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Best Practices Subcommittee of
Distance Learning and Technology
Advisory Board



Report to College of Extended Education

*Best Practices For Delivering Quality
Online Courses/ Guidelines for Instructors
May, 2001*

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Best Practices For Delivering Quality Online Courses:

Guidelines for Instructors

Outline and Resources

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This draft document will provide a framework for expansion into a comprehensive handbook for instructors. The subcommittee has assembled this outline of essential information for instructors who are beginning to teach online, to help them more easily plan and develop quality instruction. As this outline is used, and feedback about the structure and content is obtained, we will add narratives and links to develop a final product useful as an on-line resource or a paper-based handbook for instructors at ASU. Some headings already have hyperlinks to excellent resources. Other headings are waiting to have links added. We encourage your comments on the scope and sequence of the content, and referrals to additional resources that would add to the document. We welcome your input and feedback.

[1] Introduction – Why participate in technology enhanced and on-line courses?

Students want more flexibility, fewer class conflicts, and the ability to take courses at convenient times without necessarily going to the university. Instructors would like online resources and technology support for themselves and for their students. They would also like a reward system that acknowledges the additional time and resources that teaching in a multimedia, online environment requires. Teaching online is not a less expensive way to deliver instruction. Online courses target audiences with specific backgrounds and needs. Courses may be completely web-based or partially web-enhanced but in all cases they are more effective and efficient if done using the unique characteristics of the computer-mediated medium.

[2]Orientation for Faculty – The online classroom requires different preparation from the traditional one. Materials and strategies should be prepared well in advance to provide needed structure for both instructors and students.

2.1 What to Expect in the Online Classroom

The online classroom has different dynamics than the traditional classroom. Below are some links that lead to general articles explaining that difference.

http://waltoncollege.uark.edu/disted/creating_powerful_online_courses.htm Creating Powerful Online Courses Using Multiple Instructional Strategies

Tina Joy - Pitt Anne Clark - U of Colorado-Denver

<http://illinois.online.uillinois.edu/IONresources/technology/myths.html>

Seven original myths of Educational Technology as formulated by Bill Scroggins, Past President, Academic Senate for California Community Colleges.

<http://coe.sdsu.edu/eet/> The Encyclopedia of Educational Technology (EET) is a collection of short multimedia articles on a variety of topics related to the fields of instructional design, education and training.

http://www.cegsa.sa.edu.au/acec98/papers/p_collis.html Implementing Change Involving WWW-Based Course Support Across the Faculty

<http://illinois.online.uillinois.edu/IONresources/onlineoverview/index.html> Online Learning - An Overview

<http://www-icdl.open.ac.uk/icdl/export/literatu/lit02/00002547.htm> Support and connectedness: the needs of women distance education students

2.2 The Online Syllabus

A well designed online syllabus is essential for a successful course. The syllabus must be available well ahead of class to advertise the course and so that students know the course expectations and deadlines. These links have very good guidelines to help you build your syllabus.

<http://online.valencia.cc.fl.us/faculty/VOfacultysyllabus.htm>

<http://online.valencia.cc.fl.us/faculty/VOfacultysyllabuscheck.htm>

Suggested guidelines from Valencia Community College for constructing syllabi

<http://ollie.dcccd.edu/Faculty/InfoForFaculty/DistrictResources/secure/olsyll2.htm>

The Online Course Syllabus - Dallas Telecollege-complete guide to learning objectives and activities for online courses.

<http://www.aln.org/alnweb/magazine/issue2/knox.htm>

[The Pedagogy of Web Site Design](http://www.aln.org/alnweb/magazine/issue2/knox.htm) by Dr. E.L. Skip Knox. A report of one teacher's design and pedagogy for a virtual course.

<http://www.cclabs.missouri.edu/policy/syllabus/> Syllabus Snippets for the Wired Instructor

<https://courses.worldcampus.psu.edu/public/atb3/syllabustemplate/syllabus.html> Syllabus Writing 101 ,a template for setting up an online syllabus from Penn State World Campus, a leader in Distance Education.

2.3 Prepare to Teach Online.

Identify the resources and support you will need. Tell students the times you will be available online, and how often to expect feedback. Set realistic expectations for you and your students. You don't have to be available 7 days a week.

- *What are realistic time commitments?
- * What resources do you need?
- * Is technology and teaching support available to help?
- * Develop realistic expectations for instructor and students.

<http://www.fgcu.edu/onlinedesign/> Planning for course management during design and development may help reduce workload through better course planning.

