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CASE REPORT ARTICLE

AN EXPERIMENT IN LIVING AND MENTORING IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION COURSE DISTANCE

UMA EXPERIÊNCIA E VIVÊNCIA EM TUTORIA NO CURSO DE EDUCAÇÃO FÍSICA A DISTÂNCIA UNA EXPERIENCIA Y UNA RELACIÓN DE TUTORÍA EN CURSO A DISTANCIA DE EDUCACIÓN FÍSICA

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ABSTRACT

Objective: to demonstrate experience as a tutor in the course of Physical Education, Distance and possible obstacles in the process of teaching and learning. **Methodology:** a descriptive qualitative study performed through an experience report on the discipline of distance tutoring online Teaching in Physical Education undergraduate degree in Physics Distance Education at the Open University of Brazil with the University of Brasília - UnB, and some possible solutions that were exposed throughout the course staff Evaluative Seminar in Physical Education course Distance Learning at the University of Brasília, DF. **Results:** visible is the improvement of teaching-learning process every two months, the difficulties and problems found during serving as tools for developing this. **Conclusion:** strategies for improvement of distance education should be sought for all undergraduate courses at a distance, but there must be effective participation of students in this process. **Descriptors:** distance education; physical education and training; higher education.

RESUMO

Objetivo: demonstrar a experiência vivida como tutor no Curso de Educação Física à Distância e os possíveis obstáculos encontrados neste processo ensino-aprendizagem. **Metodologia:** estudo descritivo, do tipo relato de experiência sobre a tutoria à distância da disciplina on-line << Didática em Educação Física no Curso de Graduação em Educação Física à Distância >> da Universidade Aberta do Brasil junto à Universidade de Brasília/UAB/UnB - e algumas possíveis soluções que foram expostas por toda a equipe do Curso no I Seminário Avaliativo do Curso de Educação Física à Distância da Universidade de Brasília, DF. **Resultados:** foi visível a melhoria do processo ensino-aprendizagem a cada bimestre. As dificuldades e problemas encontrados durante o Curso servem como instrumentos para o desenvolvimento dele. **Conclusão:** estratégias para melhoria da educação a distância devem ser buscadas por todos os cursos de graduação desta modalidade, assim como também deve haver a participação efetiva dos alunos neste processo. **Descritores:** educação a distância; educação física e treinamento; educação superior.

RESUMEN

Objetivo: demostrar la experiencia como profesor en el curso de Educación Física a Distancia y los posibles obstáculos que hay en el proceso de enseñanza y aprendizaje. **Metodología:** estudio cualitativo descriptivo, realizado a través de un relato de experiencia en la disciplina de la enseñanza a distancia y la tutoría en línea en el grado de licenciatura en Educación Física a Distancia de la Universidad Abierta de Brasil con la Universidad de Brasília - UAB/UnB, y algunas posibles soluciones que fueron expuestas durante el Seminario de personal del curso de evaluación en Educación a Distancia de de Educación Física en la Universidad de Brasília, DF. **Resultados:** visibles es la mejora de los procesos de enseñanza-aprendizaje cada dos meses, las dificultades y problemas encontrados mientras se desempeñaban como herramientas para el desarrollo de este. **Conclusión:** estrategias para el mejoramiento de la educación a distancia debe buscarse en todos los cursos de pre-grado a distancia, pero debe haber una participación efectiva de los estudiantes en este proceso. **Descriptores:** educación a distancia; la educación física y el entrenamiento; la educación superior.

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INTRODUCTION

Information technologies development has allowed enhancing new teaching alternatives or the distance education, which is being researched and practiced in universities and companies. Distance education is not new. In Brazil, it has worked for decades, by mail courses, like the “Instituto Universal Brasileiro” (Brazilian Universal Institute) ones, and by TV, like “Telecurso 2º Grau” (High School Telecourse), created by Rede Globo (a Brazilian TV network). The last years’ biggest news is the interactive technologies possibility, which allows real-time communication between teachers and students, just like teleconferences and the Internet, that are increased in capillarity, speed and multimedia resources terms.¹

Accordingly, Distance Education must work in a place in order to democratize the access to Public Colleges, allowing graduation to people excluded from the educational process.² Also teaching, in health areas, like Nursing, are experimenting Information and Communication Technologies, which demand initial and continuous studies through life, added to needs of preparing flexible, dynamic professionals, with technical and scientific growing possibilities socialized or individualized.³

