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Faculty Guidelines
FOR ONLINE TEACHING
WHAT IT IS & HOW TO DO IT

RIDER UNIVERSITY | COLLEGE OF CONTINUING STUDIES

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TO THE READER

If you have picked up this manual, chances are that you are thinking about teaching a course online. You are probably feeling as though the task is monumental, and you may not know where to begin. That's exactly why we wrote this manual—to show you where to begin.

When the first author began teaching online in 1996 there were few models available from which to learn. Very few faculty taught entirely online courses - nationwide. Some faculty added listservs to their face-to-face classes, but entire online courses were few.

By the time the second author began teaching online in 1999—just three short years later—things had changed considerably. Many faculty members were teaching online, but the models were as varied as the curricula. And although many more books and articles about online teaching were available, a “how to” manual with actual examples of what to say online was nonexistent.

So we decided to remedy that situation by drafting this instructor's manual filled with real examples of how to plan for the online experience and then how to actually “behave” as an instructor online. Examples included are from both undergraduate and graduate level courses.

We offer this manual not as THE model that you should use, but as an example of a model that is working for us. We have found that our students are learning and enjoying their experience online. Therefore, we invite you to borrow our model and build upon it for your own purposes in teaching.

One of the lessons we learned very early in this venture is that online learning is a team sport...you can't do it alone. And so we would like to thank all those individuals who make it possible for us to teach online. We especially thank our online students, who teach us as much as we teach them.

Marie Cini & Boris Vilic

FORWARD

Marie Cini and Boris Vilic have created a thoughtful and helpful guide for faculty teaching online. Faculty Guidelines for Online Teaching provides a wonderful meld of ideas for effective teaching online, suggestions based on personal experience, and specific examples from online courses. As Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence, I believe that this guide would be indispensable to a faculty member teaching online for the first time; however, the richness of its ideas and examples would undoubtedly make it useful even to veteran online teachers.

The authors have been generous in devoting their talents and time to creating this guide for other faculty. They view it as a “work in progress” and invite other faculty to share their own experiences and successes in teaching online, so that subsequent editions of the guide can incorporate an even wider range of ideas and examples.

Teaching online is a relatively new frontier. We invite faculty to explore ways of teaching that capitalize on the strengths of this medium so that our online students reap the benefits of a true Duquesne University education.

Dr. Dorothy A. Frayer
Associate Academic Vice President
Director, Center for Teaching Excellence

PRE-PLANNING

■ TRANSLATING YOUR FACE-TO-FACE COURSE TO THE ONLINE ENVIRONMENT

TEACHING LIVE OR ONLINE: IS THERE A DIFFERENCE?

In our experience, we have found that the live classroom and the online environment are qualitatively different experiences both for the instructor and the students. However, you should keep in mind that translating your course to the online environment is merely changing the delivery mechanism; you can certainly set and meet high quality educational standards in both formats. Moving from the live classroom to the online environment takes some restructuring of your course, and it requires you to view your role as an instructor a bit differently. In this guide we will take you step by step through the process of translating your live course to an online version.

START WITH YOUR GOALS IN MIND

Just as you would with any course you teach, ask yourself “What are the goals or objectives I would like my students to reach in this course?” For example, you might want your students to a) become better critical thinkers, b) master the course content and c) learn to work productively in a small group. Now, take the time to think through five to eight goals you would like your students to meet in a course you are currently teaching or planning to teach. List them here:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

These goals can be achieved in both the face-to-face and online classroom. The next section will show you how.

UNDERSTANDING HOW YOU TEACH IN A FACE-TO-FACE CLASSROOM

First, think about how you teach in a live classroom. Like most instructors, you probably use a variety of teaching methods to achieve the goals you listed earlier. For example, you might lecture and hold large and small group discussions. Other instructors might lecture, show films, hold debates, and sponsor a field trip. Take a moment now and list the methods you use to teach the “live” version of your course:

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

Before we move to the online version of your course, take a moment to match up your overall course goals and your teaching methods. For example:

<i>Course Goals</i>	<i>Live Teaching Methods</i>
Increased Critical Thinking	Small group debates Reaction Papers
Mastering Course Content	Lectures Research Paper
Working in a Team	Small Group Project

Now, take a few minutes and list your course goals and the live teaching methods you use to achieve these goals:

<i>Course Goals</i>	<i>Live Teaching Methods</i>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

We have found that it is a good idea to make sure that your course goals and teaching methods “match up.” That is, have you built in teaching methods that will help your students meet the course goals? If not, could you try new or different methods? For example, if you want your students to enhance their critical thinking, have you built in at least one method to help them do this?

Then ask yourself if each teaching method that you use is necessary. For example, if you ask students to hold a debate because you happen to like debates, but they don't seem to learn anything new from the experience, you might drop that activity in favor of a method they do learn from.