<http://illinois.online.uillinois.edu/IONresources/instructionaldesign/index.html> Instructional Design for Online Course Development

2.4 Identify the Audience

Not all students are successful learners at a distance. Are your students first-time computer users? Have they had prior experience in online classes? Knowing the characteristics of your students will help you design a successful online learning experience for them. Here is some research on learning styles and a computer skills inventory that can help you.

<http://www.tafe.sa.edu.au/lsrc/one/natproj/tal/> Teaching and Learning Styles that Facilitate Online Learning

http://www.uwec.edu/Academic/Curric/koroghcm/research/computer_skills.htm Computer Skills and Distance Education Survey

2.5 Locate Teaching and Learning Support

<http://www.outreach.utk.edu/weblearning/> Web-based resource for delivery and management of education via the Internet.

2.6 Locate Technology Support

<http://www.educause.edu/ir/library/html/cem9725.html> Developing an Information Technology Support Model for Higher Education by Richard Kesner. Ideas for service delivery models.

<http://www.educause.edu/pub/er/review/reviewArticles/30446.html> Netlaw: The Faculty and Digital Technology

<http://www.educause.edu/ir/library/html/cem9633.html> Information Technology Support Services: Crisis or Opportunity?

http://firstmonday.dk/issues/issue3_1/noble/index.html Digital Diploma Mills by David Noble:

<http://horizon.unc.edu/TS/default.asp?show=article&id=612> Rethinking Faculty Support by Mark Donovan

<http://w3.scale.uiuc.edu/scale/links/library/geoghegan/wpi.html> What Ever Happened To Instructional Technology?

<http://edweb.sdsu.edu/clrit/learningtree/DCD/WWWInstrdesign/WWWInstrDesign.html> Using Instructional Design Principles To Amplify Learning On The World Wide Web Best Paper Award for "Use of the World Wide Web" SITE 96 (Society for Info. Tech. and Teacher Education 7th World Conference)

2.7 Copyright and Ownership Issues

Commercial Materials

The use of copyrighted materials in password protected or secure environments must follow guidelines for electronic reserves (or obtain written permission). Teachers may use only one copy of any copyrighted item for one semester only. The item cannot be used again without written copyright permission. The instructor is responsible for obtaining permissions. A copy of one chapter from a work of a single author or copies of not more than three chapters or articles from a collective work or periodical volume may be used over the course of a semester.

<http://www.public.asu.edu/~jeremy/CLTEjan2001%20On-linecourses.html>

overview of current university policy and guidelines for use of copyrighted materials in courses offered behind password protection

Student Produced Materials (Insert General Counsel draft for permissions)

2.8 Course Records

<http://info.lib.asu.edu/lib/archives/records.htm>

Records retention schedule for grade books

2.9 Policy References

<http://www.asu.edu/studentlife/judicial/integrity.html>

Academic Integrity Policy:

http://www.abor.asu.edu/1_the_regents/policymanual/index.html#5

Student Code of Conduct: Arizona Board of Regents Policies 5-301 through 5-308

<http://www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/acd/acd125.html>

Computer, Internet and Electronic Communications Policy

[3] The Welcome Message – Students who are new to the online environment are often anxious. Early messages should be informal and encouraging. Praise generously to encourage new online learners.

3.1 Develop a Community of Learners

<http://www.esocrates.com/LearningResources/ClassroomOLCJME.html>

Management Classes as Online Learning Communities. Dr. Paul Shrivastava

<http://www.helsinki.fi/science/optek/1995/n2/cutler.txt> Distributed Presence and Community in Cyberspace by Richard Cutler

<http://www.freeform.org/thesis/community.html> Building Community

<http://www.well.com/user/hlr/vcbook/> The Virtual Community by Howard Rheingold

3.2 Exchange Biographical Information.

Because the online environment is a more informal one, students and teachers can learn more about each other's interests than they can in a traditional classroom. Have students post brief autobiographies or themselves as one of their earliest assignments. This helps to establish a sense of community.

3.3 Provide Formal and Informal Communication Areas.

Chat areas are synchronous and are a good spot for informal, spontaneous, conversations. Discussion folders are more formal and are reserved for academic discussions about class content.

[4] Establish a Social Community – Encourage the development of an online intellectual and social community. Students will often form stronger social bonds online than they would in a traditional classroom.

