

Chapter 10 - Using Course Websites as Instructional Tools

Using its long history of developing and offering face-to-face instruction and its large investment in technology, Florida State University has developed online instructional tools for use in the traditional classroom, the web-enhanced class, and in fully online courses.

- **The Development of Online Learning**
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- **Using the Web to Teach**
- **Planning for Web-based Learning**
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- **Learning How to Use Course Websites**
- **Introducing Students to Online Learning**
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The Development of Online Learning

History of Distance Learning

The simplest definition of distance learning is learning that takes place when the instructor and student are not in the same room, separated by physical distance. Whether the instructor and student are across campus from one another or thousands of miles apart, they remain connected via some form of technology.

Since the first correspondence courses were offered in the late 19th century, the technologies used in distance learning have evolved considerably, from mail to radio, from local educational television stations to the latest media - computers, telecommunications, the Internet, and the World Wide Web. The Web, a computer network capable of delivering many different types of media, has contributed to the growth of interest in distance learning. Because of the Web's delivery and communication capabilities, the types of learning events that can take place are expanding. With the development of the Web, "distance" has become "online" learning. (See **Web-supported Courses**.)

Synchronous versus Asynchronous

The communication terms “synchronous” and “asynchronous” refer to the element of time in course interactions. Synchronous communication occurs when there is a simultaneous learning experience. Instructor and students communicate at the same time, i.e., in “real time.” Synchronous online communication can take place via text (instant messaging, chat tools, and “virtual classrooms”), as well as via interactive audio and video conferencing.

Asynchronous communication offers participants more choices of where and when to engage in learning. An example would be a web-based course in which the instructor posts a lecture and assignments online for students to view, complete, and submit at another time. Another example would be a “threaded discussion” forum in which students post messages and responses over a period of days or weeks.

While synchronous communication may seem most desirable due to its similarity to the traditional classroom experience, there are limitations. One limitation is complexity: due to the limited number of communication channels available in an online environment, conversational turn taking becomes a more involved process (who is responding to whom? whose turn is next?). There also may be issues of complexity in the tools used for synchronous interaction that can put some students (e.g., the disabled) at a disadvantage.

Another limitation is bandwidth, especially with regard to synchronous audio and video interaction. The more data an instructor wishes to transmit - whether the data is text, sound, pictures, or all three - the higher the bandwidth requirements for all participants. Because broadband Internet connectivity is not yet universal, it may be difficult or impossible for instructors to interact synchronously with all students.

A third limitation to synchronous communication relates to student needs. Many online learning students hold full-time jobs, are busy raising families, and may well be located in a different time zone than the University. The online programs in which they are involved may have been marketed with asynchronous convenience touted as an important benefit - the very reason they have enrolled at FSU rather than elsewhere. Thus, even if issues of complexity and bandwidth have been surmounted, there may still be good reasons to employ asynchronous methods of interaction in a web-based course.

Explanation of Terms

The terms “media,” “multimedia,” and “interactive multimedia” have recently entered our lexicon; yet have become almost meaningless due to their overuse and/or misuse. An explanation is in order if you are to understand the varied uses of these terms.

- Media - First, the simplest definition. The word “media” (plural for “medium”) is so commonly used today that it is becoming a collective noun in the singular form, as with the word “data.” In the context of computers, media

generally refers to: 1) the objects on which data can be stored (e.g., disks, CD-ROMs), and 2) the form and technology used to communicate information – audio, video, graphics. Media enables students to reread lectures, which they may have missed in class while taking notes.

- Multimedia, then, refers to the use of computers to present concurrently, in an integrated manner, more than one medium - text, graphics, video, animation, and sound. Any website can be viewed as a multimedia presentation, even if it simply contains text and images (e.g., a lecture with graphics). A plus of multimedia in instruction is the ability to present information in various formats to accommodate the various ways students learn (e.g., visual, auditory) and to use the media to suit the subject or learner (e.g., assigning kinesthetic homework).
- Interactive multimedia - Multimedia are interactive when the audience has some control over the display or presentation. This user control or reaction to input distinguishes them from, say, motion pictures. Interactive multimedia runs from high interactivity, as with video games, to online forms, which give fewer options for user interaction (you simply fill in the blanks).