When you are satisfied that you have clear course goals and teaching methods that will help students achieve those goals, you can more easily translate your “live” class to the online environment.

TIPS BEFORE YOU MOVE ONLINE

We have found that teaching online has to be approached differently than teaching in a “live” classroom. In a live classroom, students have learned the norms of sitting quietly, listening to a lecture, taking notes, and generally not participating very much. Even in the most interactive classroom the instructor still does most of the talking.

However, in an online class, the instructor plays a less active role. Notice we did not say “inactive” role! The instructor has an important role to play in the online classroom, but it is different than he or she is used to in a live class. We'll discuss that later in this guide.

In the online environment, students must take a great deal of responsibility for their learning. There is no classroom per se where they come to sit for a period of time, listen, and take notes. The instructor is less a “sage on the stage” and more a “guide on the side” (to steal an overused, but very accurate phrase).

So, instead of asking yourself “how do I lecture online?” you should rephrase the question and ask “how do I ensure that students learn and understand the course content?” For example, instead of lecturing on the culture of Athens during the time of Plato, you might direct your students to read a text-based article with that information (and some interesting academic web sites can also be used as reference material).

Not all material needs to be on the web, however! You will still assign a textbook or materials, and the students will still read them the “old-fashioned way,” in most cases. Your role becomes that of a mentor, helping students to understand the nuances of the material and guiding them to a more in-depth and inclusive discussion online.

KNOW YOUR AVAILABLE ONLINE FEATURES

At this point it is a good idea to think through your course goals and develop online teaching methods to meet them. However, you must first understand what is possible in an online environment. Most web-based course software will offer you the following features that you can use (or not) in your online class:

- **Web Pages.** Web pages are used to post syllabus information, short written “lectures,” or reference material. Remember, though, that in an online environment short, lively pieces of text work best. Page after page of academic discourse is not useful; reading long texts while sitting at a computer screen is not comfortable or easy. Save dense material for a “hard” copy or an attachment that students can download and print on their end. *Useful for (a) covering course content, (b) providing course structure.*
- **Calendar.** A calendar enables instructors (and students) to post important dates and deadlines. *Useful for providing course structure.*
- **Discussion Forums.** A discussion forum is an online course feature where messages that are posted are visible to the entire class. This feature is akin to a whole-class discussion, but it occurs asynchronously (not at the same time). Every class member can read every message and can reply publicly at times that are convenient for them. *Useful for (a) covering course content, (b) enhancing critical thinking, (c) building community online.*
- **Private Discussion Forums.** Private forums are forums where only members of a small project group can go to discuss their work in private. This feature is similar to sending a small group of students off to another room to work privately. Again, this forum is asynchronous; students add to the ongoing discussion at times that are convenient for them. The instructor may or may not have access to their dialogue (this would be the instructor’s choice). *Useful for (a) discussing content in small groups, (b) forming small communities online, (c) fostering creative thinking, (d) enhancing critical thinking, (e) improving team skills.*
- **Group Presentation Areas.** Presentation areas allow for a group project to be posted. Although student groups cannot present in a live fashion, they can work on a collective project and post it in a public area where others can read and comment on their work. *Useful for (a) covering course content, (b) enhancing critical thinking, (c) modeling high quality work.*
- **Email.** Private mail, or email, enables the instructor and an individual student to communicate “privately.” Also, two students can communicate

privately. That is, the message will only be visible to the individual it is sent to, not the entire class. *Useful for (a) communicating between individual student and faculty member, (b) providing formative evaluation.*

- **Chat Room or Virtual Classroom.** A chat room is a feature that allows you to talk with one or more members of the class in “real” time (i.e., synchronously). We have found this not to be a pedagogically sound feature for group or class discussions; it tends to turn into a “tower of Babel” (or is it the “tower of babble”) as various thoughts come streaming in simultaneously. However, some faculty find the chat feature is useful for facilitating small group activities such as brainstorming or decision making when two or three students need to resolve an issue quickly (in real time). *Useful for (a) building community online, (b) allowing students to communicate in real-time, and (c) explaining content and answering questions to a small number of students.*

Let's take one goal all instructors presumably share: enhancing students' learning of course content. Below we have listed traditional face-to-face teaching methods and their online counterparts.

<i>Course Goal</i>	<i>Face-to-Face Methods</i>	<i>Online Teaching Methods</i>
Increase student learning of course content.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assign book 2. Lecture 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide written materials offline 2. Explore and link to academic websites on the topic 3. Post short summaries with commentaries of the book chapters online

It is a good idea to make use of the many features of the technology you will use. You can and should use active teaching methods, interactive discussion groups, and hyperlinks to Web resources. The new, interactive features of technology and the ability to access complete and updated information online can actually enhance the learning experience of students over and above the static face-to-face classroom.