4.1 Welcome students

<http://www.elearningpost.com/elthemes/comm.asp> Building Online Learning Communities

4.2 Campus on-line services, activities, and resources (add ASU resources)

4.3 Provide Informal Atmosphere

4.4 Encourage Students to Share Information about their Lives

<http://www.elearningpost.com/elthemes/amyjo.asp> Building and sustaining successful learning communities – Interview: Amy Jo Kim

4.5 Organize Groups to Collaborate on Online Assignments

<http://www.elearningpost.com/elthemes/norman.asp> Learner-Centered Design – Interview: Donald Norman

<http://thenode.org/tfl/fieldnotes/dipetta.html> Psychological Type as a Tool for On-line Groups This paper examines the use of psychological type as a group process "tool" for moderators of on-line discussion groups.

http://www.ascusc.org/jcmc/vol1/issue1/IMG_JCMC/ResourceUse.html Use of Communication Resources in a Networked Collaborative Design Environment

<http://www.informatik.umu.se/~rwhit/CSCW.html> Intended to provide a critical overview of what is meant by the terms computer supported cooperative work (CSCW) and groupware.

<http://www.acm.org/sigchi/bulletin/1997.2/students.html> Students: The Evolution of CSCW—Past, Present and Future Developments. The student editors have set out to examine how CSCW has developed to where it is today and where it might be going in the future.

<http://kapis.www.wkap.nl/kapis/CGI-BIN/WORLD/journalhome.htm?0925-9724>. Computer Supported Cooperative Work (CSCW). A Journal of Collaborative Computing

<http://thenode.org/tfl/fieldnotes/buchal.html> Discusses creating a virtual collaboration environment using synchronous and asynchronous communication.

<http://www.ccs.neu.edu/home/perrolle/privacy.html>
Social characteristics of privacy as a small group phenomenon.

[5] Facilitate Learning –

Direct students to online resources that will broaden their class experience. Encourage students to be partners in learning by sharing the online resources that they find.

5.1 Be a Guide On-the-Side rather than Sage-On-The-Stage

http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~mpc3/moderate/teach_online.html

The Role of the Online Instructor/Facilitator by Zane L. Berge, Ph.D

5.2 Provide Guidance for Online Resources

5.3 Encourage Students to Search Widely and Share Resources

5.4 Design active student centered techniques and activities

[6] Enhance Motivation – Students have chosen your online class for a variety of reasons. Encourage their class participation by striving to meet their particular needs.

6.1 Provide Successful Activities

6.2 Encourage Students

6.3 Personalize your directions and feedback

<http://www.elearningpost.com/elthemes/personalization.asp>. Personalization in learning solutions

6.4 Delegate responsibilities within the community

Identify student mediators/facilitators, etc.

6.5 Monitor Student Problems

[7] Moderate Successful Discussions – Good instructors are clear about their expectations for discussions. Requiring at least two substantive contributions per week, with one the first half and one the last half, works well. Involve students in moderating, asking them to post the initial question, monitor contributions, and summarize the discussion threads at the end of the week.

<http://www.emoderators.com/moderators.shtml> Resources for Moderators and Facilitators of Online Discussion

<http://www.emoderators.com/moderators.shtml#mod> Moderating Resources

<http://thenode.org/pedagogy/list.cfm?Subj=28&Loc=PED> Resources to help moderate online discussions, choose and develop appropriate online activities and bibliographies for further research into this topic.

<http://www.indiana.edu/~ecopts/ectips.html> Effectively Using Electronic Conferencing

http://www.edteched.uottawa.ca/options/Dec_97/SuccesConf_en.htm

Keys to Successful Computer Conferencing in Courses

http://www.syllabus.com/syllabusmagazine/oct99_magfea2.html

[Ten Paradoxical Truths about Conference Software in the Classroom](#) By John Ottenhoff and David Lawrence, Alma College

http://olt-bta.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/download/ConfGdNode_e.pdf So, You Want to Host an Online

Conference

<http://thenode.org/tfl/fieldnotes.html/green>

The Role of the Moderator in Online Forums

<http://www.nettskolen.com/forskning/19/cmcped.html> The Online Report on Pedagogical Techniques for Computer-Mediated Communication. By Morton Flate Paulsen

http://www.lgu.ac.uk/deliberations/inf_tech/ostbye.html

From Classic to Electronic Quescussion

<http://www.emoderators.com/moderators.shtml#cc> On Computer Conferencing using Lists

<http://publish.uwo.ca/~maandrus/cmogui-1.htm>

Instructor's Guide to Computer Conferencing by Mary-Anne Andrusyszyn

7.1 Give Explicit directions

<http://www.emoderators.com/moderators.shtml#netiq> Netiquette Guides

7.2 Provide Peer-Peer Moderating Experiences

<http://www.emoderators.com/moderators.shtml>

Resources for Moderators and Facilitators of Online Discussion

Mauri Collins and Zane L. Berge

7.3 Model the Intellectual Level of Discourse Expected

http://www.ed.psu.edu/acsde/deos/deosnews/deosnews9_2.asp Keeping The Thread:

Adapting Conversational Practice to Help Distance Students and Instructors Manage Discussion in an Asynchronous Learning Network. Dr. Donald J. Winiecki

7.4 Require that Messages be Relevant to Topic

http://www.aln.org/alnweb/journal/Vol3_issue2/beaudin.htm Keeping Online Asynchronous Discussions on Topic Bart P. Beaudin, Ph.D.