Interactive multimedia can be both synchronous and asynchronous. In a live videoconferencing session (synchronous interactive multimedia), the instructor can query students, who then respond, which may stimulate further discussion from other classmates. Students taking quizzes on a course website and then

receiving grades for their performance, and corresponding with their classmates or instructor via discussion boards, are examples of asynchronous multimedia interaction.

In both of these examples, however, the activities are no more interactive than in face-to-face classroom participation. The degree of interactivity does not increase but the quality may increase. Students working from a computer have more time to ponder a question before responding than they would if they were in the classroom. Instructors find that e-mail or discussion boards enable their students to have in-depth and uninterrupted discourse. Students who are timid about speaking out in class feel freer to express their opinions online.

A good relationship between instructor and students, making them feel they are getting a personalized education, does not just happen by posting lectures and a syllabus online. Quality interaction with students takes effort.

The Future

The future of online learning lies in the further integration of multimedia platforms. Multimedia is both an evolution and a convergence of technology. Computing, television, printing, and telecommunications are all converging. Also, as the costs of communication technologies decrease, it is likely that an entire infrastructure can be built – and accessed – by most people in the developed world. A fiber optic infrastructure would allow for larger bandwidths and thus the delivery of more integrated multimedia to homes and offices.

Interactive Multimedia: Advantages and Overcoming Limitations

Advantages	Overcoming Limitations
<p>Better learning and retention</p> <p>Interactive multimedia provides multiple learning modalities and actively involves the learner.</p>	<p>Limited modalities</p> <p>Limited bandwidth makes real-time information transmission impractical, but this limitation has forced instructors to become better organized and more reflective.</p>
<p>Addresses different learning styles and preferences</p> <p>The incorporation of multiple modalities provides opportunities for teaching individual learners.</p> <p>Example</p> <p>Those with weak reading skills can use aural and visual skills to process verbal information.</p>	<p>Limited imagination</p> <p>Most software has limited capacity for genuine interaction with learners. Most computer-based instruction relies on simple multiple choice or true-false questions for assessing the learner's progress. It does not have the diagnostic capability of a good instructor. But this forces instructors to be creative, to find learning activities that do not rely on simple assessment tools.</p>

Advantages	Overcoming Limitations
<p>Effectiveness across learning domains</p> <p>Interactive multimedia instruction has been shown to be effective in most learning domains. It can present simulations that provide opportunities for problem-solving and higher-order thinking skills, and even to address affective components of learning.</p>	<p>Equipment requirements</p> <p>Although equipment is becoming standardized, and multimedia capabilities are built into operating systems like Windows, problems remain in getting everyone hooked up to all of the capabilities of the Web, especially those with older equipment. But hardware and software costs can be included in financial aid applications, and through University licenses, both can be purchased at reduced prices. Also, students can download free software.</p>
<p>Realism</p> <p>Interactive multimedia provides a high degree of realism. Instead of merely reading about a speech by Dr. Martin Luther King, students can actually see and hear the speech as originally presented.</p>	<p>Start-up costs</p> <p>Some students cannot afford to purchase the technology needed to participate in computer-based instruction, but such technology is already considered to be standard course material. Students are expected to own computers or use campus computer labs.</p>
<p>Motivation</p> <p>Learners show consistently positive attitudes toward interactive multimedia. For today's MTV-conscious youth, multimedia instruction is a natural avenue for exploring the information revolution.</p>	<p>Entertainment value might outweigh educational value</p> <p>The computer and the Web are time sinks, with diversions that can interrupt concentrated and focused study and work. However, such distractions can be overcome by putting responsibility for learning on the student. Instructors can then create activities that actively involve students.</p> <div data-bbox="834 1522 1502 1732" style="border: 1px solid #800000; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; margin-top: 20px;"> <p> Example</p> <p>After students have read a chapter in the assigned text, query them about the content.</p> </div>

Using the Web to Teach

Any course offered through FSU may add a course website. Website uses vary from simply enhancing a face-to-face course to exclusive use for online learning courses. The following definitions may help clarify the use of the Web for teaching.