Take a few minutes now and list the online teaching methods you will use to reach your course goals:

<i>Course Goals</i>	<i>Online Teaching Methods</i>

THE INSTRUCTOR'S ROLE ONCE THE COURSE GETS STARTED

Most of the “action” in an online course occurs in the Discussion Forum(s). Generally, the instructor should view his or her role as that of a facilitator, ensuring that the task and interpersonal needs of the group are monitored and tended to. This entails:

1. **Welcome Messages.** Posting a welcome message at the start of the course. We recommend a public welcome in the public discussion forum AND a private welcome to each student through the private mail function in your software.
2. **Introductions.** Asking students to post an introduction about themselves. The instructor should set the tone by posting his or hers first.
3. **Positive Reinforcement.** Thanking students for posting messages (at first this reinforcement is key to students feeling welcome to participate online). The instructor should do this both in public messages and private email.
4. **Formative Feedback.** Providing private, formative feedback to students about their progress online. Students like to know how they are doing, and it helps to shape a better discussion.
5. **Higher Levels of Thought.** Encouraging students not just to function at the lowest levels of cognitive functioning (recall or recognition), but to encourage higher levels of thought: application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (as in Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Objectives).

- For example, if a student posts that she likes a certain theoretical model, you might ask her (online) how she could apply that to a particular situation (e.g., “Sarah, how might Maslow’s need theory apply to college students?”) (*Application*).
 - If a student posts a message that shows that he misunderstands an idea, you might ask the class to help analyze the idea (break it down to its component parts) so that everyone understands it better (“What are Machiavelli’s main points in *The Prince* about good leadership?”) (*Analysis*).
 - If students are discussing ideas separately and not seeing the similarities between them, you might challenge them to come up with a way to incorporate both ideas (e.g., “Folks, how can these two ideas about decision making be pulled together into a single model of decision making?”) (*Synthesis*).
 - To help students understand how to judge the quality of an argument or idea, you might ask them “Using the criteria for credible and useful websites that I posted last week, how would you evaluate the information found on the 'We Never Walked on the Moon' web site hosted by 'Citizens to Overthrow the Government'?” (*Evaluation*).
6. **Dialogue.** Pointing the students toward dialogue with one another. For example, you might read a message by Sue that argues for stricter gun control laws and one by Jane for fewer restrictions on guns. You could ask each person to think through and hold a dialogue concerning their underlying assumptions about the rights of citizens in a democracy to own guns. In this way, you help individuals examine their own and others' assumptions behind their arguments. You also model good interpersonal discussion skills online. As you provide examples of appropriate behaviors online you will notice the students begin to model those behaviors.
 7. **Course Feedback.** Soliciting feedback from students halfway through the course. Ask them to send you private messages regarding (a) what you should continue doing, (b) what you need to do more of, and (c) what you should not do. They will provide you with excellent insights to improve your teaching online. You can also use the survey tool available in many web-based course software products to administer a mid-course feedback survey.

HOW OFTEN TO POST MESSAGES

In our experience with effective online instructors, ***15-20% of the postings in a course should be from the instructor.*** Students want to know that they are “heard.” They also want to “hear” from the instructor. The only way to be visible is to post messages as we described above, making you an important presence in the course. Merely allowing students to post messages without facilitating in a thoughtful and focused way is NOT teaching online. If you carefully shape the discussion, ask thoughtful questions, and monitor the ongoing dialogue, you should find:

