

Scott Warnock does an impressive job of establishing 41 guidelines for newish online composition faculty (or those desiring to begin their endeavor in online composition instruction). The book is chock full of great ideas and what's more, they are steeped in instructional design principles as well as practical teaching strategies. As I finished reading, I was astounded at the Works Cited page which totals 13 and a half pages! I am a full time instructional designer as well as a part-time online composition instructor, so my full time self was happy to see that the "Bible" of online instruction was included -- Ko & Rossen's *Teaching Online: A Practical Guide*. Warnock's vision of gradually migrating course materials online or even moving from traditional to hybrid and then completely online is a concept that doesn't always sit well with instructional designers. From a practitioner's standpoint, I also have trouble with this concept -- instructional designers and techy faculty alike will agree that teaching hybrid is MUCH harder than teaching completely online. There is a lot of gray area with hybrid instruction. Sometimes it's easier to jump to online teaching than to attempt hybridizing as a springboard to online. Because online community is paramount from an ID perspective, I appreciated that Warnock put information about "building your online teaching persona" at the forefront. Honoring that you are a human being, not a robot teaching the class is the first step to successful online instruction. There are too many facets of this book to go point-by-point through, however, I will mention a few that are on my "hit-list" when I approach helping faculty consider online instruction (even those who aren't composition instructors):

1. Negative roles to avoid -- I appreciate his student-centered way of approaching your teaching persona in the online classroom. It's important to try and be the "best and most approachable 'you' in an online environment.
2. As a newbie, use the college CMS! -- Enough said!
3. Discussion Boards -- I love the ideas of giving a word criteria to enforce thoughtfulness of posting. However, I do disagree with the suggestions for responding in the discussion boards. I believe the instructor can be a distraction in the DB and I only interject when there is misinformation or hostility. -- Add to this
4. Chunking! -- Instructional Designers everywhere love this term! It's how our brain works -- by creating patterns or chunks. Take your content and create "bite-sized," objectives-based chunks for students to easily digest.
5. The survey of what lessons you have and how you currently teach them is a great way to begin translating to online teaching and learning -- it's often the place that I begin as an instructional designer -- I ask them....what resources do you have? What are your objectives? How do you currently teach them? Not a fan of uploading PowerPoint slides. In fact, I avoid that training all together as it's so easily abused.

Warnock gives many impressive resources and helpful tips. There are so many hidden gems in the book, I cannot list them all! One area that I will dog ear and continue to go back to is the information on how to structure and execute peer review as well as grading strategies. These two are paramount for an online composition instructor. Though I have been teaching online for 7 years, I had never given my grading techniques much thought in relationship to how I used to grade in a face-to-face class. All in all, I feel smarter having read this book.....and some of it was just reassurance that I'm doing the right thing!