7.5 Present Conflicting Opinions

7.6 Summarize Discussions

[8] Improve Interactivity – Instructors should design activities to address each of the following areas of interactivity.

8.1 Student-Instructor.

Encourage messages to and from students.

http://www.stedwards.edu/it_dept/instcom/roles.html

Wearing Many Hats: The roles of an online instructor by Danney Ursery - Martha Meacham -

8.2 Student-Student.

Form teams of students to discuss topics

<http://www.asu.edu/lib/webdev/inter.html> Distance Education & Interaction

8.3 Student-Content.

Post explanations of difficult sections of reading

http://www.aln.org/alnweb/journal/vol2_issue2/almeda.htm A Systems View

University of California Extension Online

8.4 Student-Interface.

Determine who is having technology problems

<http://www.ssu.missouri.edu/SSU/AgEd/NAERM/s-e-4.htm> Interaction in the Distance

Education Setting

8.5 Instructor-Content.

Provide links to outside resources

8.6 Instructor-Technology.

Locate technology support to assist class.

[9] Provide Timely Feedback –

Students expect prompt feedback. Let them know what turnaround time you can provide. Instructors are not expected to be available 24/7. You can make use of micros for some messages that you send frequently.

9.1 Respond promptly

9.2 Learn Student Expectations

9.3 Plan to Give Frequent Feedback

<http://www.fgcu.edu/onlinedesign/manage.html> Design Principles for Online Instruction, Florida Gulf Coast University

9.4 Use facilitators

9.5 Design Collaborative Activities

9.6 Provide Guidance for Online Resources

<http://thenode.org/workshops/list.cfm?Subj=54&Loc=WKP> Ways to help you find information on the Internet quickly and efficiently.

<http://www.ala.org/acrl/undwebev.html> Teaching undergrads WEB evaluation: A guide for library instruction

<http://thenode.org/workshops/list.cfm?Subj=55&Loc=WKP>

Ways to evaluate the quality of the information you find on the Internet.

<http://www.lib.vt.edu/research/libinst/evalbiblio.html> Bibliography on Evaluating Internet Resources

<http://illinois.online.uillinois.edu/IONresources/webeval/index.html> Evaluating the Validity of Information on the Web

<http://www.mcli.dist.maricopa.edu/show/what/start.html> what a site!

<http://sosig.ac.uk/desire/internet-detective.html> Internet Detective

[10] Assess Student Learning – Use a variety of assessment tools. If necessary, tests may be proctored at various locations such as libraries. Essay tests and papers should have a consistent “voice”. Grades can be updated and posted regularly so that students always know how they are doing.

10.1 Methods and techniques

10.2 Examples and resources

[11] Course /Instructor Evaluation –

Course evaluation forms similar to those used in traditional classrooms may be used. If instructors wish to gather additional information in order to make course revisions, they often find it helpful to post mid-semester qualitative questionnaires.

<http://csti.semo.edu/itfrr/> Information Technology Faculty Roles & Rewards Action Team

<http://www.aahe.org/FFRR/ffrnew2.htm> Faculty Roles & Rewards

11.1 Assessment of student achievement

<http://ericae.net/edo/ED328611.htm> The Case for Authentic Assessment. ERIC Digest

http://edweb.sdsu.edu/triton/july/rubrics/Rubrics_for_Web_Lessons.html Rubrics for Web Lessons

http://www.liv.ac.uk/ctibiol/vCUBE97/html/helen_pownall.html The CASTLE Project Creating On-line Assessments

<http://illinois.online.uillinois.edu/IONresources/assessment/cheating.html> Strategies to Minimize Cheating Online

<http://www.calstatela.edu/academic/webfolio/web1.htm> about Webfolios: Webfolios are portfolios on the World Wide Web.