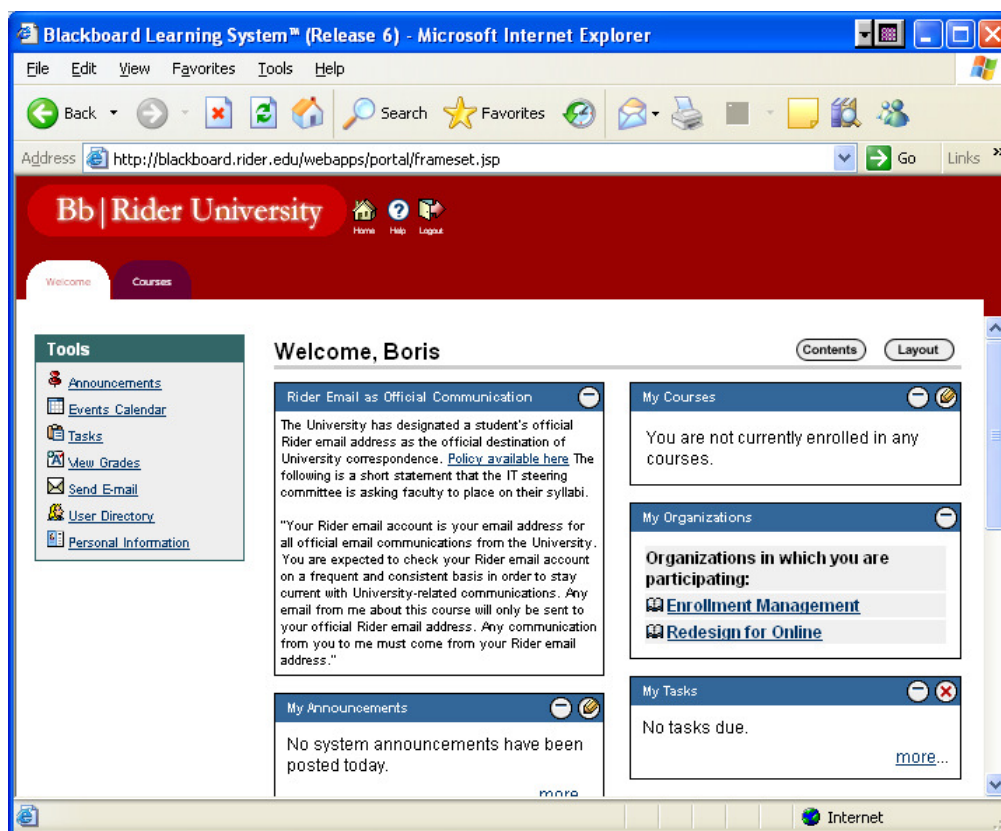
- a high level of participation from all students, not just a few (as is common in a live classroom);
- a high standard of critical thinking; the public nature of the medium causes students to reflect and post deeper comments than is possible in a live classroom where being glib is often rewarded; and
- an enthusiastic and committed group of students who take more responsibility for their learning.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPING YOUR ONLINE COURSE

Now that you understand some of the strategies for translating your face-to-face course to its online version, you may ask yourself what to do next. Before you can proceed to teach online, you will need to develop online course materials and decide how you will organize your online course.

■ COMPONENTS OF AN ONLINE COURSE

BlackBoard, an Internet-based application used to deliver online courses (or any similar application such as WebCT or eCollege), houses a plethora of features or tools that you can use in your online course. In an earlier section, we explained some of the tools that you can use in your online course (see section “Know your available online features”). We will now attempt to explain the online course in its entirety. What you see below is what an online course looks like:



This online course features some of the tools available in BlackBoard. The following section will briefly explain each tool as we specifically designed it for our online course template:

- **Start Here.** Start Here is a brief introduction to the features of the online course. It serves as a way of familiarizing students with different features of their online course and provides them with an introduction to online learning.
- **Announcements.** The announcements area is where you can post important reminders for students. The system administrators may also post announcements (such as planned outages).
- **Faculty.** This course area provides students with quick access to your contact information.
- **Syllabus.** The course syllabus can consist of information such course objectives, course description, but it can also consist of mini-lectures used in the course or academic integrity guidelines. In a later section, we will explain it in depth.
- **Class Calendar.** Class Calendar is just what it says: a calendar. It outlines all important dates and deadlines throughout the course.
- **Discussion Forums.** Discussion Forums are the core of the online course. Here, students can post their introductions, answer the questions posted by the instructor, dialogue with one another, work in small groups, etc.
- **Assignments.** The Assignments feature of your online course allows students to electronically submit any assignments to you. You can specify the due date for assignment completion, provide instructions, etc. Once you grade the assignment, the grade will automatically be transferred to the Grade Book feature (available in the Course Tools section of your course).
- **Quizzes.** This course area allows you to post quizzes or surveys. The grade received on a quiz will also show up in the Grade Book feature of the course.
- **Communications.** The communications area houses course roster, email, chat rooms, etc.
- **Course Tools.** In this area of the course, students can check their grades, access a file exchange area, calendar, and the like.
- **Resource Center.** This is a link to the School of Leadership & Professional Advancement's Student Resource Center. This center is a useful resource as it provides students with many writing resources such as how to write a research paper, how to avoid grammatical mistakes, how to use the MLA writing style, just to name a few.

- **Gumberg Library** is a link to the electronic databases at the Moore Library that students can access from their home via the Internet.
- **Technical Support** enables students to contact trained technicians at the help desk who can assist students with various technical issues.

As you can see, most of these features have already been developed for your use. The two things that you will have to develop are a) Syllabus and b) Discussion Forums. Before we can take you through the development process for both, it is important to discuss the timeline for online course development.