- **Web-supported course** – Any face-to-face course that uses a course website.
- **Online course** – Any course offered via the Internet that has no face-to-face requirement
- **Distance course** – A course offered through a distance program; generally web-based but may have some face-to-face requirements.



Example

The RN-to-BSN Nursing online degree program requires on-site practicum.

Web-supported Courses

If you simply want to enhance your face-to-face course by using the Web, there are two major uses – to make course content available to students and to use for online activities.

- **Make Course Content Available to Students**
 - ◇ **Post materials on your course website for students to view or print** – course syllabus, assignments, the calendar or schedule, written lectures, articles – just as you would hand out materials in a face-to-face class. The material you post remains available throughout the semester (or until you remove it), and will eliminate the expense and labor of making copies for your class.
 - ◇ **Connect students with material from other websites.** You simply provide a clickable hyperlink (website address) on your course website, which eliminates copying articles or material, using the reserve system at the library, or otherwise distributing paper. Of course, not every journal or book can be viewed online, so in some cases the hard copy version may still be necessary. On the other hand, many resources are only available via the Web.
 - ◇ **Post timely information on the Announcements page,** which is an electronic version of a bulletin board.
 - ◇ **Receive and return assignments (as files) through the Assignment Tool,** which is a kind of electronic mail slot.

- **Use for Online Activities**

Just about any activity students do in class can be adapted to the online environment. You can use a course website as an electronic classroom or meeting space where students engage in activities and complete assignments, from taking quizzes online to participating in class discussions and collaborating on projects.

Some of the tools available on a course website are:

- **Discussion Board** – You can moderate a class discussion on a designated topic; class members may post input or responses at any time. The entire history of the discussion is viewable, so no one needs to rely on recall.
- **Group Pages** – You can assign students to groups and provide a private group space where group members use communication tools to collaborate on assignments, activities, and discussion topics.
- **Send E-mail** – You and your students have access to e-mail forms, pre-addressed to individual class members.
- **Virtual (Online) Chat** – You and your students can engage in text-based interaction and share presentations and web resources in real time. (This tool is best used for quick exchanges on less-weighty topics. Discussion Boards are better suited for topics that require more elaboration.)

Reference

- See Learning How to Use Course Websites for a list of the various training methods available.

Online and Distance Courses

As of the date of this publication, FSU has online and distance courses for three undergraduate degree programs – Computer Science, Interdisciplinary Social Science, and Nursing – and 14 graduate degree programs – Adult Education (major in Human Resource Development), Business Administration, Communication Disorders, Criminology (major in Criminal Justice Studies), Educational Leadership, Information Studies, Instructional Systems (major in Open and Distance Learning; major in Performance Improvement & Human Resource Development), Insurance/Risk Management, Mathematics Education, Nursing, Physical Education, Science Education, Social Work, and Special Education. The number of online graduate degree programs is continually increasing.

Reference

- If you are interested in creating an online or distance course (or program), talk to your department chair. If the department chair likes the idea, he or she can get help on any facet of online education from the Office of Distance Learning. See Chapter 15 - Support and Resources for a list of contacts and phone numbers.

Time Involvement

The actual time it takes to get a website up depends upon your goals as well as your computer and Internet experience. You can learn to post basic documents – course syllabus and schedule – in one 2-hour workshop.

Reference

See Learning How to Use Course Websites for the various training methods available.