<http://www.aahe.org/assessment/principi.htm> ASSESSMENT FORUM 9 Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning

<http://carmen.murdoch.edu.au/~zariski/peer1.html> Student Peer Assessment in Tertiary Education: Promise, Perils and Practice

<http://ericae.net/edo/ED365312.htm> Alternative Assessment and Technology. ERIC Digest

<http://www.amstat.org/publications/jse/v2n1/garfield.html> Beyond Testing and Grading: Using Assessment To Improve Student Learning

http://leahi.kcc.hawaii.edu/org/tcc_conf97/pres/pitt.html Creating Powerful Online Courses Using Multiple Instructional Strategies

<http://illinois.online.uillinois.edu/IONresources/assessment/bloomtaxonomy.html> Assessing Learning Objectives Bloom's Taxonomy

<http://illinois.online.uillinois.edu/IONresources/assessment/bloomtest.html> Sample Test Questions - Six Levels of Learning

<http://www.eduport.com/community/kiosk/20004/evalprint.htm> e-Learning: Improving Quality Through Assessment and Evaluation

<http://illinois.online.uillinois.edu/IONresources/assessment/rubric.html> Sample Rubrics Evaluation Process to Improve Teaching/Learning

<http://www.ltss.bris.ac.uk/jcalt/> Evaluation of Learning and Media Toolkit

http://www.astd.org/virtual_community/research/What_Works/e-learning/e-learning_main.html Evaluating the Effectiveness and the Return on Investment of E-learning

http://mime1.marc.gatech.edu/MM_Tools/evaluation.html Evaluation Tools

<http://www.wiche.edu/telecom/resources/publications/Guidelines.PDF> Statement of the Regional Accrediting Commission on the Evaluation of Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs

<http://ericae.net/pare/getvn.asp?v=6&n=3> Some Evaluation Questions

<http://www.parshift.com/OtherWise5.htm> Asynchronous Learning Networks: Evaluating Anytime/Anywhere Learning

<http://www.eval.org/EvaluationDocuments/aeaprin6.html> Guiding Principles for Evaluators

http://www.gao.gov/policy/10_1_4.htm Designing Evaluations

http://horizon.unc.edu/projects/monograph/CD/Technological_Tools/Graziadei.asp Building Asynchronous and Synchronous Teaching-Learning Environments: Exploring a Course/Classroom Management System Solution

<http://illinois.online.uillinois.edu/IONresources/evaluation/evaluationDQs.html> Read some thought-provoking questions about course evaluation and compare your answers with ION's answers

http://intercom.virginia.edu/cgi-bin/cgiwrap/intercom/SurveySuite/ss_index.pl Survey Suite: Survey Generation Tool

<http://depts.washington.edu/oeaias/index.html> IAS Online

<http://www.nea.org/nr/nr000321.html> NEA and Blackboard Inc. Study Finds 24 Measures of Quality in Internet-Based Distance Learning

<http://www.pbs.org/als/agenda/Articles/benchmarks.html> What Are the Quality Benchmarks for Internet-Based Distance Education?

<http://web.nysed.gov/ocue/distance/practice.html> Good Practice in Distance Higher Education

<http://www.tltgroup.org/programs/flashlight.html> Flashlight™: Helping You Analyze and Improve Educational Uses of Technology

11.2 Additional Resources: Online Learning Readiness Surveys and Student Orientation Pages

<http://online.valencia.cc.fl.us/Students/VOselfassessment.htm>

<http://www.departments.dsu.edu/disted/orientation.default.htm>

<http://www.scsr.nevada.edu/disted/>

<http://www.mdcc.edu/vcollege/isdefor.html>

<http://instcomp.spjc.edu/ecourses/selfassess/index.htm>

http://www.wgu.edu/wgu/self_assessment.asp

<http://www.onlinelearning.net/ole/holwselfassess.html>

http://www.cod.edu/dept/CIL/CIL_Surv.htm

<http://illinois.online.uillinois.edu/IONresources/onlineoverview/StudentProfile.html>

<http://ecollegelogin.ccconline.org/index.real?action=islearn>

<http://www.kcvu.org/student.nsf/981e7c2b6811b045852567520044e13f/8410e509250>

<http://www.idahoe-campus.state.id.us/>

<http://www.csu2learn.colostate.edu/csun/distancesurvey.htm>

<http://ivytech7.cc.in.us/distance-education/detest.html>

<http://ecampus.uwyo.edu>

<http://eouonline.org/index.learn?action=Quiz>

<http://www.ccsn.nevada.edu/distanceed/question.htm>

<http://ivytech7.cc.in.us/distance-education/detest.html>

<http://www.wiche.edu/telecom/resources/publications/guide/guide.htm>

http://www.umuc.edu/distance/de_orien/dequiz.html

<http://www.distance-educator.com/dn2.phtml?id=2905>

<http://www.sinclair.edu/distance/>

<http://www.gcampus.org>

<http://www.itcnetwork.org/reports.htm>

<http://www2.nau.edu/otle/camp>

<http://distance-ed.bcc.ctc.edu/WebAssess/>

<http://oregonone.org/DEquiz.htm>