TIMELINE FOR ONLINE COURSE DEVELOPMENT










Unlike its face-to-face counterpart, an online course typically involves a team of people working toward a common goal. For example, once you develop your course materials, the IT department (i.e. OIT) has to create a course “shell,” multimedia technicians may need to convert your materials to web pages and upload them to BlackBoard, coordinator of distance education has to make TEQs and Technical Support available for your course, etc. Furthermore, all of the course materials for online courses have to be developed prior to the course beginning. It usually takes about three months from the time a faculty member starts working on course materials to the time when the course is available to students. You should use the following timeline as a general guide for online course development:

- **3 months prior to course beginning:** you should go through this manual and start developing strategies for translating your face-to-face course to its online version.
- **2 months prior to course beginning:** you should start developing your online course materials; and
- **1 month prior to course beginning:** you should upload your materials to your online course

As you start the process of developing your online course materials, you first have to think about the structure of the virtual syllabus and the organization of discussion areas (or forums). The following sections will take you through the process of developing both the virtual syllabus and the discussion areas.

■ PLANNING AND DEVELOPING THE VIRTUAL SYLLABUS










The Syllabus section of your online course is what its name implies – the course syllabus. However, merely posting a multiple page syllabus is not a very efficient use of the web-based software. It is much easier for both instructor and students to “chunk” the syllabus into separate sections, each addressing one main topic. For example, you might organize your syllabus in this way:

-  [Introduction to the Course](#)
-  [Course Objectives](#)
-  [Textbooks](#)
-  [About Your Faculty](#)
-  [Learning Evaluation Methods](#)
-  [Assignments](#)
-  [Writing Guidelines](#)
-  [Due Dates](#)
-  [Online Discussion Guidelines](#)

Each line is a hyperlink to that section of your virtual syllabus. We will exhibit each section here and explain its most important aspects.

INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE

This section is merely a short introduction to the main themes in the course. Some instructors place this on their syllabus; others discuss it in class. In the online environment it is crucial to post all these explanations in written form because you won't have the luxury of face-to-face discussions. Be clear and concise in your explanations online; it will save you and your students from much confusion.

	Introduction to the Course
	Course Objectives
	Textbooks
	About Your Faculty
	Learning Evaluation Methods
	Assignments
	Writing Guidelines
	Due Dates
	Online Discussion Guidelines

Here are two examples of course introductions:



Example 1: Introduction to the Course

Leadership is an increasingly important topic in contemporary organizational and community life. In today's leaner organizations, individuals are called upon to be both effective leaders and followers in their professional roles. This course will examine the issues, dilemmas, and challenges facing individuals who exercise leadership, no matter their level in an organization.

This course will also help students to develop the skills necessary for graduate-level study in leadership. These skills include accessing and using information effectively, writing clearly, reading to extract meaning, thinking critically, and synthesizing information from a variety of sources. Students are also encouraged to reflect upon their own leadership experiences.

To meet the above overall goals of the course, classes will consist of "e-lectures," large and small group discussions of outside readings, and online group activities designed to allow students to apply and critique the course material.

It is becoming increasingly important that we all learn to work effectively in both face-to-face and virtual groups. To that end you will be assigned to a "cyber-team" consisting of approximately four students. Your cyber-team will work together over the entire semester on a group project. You should get to know one another online, exchange contact information including phone numbers, fax numbers, and email addresses, and determine what skills each person in the group can lend to the team effort. See Small Group Project for more details.



Example 2: Introduction to the Course

Almost at the very end of your academic journey through Saturday College, you have learned how to “navigate” the system. You probably know exactly how to approach a group project, how to interact with a faculty member, or how to finagle advisors to let you take a class without taking the prerequisites. Likewise, through your professional endeavors, you’ve learned how to act in the workplace, get a promotion, or earn a raise. It took some time getting used to, but you’ve managed; otherwise you wouldn’t have made it to your senior year and this capstone seminar.

The Information Age

This online course is just another system to master. You may ask yourself whether it is really necessary and whether you want to spend the summer doing it. Most of you will be graduating shortly, and I firmly believe that – as IT professionals – you need to learn how to operate in the cyberspace. The World Wide Web, video conferencing, pagers and PCs are just some of the technologies that enable us to take advantage of the Information Age. We have become accustomed to getting information quickly. By the same token, we are expected to respond quickly as well. Our boss expects it; our coworkers expect it; our families expect it... Next week just doesn’t seem to be good enough of a response. The “laid back” 60s are a thing of the past, and the overwhelmingly busy 90s have engulfed us with heavy workloads, a lack of spare time, and related stress. As an IT professional myself, I think that we can overcome some of the problems related to the Information Age by becoming expert users of technology. Just imagine what your schedule would look like if you felt uncomfortable using a computer? Imagine how long it would take you to fulfill your job responsibilities if you didn’t know how to use MS Word, Excel, or Access? You would probably end up working some 100 hours a week (instead of more modest 60)... Cyberspace is increasingly becoming a large portion of our lives. As companies are looking for ways to cut down on costs, deliver their products and services faster and more efficiently, and improve customer satisfaction, the Internet almost always seems to be the best solution. To prepare for working efficiently in this new era, you have to master cyberspace. This class will hopefully help you do to so.