In the Physical Education Manifest⁴, this subject was defined as “The Education element that uses, systematically, physical activities and the influence of natural agents like air, the sun, water, etc. as specific means”. So, it’s possible to declare that physical activities are considered a privileged educational vehicle, because they cover the being in its totality. In this Manifest, the physical exercise was identified with the Physical Education specific mean, whose main goals were: (a) healthy and balanced body; (b) ability to action; (c) moral values. In that document, the function of Physical Education and sports for youth formation is, from a Permanent Education point of view, to act in children, young and adult integral shaping”.⁴

The search for a quality educational practice implies recurrence for teachers to reflect on their performance and the theoretical and technical updating which gives them circumstances to generate their own didactics, adapted to their personal and collective context. Thus, it is up to the didactic, as a Pedagogy branch, to equip the educator, leading him according to the basic principles of education, for the educational theories will subsidize the own pedagogic

system.⁵

Didactics works with articulation questions between teaching and learning, aiming the educational process organization and controlling, under an intentional and systematic point of view.⁶

Thereby, in physical education, it is named like a pedagogic subject with a normative and practice character, which has as specific object the teaching technique, and also as a systematic set of specific principles, rules, resources and procedures, on which every teacher should know about and know how to apply them in order to guide their students through the subjects learning, focused in their goals, revealing a technic character.⁷

The Distance Physical Education pedagogic project - taught by Universidade Aberta do Brasil (Brazil Open University), in partnership with the Education Ministry and Universidade de Brasília (Brasília University) - was prepared taking into account the National Curricular Directives; the requirements from “Parecer” CNE-CP 21-2001; the Resolution CD/FNDE/# 34, from august 9th, 2005; and the Distance Courses Quality Parameters - SEED/MEC, highlighting the formation for didactic use of Information and Communication Technologies.⁸

The management and technical team is composed of the UAB/UnB general coordinator, Doctor Professor Maria Lídia Bueno Fernandes; the UAB/UnB pedagogic coordinator, Master Professor Maria Valeria Jacques de Medeiros; the physical education course coordinator, Doctor Professor Iran Junqueira de Castro; the course manager, professor Rosana Amaro; the tutoring coordinator, Professor Nelma Melani; the course secretaries, Juliana Vieira and Igor Leite; the 10 pole coordinators; the 56 distance tutors; the 15 presence tutors; and the 7 specific presence tutors for the stage subject.

The distance project of physical education course degree was elaborated to promote development for teachers that act in public teaching systems and that do not have legal habilitation to teach; also, to provide the same teacher formation to people from high school. This initiative is an effort promoted by the Brazilian education, to improve the quality on basic education.⁸

Taking a degree course in the subject on what he or she effectively acts, the teacher will possibly accumulate not only the specific teaching content, but also countless pedagogic possibilities that allow an effective

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performance, really inserted in an information and knowledge society.⁹

There are many goals in the distance college degree of physical education. Among them, are training with a solid base of scientific and technical knowledge about man - in their chemical, physical and biological dimensions - and the anthropogenetic growth, linked to the psychological and sociological dimensions, for a view integrating body, movement, education, sport and leisure.⁸

The course mixes presence moments with distance developed activities, and has, as explicit goal, the digital inclusion process, allowing the teachers proficiency in codes and languages of information and communication technologies.^{8:8}

The course is divided in two modalities: a) Pro-Course Degree, exclusive for teachers who act in public schools and still do not have degree course, distributed by poles as follows: Brasília University - UnB (100 vacancies for 2 poles - Planaltina and Ceilândia); Rondônia Federal University - UFRR (160 vacancies for 2 poles - Ariquemes and Porto Velho); and Amapá Federal University - UNIFAP (150 for 1 pole, in Macapá). So, a total of 140 students started the course in 2007. b) Brazil Open University - UAB, exclusively for the other students (from high school or not), distributed for the following cities: Barretos - SP (130 vacancies: 50 started in 2007, 40 in 2009 and 40 in 2011); Duas Estradas - PB (50 vacancies in 2007 and 40 in 2011); Piritiba - BA (90 vacancies: 50 in 2007 and 40 in 2011); Santana do Ipanema - AL (90 vacancies: 50 in 2007 and 40 in 2009); Alto Paraíso - GO (40 vacancies in 2009); Porto Nacional - TO (40 vacancies in 2009); Coromandel - MG (40 vacancies started in 2009); Buritis - MG (40 vacancies in 2011); Barra do Bugres - MT (40 vacancies in 2011) and Primavera do Leste - MT (40 vacancies in 2011), totalizing 640 vacancies since 2007.

