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Book Review:

Palloff, Rena M. and Keith Pratt. (2003). *The Virtual Student: A Profile and Guide to Working with Online Learners*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

The Virtual Student, 191 pages, by Rena M. Palloff and Keith Pratt is part of the Higher and Adult Education series, published by Jossey-Bass. The authors divide the book into various sections that highlight relevant aspects of leaning in an online environment.

Part one of the book profiles the virtual student, discussing who the virtual student is, the student side of online learning communities, learning styles; gender, culture, lifestyle, and geography; and what the virtual student needs.

Part two of the book provides a guide to working with the virtual student, the inherent issues, concerns, and strategies. Sub topics include designing good student orientations, time and commitment, assessment and evaluation, legal issues; attrition, retention, and group size; and student-centered learning or best practices for online teaching.

Finally, the book includes a “toolkit” for a successful online student. The authors highlight both faculty tools and student tools. For example, in the faculty tools section, the

authors provide sample course guidelines; whereas, in the student tools section, they list self-assessment questions.

Primarily, *The Virtual Student* is an excellent guide to use or book to assign for new instructors in training for online teaching. This book would also be useful for administrators training to supervise online instructors. Secondly, this book could be helpful to individuals considering enrolling in online coursework. The book includes content that administrators or instructors could share with students to maximize their success. *The Virtual Student* is well-organized, thorough yet concise, and relevant in content and scope.

Rena M. Palloff and Keith Pratt serve as core faculty at Capella University's School of Education. They also teach for the Fielding Graduate Institute. The Center for Excellence in Education has also appointed Palloff and Pratt as faculty where they direct the Crossroads Consulting Group. Their other publications include *Lessons from the Cyberspace Classroom* and *Building Learning communities in Cyberspace*, also published by Jossey-Bass.

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