When Technology fails...

An important thing to note is that -- as most of us have learned the hard way -- technology can and does fail when we need it most. However, don’t get hung up on the technology though. Think about your objectives instead. If you are trying to submit a paper and your ISP is down, fax the paper or (snail) mail it instead. If you are trying to post to the discussion forum and your computer starts misbehaving (to put it mildly), contact me and we will figure out a way how to enable you to still continue with your participation. Make sure you always communicate your problems with me. If I don’t know about your problems, it is virtually impossible for me to be forgiving when it comes to deadlines and the like.

OK... enough with me talking and let’s move on with the class...

COURSE OBJECTIVES

As with the introduction to the course, you should clearly list the objectives of the course for the online students. Here are two examples:



Example 1: Course Objectives

At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to:

- discuss the meaning of leadership as an evolving concept;
- compare and contrast classical and contemporary models of leadership;
- articulate a new paradigm of leadership that views the development of effective followers as crucial to the leadership equation;
- analyze the organizational context in which leaders must function;
- assess their own leadership skills; and
- apply leadership knowledge and skills to specific organizational challenges.

	Introduction to the Course
	Course Objectives
	Textbooks
	About Your Faculty
	Learning Evaluation Methods
	Assignments
	Writing Guidelines
	Due Dates
	Online Discussion Guidelines



Example 2: Course Objectives










Upon the completion of the course, the student will be able to:

- understand strategic application of information technology;
- establish an organizational framework for technology implementation;
- identify best practices in the use of information technology;
- understand how existing and future technological developments can be leveraged for competitive advantage; and
- integrate prior knowledge of business functions into a larger technology paradigm for an organization.

TEXTBOOKS

Most times you will tell your students to procure their books from MBSDirect, the online version of the Barnes and Noble bookstore on the Duquesne Campus. We can even provide a hyperlink to their site. Here is an example:

 **Example:** Textbooks

-  [Introduction to the Course](#)
-  [Course Objectives](#)
-  **[Textbooks](#)**
-  [About Your Faculty](#)
-  [Learning Evaluation Methods](#)
-  [Assignments](#)
-  [Writing Guidelines](#)
-  [Due Dates](#)
-  [Online Discussion Guidelines](#)

One text is required for the course and is available online through MBSDirect:








Hickman, G. R. (1998). *Leading organizations: Perspectives for a new era*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

This is a recently-released, edited text filled with articles that discuss some of the very latest ideas in organizational leadership. You will find it useful to retain this book to refer to throughout the entire program.

ABOUT YOUR FACULTY

Since your students won't be meeting you face-to-face, this is a good section to add so that they can get to know you. You should give your students information about your background and why you are teaching this course. Here are two examples:

 **Example 1:** About Your Faculty

-  [Introduction to the Course](#)
-  [Course Objectives](#)
-  [Textbooks](#)
-  **[About Your Faculty](#)**
-  [Learning Evaluation Methods](#)
-  [Assignments](#)
-  [Writing Guidelines](#)
-  [Due Dates](#)
-  [Online Discussion Guidelines](#)

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Dr. Cini oversees the Organizational Leadership curriculum in Duquesne University's Saturday College, an innovative academic program designed for adult students who wish to pursue a Bachelor's degree. As part of this curriculum, Dr. Cini piloted the first course taught entirely online (using conferencing software) at Duquesne University in the spring of 1996 and

continues to teach online. In addition, Dr. Cini teaches leadership courses in the Master of Arts degree program in Leadership and Liberal Studies, also offered in a Saturday format at Duquesne.

Dr. Cini's current research interests focus on leadership development in adults. She has also conducted research on the psychological factors that draw individuals to groups and organizations; on newcomers to groups; on faculty perceptions of their experiences teaching in traditional and in accelerated formats; and on student satisfaction and learning in distance formats.

Her work has been published in *Career Development Quarterly*, *The Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *The Journal of Public Management and Social Policy*, *The Journal of Leadership Studies*, and *A Leadership Journal: Women in Leadership-Sharing the Vision*. Dr. Cini has also developed and delivered leadership development curricula as part of a team to a variety of organizations including AT&T, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the Federal Reserve Bank.

Dr. Cini earned her Ph.D. in social psychology from the University of Pittsburgh in 1994, with emphases in group processes and research methodology. Her awards include the 1993 Dissertation Research Award from the American Psychological Association Science Directorate and the Sloan Graduate Fellowship from the University of Pittsburgh. She has also been elected to numerous honorary societies and has received commendations for outstanding teaching.