Learning to set up and manage an online discussion and to use many of the other course website features, such as the Assignment Tool, will take more time. Development of more complex materials such as interactive web simulations and audio/video components can add significant time and complexity (even as they make the course a more powerful learning experience). However, once you have created and uploaded material or created discussion boards, the online course can be copied forward from semester to semester, allowing you to concentrate on enhancing and improving your course in future offerings.

Online Communication and Time

The Web's open avenues of communication can be both a blessing and a curse. Students can get information via your class website that you otherwise would distribute during class time; yet some online material is difficult or illegal to copy or reproduce. Some students who would never talk in class will "talk" on the website. The Internet has offered not only more communication tools and access, it also has engendered an "always on" or "24/7" culture. Whereas strictly face-to-face classes have prescribed meeting times – and thus interaction times – many activities in web-supported or online classes are asynchronous; therefore, students can work and think about your classes outside of "standard" class meetings. So, offering a web-supported or online class can increase the amount of time you spend communicating with students. While this is good for education, it does place the burden on instructors to organize and manage online communication.

Planning for Web-based Learning

Planning the Components of a Course Website

As in all courses, the quality of the instructional planning maximizes the learning for all students. In the Web environment, answers to two questions are especially valuable.

- What components will enhance teaching and learning?
- What components will save time by being posted for students to access online?

At the most basic level, instructors can post content and

announcements at a course website. However, course planning usually begins with a course map – an outline of topics, weeks, objectives, activities, assignments, and assessments to show alignment of course components with each other in a weekly calendar format. Planning also includes the purposeful design of activities to create a student learning community – supportive student groups in a course that develop with the students’ active access, pursuit, generation, and evaluation of information and learning in their discussion, chats, and e-mail communications.



Related Chapter

For further guidance, see “Teaching the Discussion Class” in **Chapter 11 – Teaching Contexts**.

Examples of Possible Course Website Components

- **Course Syllabus** (See Chapter 3 – Creating a Syllabus for details on what your syllabus should contain.)
- **Staff Information**
- **Student Information**
- **Course Calendar** – Due dates for readings, activities, assignments, quizzes, and exams
- **Weeks (or Units or Topics)**, which could include:
 - ◊ **Assignments and Activities**, including direc-

tions and due dates. For face-to-face classes with web-enhancement, you may wish to include required assignments, even if minor, for extra points to be turned in at the scheduled class times or other incentives to maintain class attendance.

- ◊ **Course Documents** – For reference, study, or answers to frequently asked questions
- ◊ **Lectures** – Notes and audio to highlight key concepts of course content
- **Communication Tools** – Areas for sending and receiving e-mail, participating in group or class discussions about particular issues, keeping electronic journals, completing “dry or simulated lab” exercises to prepare for “wet or real lab” experiences, or engaging in chat sessions. Many students are able and willing to participate more fully online than in face-to-face classes, especially when discussion assignments require each student to post a comment or the results of a brief assignment and to reply to a comment or question from other students.
- **Student Tools** – Areas for using the Assignment Tool to send and receive completed papers, homepages, or personal profiles of students, and access to grades.
- **Assessments** – Areas for quizzes, exams, and surveys; online grade books; and assessment statistics.

Clarity of Performance Expectations

It also is critical to make assignments and performance expectations clear and specific, so that students know exactly what you expect.



Examples

“Send your e-mail to ‘x’ by noon Thursday, ‘date and year,’ describing your topic and plan of procedure, in 2-3 paragraphs of 2-5 sentences each.”

“Submit your midterm by noon Thursday, ‘x’ date and year, according to the instructions and requirements listed at ‘x’ location on the course website.”

Engineering Activity Using Online Discussion

Homework #6 Discussion Questions

Part 1: Answer Three Questions

Complete all of Part 1 by 11:59 p.m., Friday, November 17.

Please answer the following three questions about your homework assignment. Use a word processor to compose your answers, and then copy and paste them as a reply to the Discussion Board.

