

ABSTRACT

A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF LECTURERS' PERCEPTION OF COMPUTER USE IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

By

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The views that college graduates are going into the work force ill-equipped to use technological tools of society, as well as an inadequate knowledge about how technology functions in higher education classrooms, contributed to recent calls for more research into the use of computers, especially, how lecturers and students currently interact with technology in the classroom.

This is a qualitative study of how a group of lecturers perceive computer use in their teaching and its impact on teaching and learning. Sources of data include in-depth interviews of six lecturers. Additional data collected to build the case studies include in-depth interviews of computer resource personnel and an administrator, classroom observations, and documentation.

Among the findings of this study are that lecturers use computers for different teaching purposes including enhancing their own efficiency and effectiveness in classroom instruction, instructional planning, management, communication,

information storage and retrieval, testing, and grading. Impacts of computer use on teaching perceived by lecturers include the opportunity to expand the range of teaching tasks, and more control of teaching. Perceived impacts of computer use on learning include students' class participation, increase in quality and quantity of learning, positive attitudes toward learning, and marketability.

Among the impacts on classroom interactions are new mode of communication, increase in cooperative learning, and new roles in the classroom.

Some of the conclusions of this study are that computer use among the lecturers studied is idiosyncratic, influenced by personal and institutional factors. Positive changes taking place as a result of computer use indicate that computers may offer education the opportunity to redefine educational goals that reflect the needs of the information society. Computers are not likely to replace teachers in the classroom, and full integration of computers into the classroom process is still far from being achieved. The revolution that computers may bring to education may be just that it fits better into the structure existing in the school than prior technologies.