Example 2: About Your Faculty

George H. Updegrove

George is an educator and consultant with 30 years of experience. He has provided direct consultation services to over 100 domestic and international organizations. George earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in psychology and sociology. He accomplished Air Force Institute of Technology post-graduate behavioral study at the University of Texas and Duke University. With expertise in leadership and organizational development, his work has taken him to 23 nations.

George has created and delivered numerous leadership development programs and has written articles for professional journals and other publications. He designed and implemented a highly acclaimed executive leadership curriculum as faculty member, and Chief, Leadership and Management Studies, at the prestigious Air War College for senior U.S. and international military officers.

In 1985 he retired from the Air Force with the rank of colonel. After retirement from the Air Force he was Vice President and COO of American










International Medical Systems in Mobile, Alabama, before coming to Pittsburgh as a Senior Consultant with Development Dimensions International. In 1996 he decided to relinquish full time work. He has been teaching in the Saturday College graduate and undergraduate programs since 1994.

At Duquesne University, he is presently working as principal consultant with the Division of Continuing Education, Center for Leadership Development, serving business clients in the greater Pittsburgh area.

LEARNING EVALUATION METHODS

As in a face-to-face class, your learning evaluation methods (i.e. grading criteria) should be very clear. We have found that assigning at least a portion of the class grade to the online discussion is a key part of motivating students to discuss frequently and with interest.

Here is an example posted by online faculty:

	Introduction to the Course
	Course Objectives
	Textbooks
	About Your Faculty
	Learning Evaluation Methods
	Assignments
	Writing Guidelines
	Due Dates
	Online Discussion Guidelines



Example: Learning Evaluation Methods

Your grade will be based on these components:

1. **Concept Integration Papers** [TWO (2) of THREE (3) are required. Each one is worth 15% for a total of 30% of your course grade.] You will be asked to integrate your class readings with your or others' leadership experience(s) in these papers. Specific guidelines for these topics can be found under “Concept Integration Papers.” Several guidelines for writing any paper for me can be found under “Guidelines for Writing Papers.”

2. **Participation** (40%) Participation means three major things in an online course:

- Reading others' postings in the Discussion Forum;
- Actively participating in the ongoing “class” discussion in the Discussion Forum (you should post at least twice a week);
- Actively participating in and contributing to your small group project.

See “Online Discussion Guidelines” for further instructions.

3. **Leader Interview** (10%) Class members will select and conduct an interview with a person they either know or have heard or read about who, in their estimation, is an excellent leader. I will post each interview summary so that we can all read one another's summaries and benefit from this shared learning. See “Instructions for Interview” for specific instructions.










4. **Small Group Project (20%)** You will be assigned to a cyber-group of about 4 people. Your group will work together throughout the semester to design an organization using ideas from the Hickman text. See “Small Group Project” for specific details.

Your final grade will be determined by the following scale:

- A 93-100
- A- 90-92
- B+ 87-89
- B 83-86
- B- 80-82
- C+ 77-79
- C 70-76
- D 60-69
- F 59 and below

ASSIGNMENTS

The papers or projects you assign should be sent to you as Word attachments in your private email in the software package you are using. We recommend that you provide clear instructions about how to label their attachments so that you are not bombarded by a number of files whose labels are not sufficiently explanatory. When you have 15 papers to receive and grade, correct labeling becomes very important so that you can find them quickly. Here is an example:

	Introduction to the Course
	Course Objectives
	Textbooks
	About Your Faculty
	Learning Evaluation Methods
	Assignments
	Writing Guidelines
	Due Dates
	Online Discussion Guidelines

 **Example:** Assignments (Papers)

Please turn in TWO of the following three papers. You MAY turn in all three- ONLY your top TWO grades will be used in calculating your final grade.

Please send me your papers in the form of a Word attachment to a private email message within WebCT. Please name your files:

YourlastnameCIP#.doc.

Therefore, if I am sending you my second paper the file would be called CiniCIP2.doc.

Paper #1 - Due October 9, 1999 at noon

In parts I and X of your text, the chapter authors all discuss the changing environment of the 21st century and the leadership necessary for the new millennium. Choose an organization you are familiar with, and, referring to the ideas in parts I and X, write a paper to brief this organization's leadership on (a) the factors in the external environment that will impact the organization in the near future, and (b) recommendations regarding how the leaders of the organization can prepare to meet these external challenges.

Paper #2 - Due October 30, 1999 at noon

Suppose that the CEO of your employing organization comes to you to tap your expertise in leadership. She wants you to start a “corporate university” that focuses on leadership development throughout the organization. Referring to ideas from Parts III, IV and VIII in your book, develop for her (a) a definition of leadership for your organization, and (b) a plan for the leadership development program.

Paper #3 - Due November 13, 1999 at noon

Using ideas from Parts II, VI, and VII, describe and discuss your employing organization (or another that you are familiar with) in terms of its (a) structure and design, and (b) culture. How does the current structure and culture benefit the organization and its constituents? How do they detract from its overall effectiveness?