1. What concepts did you need to know to complete your homework assignment successfully?
2. What parts of the assignment were particularly difficult, or especially easy, for you?
3. What questions do you have about what you have studied so far?

After you submit your answers, please complete the Part 2 activities.

Part 2: Read, Reply, and Respond

Complete all of Part 2 by 11:59 p.m., Friday, November 17.

Read the answers of the other students as the answers are posted.

4. Reply to at least two of the other students.
5. Respond to the replies that you receive. If you do not have any replies, then e-mail your classmate(s) asking for a reply to your answer.

Homework #6 Teamwork Forum Directions

If you are having difficulties with any of the problems presented in Homework Assignment #6, post your statements or questions about your difficulties and request assistance from your classmates for clarity on what you need to do. When you respond to someone’s statement or question, please make

sure that you do not solve the problem. Instead, make sure that you provide guidance, such as an explanation of key concepts or ideas that will help in solving the problem. Please continue to discuss the interpretation of the problems and your approaches to solutions, as needed.

Sociology Assignment Using Online Discussion

You are assigned to correspond with each other using e-mail each week regarding sections of *The Ninemile Wolves*. I hope that this assignment will do a couple of things. For one, I want you to use concepts from the other course materials and from class discussions in your discussions of *Ninemile Wolves*. In addition, I want you to use sociological concepts actively, including those that we do not note in class. In short, this is an opportunity for you to not only improve your understanding of the material in this course but in sociology as a whole.

Everyone is required to attend an initial tutorial seminar to become familiar with using e-mail. After that, you may submit your weekly entries to your fellow students and to me any time during the week. Be sure to read the e-mails that you receive from your fellow students. Your grade depends in large part upon your ability to communicate your ideas to other students in your group effectively and to engage in a dialogue with them. To get you started and to prompt discussion as needed, below I pose questions for each week's reading. Those questions are almost always about deeper issues; so do not be satisfied with a simple answer.

Moreover, you should not use the discussion questions as a crutch. Ideally, you and other members of your group will identify your own issues for discussion and will eventually ignore the discussion questions. Also, you are welcome to pull in material from class, other courses, or your life experience, but there should always be a connection to *The Ninemile Wolves*.

Remember that we will not be discussing *The Ninemile Wolves* in class at all. This assignment is to be completed entirely via e-mail. Your weekly comments, due on the date listed by 9 a.m., should be approximately two computer screens long. They will be graded on the quality of thought and argument that they evince in the context of the issues raised by your group. There will be very few “right or wrong” answers to the issues that are raised in the book in an ultimate sense, although, as an individual, you should argue for the superiority of your viewpoint or seek to find common ground among diverse opinions. What matters most is how effectively you discuss those issues. I will print out your comments each week, grade them, and return them to you.

Excerpted from Rik Scarce, *Using Electronic Main Discussion Groups to Enhance Students' Critical Thinking Skills*. Retrieved August 2005 from: Used with permission from Horizon: <http://horizon.unc.edu>

Completing the Alternative Modes of Instruction Form

Technology Use and Form 2

As part of the formal planning process, instructors must complete the Alternative Modes of Instruction Approval Form (Form 2) if they plan to offer a course that will use some form of technology for equivalent contact hours and/or to deliver course content.

Copies of Form 2

The two types of courses that require the submission of Form 2 are the combined course offering and the distance-learning course.

- **Combined Course Offering** – Typically offered in the traditional face-to-face format on the main campus or a branch campus, the combined course offers less than 75% of the total course content through the use of some alternative means, i.e., website, video. The delivery of the instruction makes use of technology or instructional materials beyond those available or distributed in the face-to-face classroom; that is, the use of technology does replace some contact hours for courses taught on the main or branch campus.

- **Distance-Learning Course** – Courses in this category deliver some or all of the instructional content through alternative methods – a course website – and the content is delivered in addition to, or in place of, traditional face-to-face instruction. If any one student receives instruction (contact hours) through an alternate delivery method, then the course by default may be termed as a distance-learning course.

