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TEACHING, LEARNING,  
AND CURRICULUM STUDIES

ONLINE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: A STUDY OF FIRST YEAR ONLINE  
TEACHERS (197 pp.)

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The purpose of this study was to explore how online teacher participants identify their professional development goals and the elements that should be included in the design of a professional development course for online teachers in K-12 education. The research questions addressed in this study were 1) What are the professional development goals of online teachers, and 2) which elements should be included in the design of a professional development course?

This research was conducted as a basic interpretive qualitative study that focused on professional development goals and instructional design preferences of the four first year online teachers. Interviews, an observation of a synchronous session, analysis of online classrooms, and course documents were collected and analyzed to identify the teachers' professional development goals and instructional design preferences.

The findings of this study indicated that: (a) the online teachers have goals of increasing student engagement, (b) the online teachers have a desire to increase their knowledge and ability in using technology, (c) the online teachers prefer to have professional development course content that is relevant to their specific online teaching needs, and (d) online course content should be offered through a variety of presentation techniques.

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