INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGNERS WORK WITH FACULTY TO GUIDE THE PRODUCTION OF ACADEMIC VIDEOS

By Sherrie Negrea



truc: break them up so that students can view smaller chunks of information. One MIT/edX study of students watching videos in four massive open online courses concluded that six minutes is the ideal length, with student engagement declining as videos get longer.

Yet sometimes, professors still want to film an entire class, says Constance Harris, director of online learning at The University of Baltimore. She advises faculty to pull the content that's going to be most meaningful to get the point across.

In online classes, professors can use video to create a more personal connection with students. They can introduce themselves at the beginning of the course and record a summary of each week's material.

"Video is a way of instilling that instructor presence," says Stephen Bridges, instructional designer and lead media producer at the University of Georgia. "The faculty member is a person with whom I'm interacting, and there's not just a robot on the other end

of the internet."

In flipped courses, the videos students view as homework must focus on the next day's activities. And in brick-and-mortar classes, professors are also using video to enhance the learning experience. Videos in a traditional classroom might show a professor demonstrating how to



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conduct a lab experiment or interviewing an expert at a remote location.

“Faculty can disseminate information much easier that way,” says Dawn Dubriel, an instructional designer at Lynn University in Florida. “And it’s the way students like to learn.”

Guiding them through video production steps

Creating an academic video requires collaboration between the instructor and the instructional designer. It often begins with a conversation about the course’s goals and how video can enhance the learning objectives.

After discussing specific types of video projects, instructional designers generally recommend that the professor write a script, or at least a bulleted list of specific items that identifies what to cover.

“It will help them know how long the video will be, and they won’t get project creep,” Bridges says.

While some colleges and universities have large staffs of instructional designers who create videos for professors, others rely on faculty to produce videos themselves.

“What you really want is a model that is sustainable,” says Harris of Baltimore. “The best model is to teach faculty how



INSTRUCTION PRODUCTION—Dawn Dubriel (right), an instructional designer at Lynn University, helps faculty such as criminal justice professor Sinee Kerker create lesson plans using instructional apps for iPad Pro. Instructional designers produce videos with professors and teach them how to do it themselves.

to create their own videos, so if they want to create a video, they can do it whenever they want to.”

At Rochester Institute of Technology in New York, four instructional designers consult with professors, who then use Camtasia video software to record voice-over PowerPoint presentations and short lectures.

“We talk to them about best practices

and make sure that each video has a very specific point,” says Marty Golia, instructional design researcher and consultant at RIT.

At Lynn University, Dubriel uses a combination of approaches, including producing videos with professors and showing them how to do it themselves with recording software. “I like to teach them how to fish so I don’t have to do ▶