Instructional Delivery Indicators

A required field of Form 2 is the Instructional Delivery Indicator, which documents the “time” characteristic of a course: synchronous, asynchronous, or mixed.

- **Synchronous** – Both the student and teacher are scheduled to “meet, tune in, or log on” at the same time. Questions are responded to immediately through various means (e-mail, voice, chat room, etc.).
- **Asynchronous** – Instruction is not limited to the teacher and student “meeting” at the same time. The instructor may make available instructional materials or content (for example, posting questions, assignments, activities, tests, to a website), and the student may access those materials whether or not the instructor is present at that time.
- **Mixed** – Instructional activities take place both synchronously and asynchronously. A “mixed” time element occurs when neither element totals 75% or more of the total instructional delivery.

Guideline for Contact Hour Replacement

Thoughtful planning concerning the forms of communication and activities to be included in a course help make your courses successful. For example, in an online 3-credit course, three hours per week of planned communication occurring between faculty and students serves as the class contact time. In a web-supported course, some or all of the contact time takes place online at the students' convenience. Peer review curriculum committees at the department/school/college level determine contact-hour equivalence.

“**Contact**” in discussion forum areas, whether synchronous or asynchronous, includes the following online interactions:

- **Explications** with extemporaneous questions of or by students and comments discussed by instructors and students in class.
- **Reflection questions** to students engaging their prepared and focused discussion of thought-provoking aspects of a topic.
- **Reports** of individual or group projects posted for class review and comment by the instructor or fellow students.
- **Critiques** prepared by the instructor or other students for critical analysis of individual and group presentations.

Non-Contact Hours

Notice that individual readings, video or audio lectures, auto-graded practice exercises or problem sets, individual homework, quizzes, group projects, and exams do not appear in the above list of “Contact” forms. Instead, these activities are considered out-of-class study or assessment parts of the course.

Also, office hours may not be substituted for contact hours. Unplanned contact between instructor and students that does not directly relate to the planned delivery of course content or achievement of course objectives should be regarded as the equivalent of office hours, and should not be assigned equivalents to standard classroom contact hours.

Instructional Technology Indicators

Another required field of Form 2 is the Instructional Technology Indicator, which documents how the course content is to be delivered to students. There are 11 choices, from face-to-face classroom instruction to the Internet. You select the type of delivery, and then choose whether the delivery is 75% or more synchronous, asynchronous, or a mixture of both.

Submission of Form 2

When submitting: If the course will be taught both on-campus and online, copies of the syllabi for both versions of the course should be attached, along with a memorandum that briefly compares the two syllabi and that explains compliance with a major requirement: Courses must provide instructional contact hours equivalent to those available to students who take the traditional format.

It is preferable to submit the form, syllabi, and memorandum **at least one term prior to the term that the course will be offered.**

Submit the completed form and attachments to the appropriate person in your department for peer and curriculum committee review. The forms are then forwarded to Melissa Crawford, Office of the Dean of the Faculties (mail code 1480), for approval by the Chair of the University Curriculum Committee. Approved forms are sent to the Registrar's Office; others are returned to the faculty.

For online graduate programs: A similar approval process exists for graduate degree programs. The Graduate Policy Committee (GPC) reviews all requests in an effort to ensure: 1) that a complete degree program is being offered, 2) that the department has the resources to offer the online program while maintaining its on-campus programs, and 3) that the online program has the same requirements as, and is comparable in quality to, the on-campus program. Department Chairs interested in offering an online program equivalent to an existing graduate degree program must submit:

- A course rollout schedule
- A written statement addressed to the Chair of the Graduate Policy Committee, which includes:
 - Admissions requirements, noting the similarity of the proposed online program to the existing on-campus program
 - Description of the similarity between courses offered online and on-campus
 - Description of how the department will offer the online program while maintaining the on-campus program (funding, personnel, schedule)
 - Estimate of the number of expected enrollment for both online and on-campus programs

Check the GPC meeting schedule and submit your request one year in advance. This prior approval will allow your department to plan its recruitment activities and facilitate the appropriate course building within set deadlines determined by the Registrar's Office.