The minimum course duration is 4 years (according to the National Education Council Resolutions # 1 and 2 from 2002 and its "Parecer" 09/2001). This calendar is different from the usual academic calendar, in order to facilitate the use of school holidays, since the students are teachers exercising at schools. The utilization of school holidays also facilitates the use of Universities structure for presence and laboratory activities.⁴

The UAB/UnB tutors go through a simplified selection process to act as presence and/or distance tutors. Brasília University - UnB - publishes an announcement, as some basic requirements are needed for that contemplation: being, at least, graduated in

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his/her acting area; having experience in teaching; master basic software and the Moodle platform; having experience in the subject contents that will be taught; and having 20 free hours each week to develop tutoring - from them, 4 hours will be on duty at UnB Campus (from the 10th academic month). The Education Ministry - with the Graduated Personal Developing Coordination (CAPES) - offers to the tutors, monthly, a grant of R\$ 765. The other program workers also have been made effective by a simplified public contest, conducted by Brasília University - UnB.

Initially, for the tutor to start in that function, he/she submits a course with other tutors from many other course degrees, like visual arts, languages, music, pedagogy and physical education subjects, so that there is familiarization as a tutor in the Moodle platform and also with the subject pedagogic plan. After the first presence meeting, the tutors are distributed to their respective subject coordinators for them to continue the formation process, until the course completes one month. The coordinators, with the tutors, build a work directed to the subject purposes, for - during a period of two academic months - many meetings happen to discuss topics about classes, teachers, tutors and subject tutors development in general.

This work is necessary because of some obstacles by tutors and supervisors in physical education course degrees from Brazil public universities. So, it an aim for this study to demonstrate the strategy suggestions that were explained in First Evaluative Seminar of UAB Physical Education Courses/Brasília University Physical Education Pro-Graduation to allow the course quality.

OBJECTIVE

- To demonstrate experience as a tutor in the course of Physical Education, Distance and possible obstacles in the process of teaching and learning.

METHODOLOGY

This article is an experience report about tutoring physical education didactic subject from the Brasília University (UnB) and Brazil Open University (UAB) physical education distance course.

The reported class had 29 students between 23 to 50 years old. Gender: 17 male and 12 female. The subject was taught between March and June, 2008. The students - most of them - already have a profession and

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many of them are from education area. One of them is bachelor in physical education, some are teachers, managers in state schools, a mathematician, a historian, active and retired police officers, a security guard, a postman, state school servers and administrative assistants from schools and from the city hall.

The physical education didactic subject started almost two weeks later, since the start would be in April 28, 2008. But the start only happened in May 6, 2008. The first weeks there was an accumulation of tasks due to this delay, both for tutors and for students. However, from the third week, the activities fitted the schedule. Students worked effectively during the first four weeks. After that, some students evaded, in both tasks and in the forums. The distance tutor tried, during this period, to call students back to activities and forums sending numerous encouragement messages, hoping they would not leave the course. As some students did not answer the task and orientation tutor messages, the distance tutor asked the pole presence tutor some reasons about their absences. Some students said, to justify, they had personal problems. However, according to the presence tutor, just one student had health problems and, also, argued that she did not had a computer at home to do the tasks in time.

Some students did the activities and tasks without even read the tutor guidelines. This became apparent in their activities mentions. Another factor that contributed to some students' low grades was the copied activities. In this case it was strictly requested that they would be redone, (strongly) warning them about the severity of that act.

From some justifications given to the distance tutor, when activities were not handed on time, it was perceptible the lack of commitment from certain students. There were several excuses, for example: a student said he did not have computer at home, another student was already doing a parallel course degree, and some others had flu, among other excuses that did not justify the act.

During the fifth and sixth months, there were pedagogic meetings to discuss the subject teaching-learning process. The six distance tutors and the didactic subject coordinator teacher met at least twice a month and - in these meetings - they debated about virtual platform students' evasion, about each student's difficulties, among other problems that appeared during the academic period. They debated, most of all, what

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measures should be adopted when dealing with students that nearly copied every task from other students or even from Internet sites and sent them to be evaluated.

