



Why Distance Learning?: Higher Education Administrative Practices

Gary Berg

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Despite significant investment in computer-based learning in higher education, there is a dearth of current research on administrative strategies for its effective use. Drawing from a national survey of higher education institutions and interviews with administrators, this book addresses key issues of distance learning: Why are higher education institutions pursuing such ventures? How are administration and management practices affected by these motivations? How should universities address the difficult administrative questions raised by distance learning?

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This book explores explicit motivations, focusing on access and a belief in the pedagogical advantages of this approach to higher education. The survey reveals that top university and continuing education administrators are more than twice as likely to lead the implementation push than individual faculty. The study also found that the core of distance learning is administratively housed in self-supporting continuing education units, and that the majority of respondents pay full-time faculty under a regular load arrangement for these courses--with no additional stipend for course development. Controversial findings involving issues of intellectual property and the different attitudes of community colleges and doctoral degree-granting institutions toward distance learning are also covered.

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