Instructional Tools of a Course Website

Blackboard, the Software Used to Create Course Websites

Blackboard is the main software used to set up web-supported and online courses at the University. FSU participated in its development and continues to use it because the software is relatively easy to learn and manage. Using Blackboard, instructors can:

Post class material, organized as:

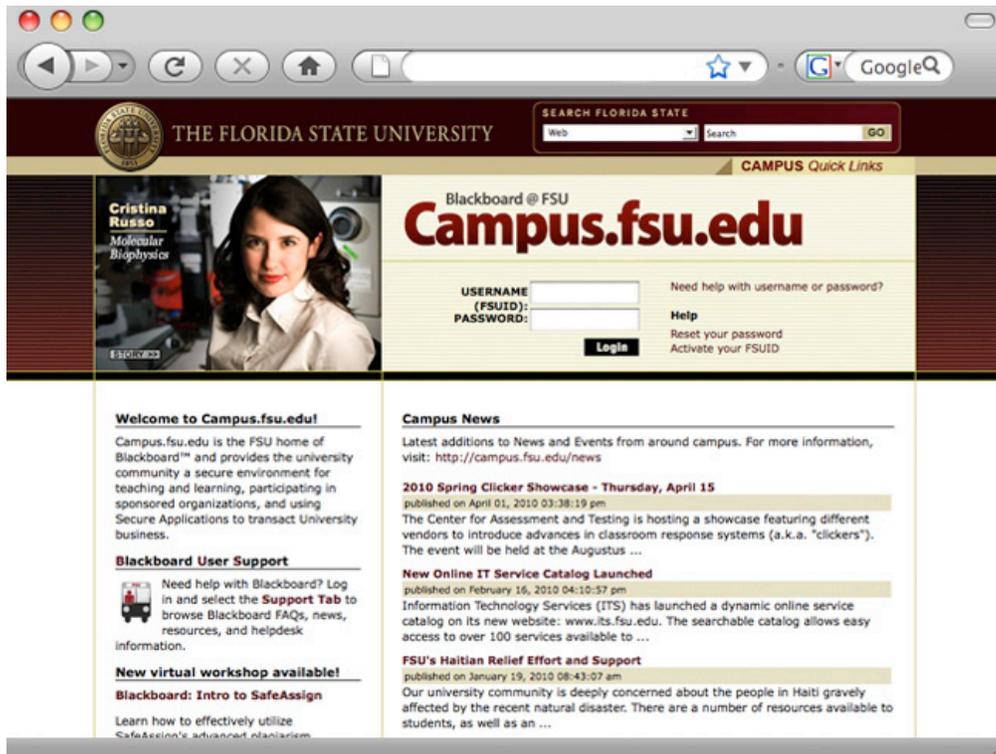
- **Class Announcements** to post timely reminders or updates for the entire class.
- **Course Documents**, including course outlines, handouts, lectures, course readings, etc.
- **Staff Information** to deliver biographies of the instructor and others who teach or support the course.
- **Assignments**, including links to activities, projects, quizzes.
- **Resources** with links to other sites, from e-journals to the FSU homepage.

Enable asynchronous activities and access with built-in communication and students tools:

- **E-mail Sender** – Pre-addressed forms enable any course participant to send e-mail to any individual or class group.
- **Threaded Discussion Board** – You can assign

discussions on designated topics, and sort postings by author or date.

