

A review of the research about Chief Online Learning Officers

Dr. Eric E. Fredericksen
Associate Vice President for Online Learning &
Professor of Educational Leadership
University of Rochester
eric.fredericksen@rochester.edu

Session Summary

This session will highlight research about those individuals who are “on point” for online learning at their institution. This will include their background and experience, how their position and group are organized, responsibilities of the role, and overall institutional approach. Key findings from two national studies, along with results from the recent CHLOE research reports, will be discussed and shared. This session will be helpful to chief online learning officers (COLOs) and any faculty and staff collaborating with them.

References and Resources

A National Study of Online Learning Leaders in US Higher Education
<https://olj.onlinelearningconsortium.org/index.php/olj/article/view/1164>

A National Study of Online Learning Leaders in US Community Colleges
<https://olj.onlinelearningconsortium.org/index.php/olj/article/view/1458>

The CHLOE Project

<https://www.qualitymatters.org/ga-resources/resource-center/articles-resources/CHLOE-project>

Interview with Inside Higher Education

<https://www.insidehighered.com/opinion/blogs/learning-innovation/2024/01/18/three-questions-u-rochesters-eric-fredericksen>

Next Steps and top 3 takeaways for attendees

1. This session highlights the blend of skills and experiences that COLOs bring to their position. Individuals who aspire to these roles can benchmark themselves against these areas to develop professional development plans.
2. For institutions looking to create a new COLO position, or to recruit a new leader into this role, the blend of skills and experiences may be beneficial and help inform the requirements of the position and the corresponding job posting.
3. This session will share information about online learning being a catalyst for organizational changes and the alignment of specific functions. Institutional leaders may benefit from COLO reporting relationships and which units are most likely to be restructured under the online learning leader.