After the eighth week, the students that did not reach sufficient grades for approval in a subject had two more weeks to finish them. Nevertheless, seven students had insufficient grades to end the subject. One of them did not take part of any subject activity; another student posted only one task from the fourth week, but participated in the presence test and in two presence lessons; another one (after being asked to redo the fourth week task) did not attend any other activity; a student - after week 4 - did not have participation and only during the complementation week he started to do some missing activities, but he was not successful; another student stayed 30 days out by a medical certificate, declaring she did not have a computer at home, and also did not finish the missing activities on time; another one had only two participations in forums and she did not do tasks from fourth week on, and it is worth noting that she did not attend any presence class; and a student had only one participation in the forums and could not do the activities in the period. None of these students participated in Chats and only two took part in the Glossary. It is emphasized that they all did not do one out of three parts of the lesson plan (the major activity in the subject). Most of the approved students had good participation in the subject. Only 7 students took part in Chats during all the course.

Some complaints were reported by the students, for example: subject starting delay, activities that would be done in presence classes were posted the night before, Chat times were not compatible with students' timetable, the subject was hard. There were some praises too: the subject, compared to previous academic times, was well elaborated and connected to the parallel subjects; distance and presence tutoring were more effective comparing to the previous ones; tasks and tests were corrected on time.

In September 10, 2008, occurred the First Evaluative Seminar of UAB Physical Education Courses/Brasília University Physical Education Pro-Graduation, where coordinators from the UAB Physical Education Pro-Graduation Course, many subject supervisor teachers, and distance tutors took part. In this seminar, the following items were debated and valued:

♦ Political Pedagogic Project

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- **Facilitating Aspect:** Pro-graduation, weekly meetings with teachers and tutors, and tutors previous training.
- **Complicating Aspect:** theory and practice relationship in the subjects (presence meetings), necessity to have a better punctuation of students participation in presence meetings, non-creation of a participation environment for deep study and search yet, clarify the evaluation system - score, mentions and new technology based method (videoconference, teleconference, video using and creation, and other resources).

◆ **Structure**

- **Facilitating Aspect:** computer equipped classrooms.
- **Complicating Aspect:** Libraries (physical space and collection), search for pole books, specific equipment and materials, specific installations and technical and operational problems.

◆ **Coordination, Teachers, Tutors and Technicians**

- **Facilitating Aspect:** Involvement of author teachers and supervisors from the disciplines taught so far and distance tutors’ participation and competence.
- **Complicating Aspect:** presence and distance tutors’ interaction, 1 presence tutor does not live in the pole, contact difficult, supervisor teacher visit during the subject development, two presence tutors hiring by pole, presence tutors assistance time in the poles and evaluation feedback time by distance tutors.

◆ **Students**

- **Facilitating Aspect:** Evasion.
- **Complicating Aspect:** Intellectual level, frequency in poles (subject activities and presence meetings), students’ interaction, copies, cheatings, forums participation and study time organization.

By these topics, a reported was elaborated by the Seminar coordinators, with participation of the present ones, in which there were some suggestions of strategies to allow the course quality:

◆ **Contributions from the Seminar participants**

- Assure quality (excessive paternalism);
- Increase subjects’ presentation, seek bigger diversification of learning forms and methods;
- Leadership valorization;
- Development of strategies which increase body practices dimension with students integration in forums;
- Invest in academic videos production;
- Development of strategies, alternatives, creative forms to solve problems (for example, participation of experienced monitors in the area);
- Ways to new students enter, in order to recover unfilled vacancies;
- Approaching presence and distance environments;
- Valorize candidate poles near Brasília;
- Review selection for distance candidates in pro-degree course program;
- Distance student profiles different from presence ones, leading to reflection about academic quality concept (relative);
- Relax students’ development during the course (respecting each one’s pace);
- Rigor to the presence tutors about their functions and responsibilities;
- Avoid long texts in the platform;
- Encouragement strategies - academic mobility;
- Creation of updating and specialization courses focusing in tutors’ capacitation;
- Systematic pedagogic meetings (seeking subjects integration, avoiding contents and knowledge superposition, and others);
- Improve relationship between poles.

FINAL REMARKS

Students who did not reach grades to be approved were not participative or rarely participated, because, since they started evading, the distance and presence tutors tried to know why they evaded from the subject. The few who answered did not do as required by the tutors.

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One of the important aspects to be investigated in the Distance Education is the teaching-learning process quality, since a bad elaborated subject and or a bad assisted tutoring will damage all this process. Facing the crescent number of poles and students all over Brazil, it is necessary to look into these standards, always focusing the democratization for a quality public university. Another important feature to be evaluated is a better selection of students who takes part in distance courses, especially full degree courses, because democratization should not lead to a graduation low quality.

Strategies to increase distance graduation quality should be copied by other courses, like the Physical Education one, which tried to do it gathering all the people involved in the teaching-learning process. Each class main student's participation is also important in order to improve this process quality.

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