- **Class Roster** – The e-mail address or homepage of any class member can be accessed on this page.
- **Student Homepages** – A template is automatically created for each registered student; class members can share information and a digital photo, which is helpful in creating a student community.
- **Virtual Classroom (Chat)**– Class members can be assigned to have real-time talks on this page.
- **Assignment Tool** – Assignments can be dropped off by students and retrieved and returned by instructors.
- **Check Grades** – Instructors can post a student's score for any assignment, quiz, or exam (along with total possible points and class average).
- **Group Pages** – Instructors can assign groups within a class to a set of the communication tools for use only by group members.
- **Class Statistics** – Instructors can access reports on a student's activity within the course website, from the time spent on the site to the website pages that were accessed.



Learning How to Use Course Websites

Whether you are a first-time or advanced user of a Blackboard course website, there are several methods available for learning how to use Blackboard to its fullest advantage.

- Course Template – If you feel confident that you can learn by doing, you can activate a web-based course template yourself. The template is a website that is not live, but that can be made live on the Internet once you have inserted all of your documents. You simply request a course website from Office of Distance Learning online.
- Workshops provide instruction and hands-on experience in everything you need to get started using Blackboard for teaching and learning.
 - ◊ A short course that walks instructors through the process of requesting, developing, and delivering a web-supported or online course is provided.
 - ◊ Advanced workshops on using audio and video on the course website are also available.
- Special training sessions for individuals or individual academic departments

To Sign Up for Workshops

Workshops are conducted throughout the academic year and are announced on campus.fsu.edu within the Support Tab.

For more information, contact the Office of Distance Learning at 644-4535.

Consultation Services Available

The Office of Distance Learning supports faculty members in their use of technology innovations in teaching and learning. Support for both web-supported and online courses includes consultation on preparing course websites, using instructional design, editing course material, and using digital media. Services include faculty consultations, instructional design, and editing of course materials.



Related Chapter

Chapter 15

Support and Resources for contacts and numbers.

Introducing Students to Online Learning

The gateway to most FSU course websites is the unified portal, campus.fsu.edu

After logging in, students will be on the Home page, which has links for tools, announcements, courses, and web mail. Note the tabs across the top of the page. Each tab is a resource designed to help you and your students. Also, keep in mind that the student Bb page does NOT have the following tabs: Content Collection, Learning Resources, and BB: Teach & Learn.

- **Home** - Contains the “My Courses” module, which enables students to see which classes they are enrolled in, that have Blackboard sites.
- **My FSU** - A customizable page that allows users to choose which items they would like to display. For examples, one of the most frequent chosen modules is the user’s FSU course schedule (including course with Blackboard sites).
- **Courses** - Lists courses that the user is (or has been) associated with and the instructors for the course site.
- **Organizations** - Lists all organizations and Discussion Boards in which you or your students are participating. The Organization Catalog lists by academic unit all organizations that have a Blackboard website.
- **Content Collection** - Is a tool for managing files. Files can be set to provide any user or group (e.g., class mem-

bers) a level of permission, from the right to read the file to the right to remove the file. Files also can be linked to any Blackboard course and organization website.

- **Webmail** - Students can send e-mail to individuals who participate in a particular course or organization from the Send E-mail page. E-mails can be sent to individual users or to groups of users within the course, such as all Users. Students cannot send e-mail to users not in their course list.
- **Secure Apps** - Provides access to many of the secure websites that students use to submit and view their personal information and to transact University business.
- **Support** – The support page provides numerous avenues for assistance, including links to Bb faqs, the student and instructor Bb manuals, and information on training.

Website Resources on Online Teaching

Accessibility

- *Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) (1.1)*, ed. S. L. Henry. (accessed November 3, 2005)
<http://www.w3.org/WAI/intro/wcag.php>
- *Research-Based Web Design & Usability Guidelines*. National Cancer Institute, Department of Health and Human Services. <http://usability.gov/guidelines> (accessed November 3, 2005).

Intellectual Property and Copyright

- The TEACH Act of 2002: *How the law affects online instruction* (2003). Office of Distance Learning, Florida State University: Tallahassee, FL.
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