Taking Your Course Online: An Interdisciplinary Journey. **Edited by Kathleen M. Torrens and José A. Amador.** Charlotte, N.C.: Information Age Publishing, 2012. xiii + 138 pages. ISBN 978-1-61735-593-6. $45.99.

Imagine that you have been asked to offer one of your courses online next semester. Where do you start? What challenges do you face? Which aspects of the face-to-face form of the course are most likely to become "lost in translation," and what can you do about it? If only you had a group of colleagues who had just been through the experience and were willing to consult with you about the possibilities and pitfalls of teaching a course online.

This helpful book is a collection of nine brief essays by instructors at The University of Rhode Island. Contributors from a variety of fields participated in a semester-long "Online Fellows" pilot program encouraging best practices for moving established courses online. The following summer they each offered one of their regular undergraduate courses in a ten-week online format. The essays that document the process provide refreshingly frank assessments of the experience of taking a course online.

The essays are arranged into broad disciplinary groups: four in "Humanities," three in "Science and Mathematics," and two in "The Professions." A short introduction explains the shared context and the format contributors followed in their reports: each essay begins with a description of the face-to-face version of the course before supplying a narrative of the process of converting and teaching the course online. A concluding chapter by the editors identifies some common themes that emerge, including: the demand for clarity and repetition in communicating expectations, the importance of establishing a temporal structure in asynchronous learning, the special demands online learning places on literacy skills, and the need to think creatively about simulating or reimagining special course components such as team-building or group problem-solving assignments.

Three essays stand out as particularly helpful for educators in religion and theology. Adam David Roth's account of converting an upper-level course entitled "The Ethics of Persuasion" is fortified with historical and theoretical perspective. His discussion of classical suspicion of written discourse and preference for the *viva voce* reminds the reader that pedagogues have been wrestling with the implications of transformative new information technology for a long time. Plato's dialogues are lifted up as a model of creatively adapting established practices to a new medium. Roth's essay is also remarkable for including both a vigorous apology for online learning, and an especially candid assessment of some of the failures of his own efforts. Rachel L. DiCioccio's essay defines immediacy as "a set of communication behaviors that influence perceptions of physical and psychological closeness" (53), and then outlines a number of helpful strategies for establishing such closeness in the asynchronous and textual world of the online classroom. Finally, Kara Misto's account of converting a nursing course highlights some of the special challenges online teaching poses for those who understand their pedagogical task to include formation in "profound human-to-human interaction" (113).

As someone who has not yet ventured into online learning or teaching, I found these essays intriguing. If there is an online course in your immediate future, this collection of dispatches from the frontlines will be useful reading.

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