Just as in face to face classes, students can work in small groups in the online classroom. Here is an example of how one group project is designed:



Example: Assignments (Group Project)

Each of you will be assigned to a small group (team). Each team will consist of approximately 4 people (depending on the overall size of the class). If you click on the Forum button in the Discussion Forum, you will be able to view the forums to which you have access. In that list, you should see “Team 1,” “Team 2,” “Team 3,” or “Team 4.” That is your team for the small group project. I will also post the members of each team in a message in the “Ask the Instructor” forum in the Discussion Forum for the class.

You should immediately get acquainted with your team members. Feel free to adopt a team name of your choosing. If you want, tell me the name and I'll change your forum title to your team's name. When you post messages to your team's forum, only you and your team members will see those messages. As the instructor, I will see them, too. However, the rest of the class won't see your team's messages; they will only see the messages from their respective teams.










Your mission is the following--

It is the year 2010. You and several trusted colleagues decide to leave your present jobs and start your own organization. Using ideas from the Hickman text, describe your organization, starting with a vision, mission, and values. What will your organization do? What is your leadership philosophy? How will you hire and develop employees? What other aspects of the book do you feel are crucial to weave into your organizational plan? Be sure to discuss the concept of social responsibility -- is it a concern for you in this organization? If so, how will you build social responsibility into your work? Describe your organization in a 5-7 page paper (one 5-7 page paper for the team).

This project should be turned into me in the form of an email attachment from ONE group member. The file should be called "Yourteamnameproj.doc." Therefore, if you tell me to rename your team the "Stealers" you should send me a file called Stealersproj.doc.

WRITING GUIDELINES

We have found that the more clear and comprehensive the guidelines you provide for papers, the more students can concentrate on content and clear writing, rather than on guessing your expectations. Here is an example of the types of information you might choose to provide:

 Introduction to the Course
 Course Objectives
 Textbooks
 About Your Faculty
 Learning Evaluation Methods
 Assignments
 Writing Guidelines
 Due Dates
 Online Discussion Guidelines

 **Example: Writing Guidelines**

The following are just a few tips about writing good papers. Please see the Online Writing Help Center and Help for Cini's Assignments for more thorough information.

Your papers (and any written assignments) should be:
 word-processed and
 double-spaced,
 with one-inch margins and
 a 10 or 12-point font size.

Papers should be approximately:

5-7 pages long in order for you to develop your ideas adequately (unless I specify a different page length in my instructions).

Your papers should have: a) an introduction, b) paragraphs that develop and support your ideas, and c) a conclusion that summarizes the paper.








Your papers should have a logical flow, with smooth transitions between ideas. They should also be free from grammatical, punctuation, and spelling errors.

Please adhere to MLA style (in-text citation of ideas) and include a Works Cited page at the end.

Your papers will be graded according to these criteria. I have listed these criteria under Learning Evaluation Methods.

DUE DATES

Even though you will post important dates in the class calendar, some students are used to having dates listed on the syllabus. It is a good idea to list important dates in both places so that students are likely to find the dates in one or the other location:

 Introduction to the Course
 Course Objectives
 Textbooks
 About Your Faculty
 Learning Evaluation Methods
 Assignments
 Writing Guidelines
 Due Dates
 Online Discussion Guidelines



Example: Due Dates

These assignments and their due dates are also listed on your Course Calendar.










PLEASE NOTE: ALL ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE ON THE DATES LISTED. LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE DOWNGRADED ONE-HALF GRADE FOR EACH DAY (INCLUDING SUNDAYS AND HOLIDAYS) THAT THEY ARE OVERDUE. THIS POLICY IS IN PLACE IN ORDER TO BE FAIR TO STUDENTS WHO DO HAND IN THEIR WORK ON TIME.

Sept. 11-Sept. 17	Post introductions in “Introductions” forum
Sept. 19-Sept. 24	Discuss Section I from Hickman online
Sept. 25-Oct. 1	Discuss Section X from Hickman online
Oct. 2-Oct. 8	Discuss Section III from Hickman online
Oct. 9 at noon	Concept Integration Paper #1 due
Oct. 9-Oct. 15	Discuss Section IV from Hickman online
Oct. 16-Oct. 22	Discuss Section VIII from Hickman online
Oct. 23-Oct. 29	Discuss Section II from Hickman online
Oct. 30 at noon	Concept Integration Paper #2 due
Oct. 30-Nov. 5	Discuss Section VI from Hickman online
Nov. 6-Nov. 12	Discuss Section VII from Hickman online
Nov. 13 at noon	Concept Integration Paper #3 due

Nov. 13-Nov. 19	Discuss Section V from Hickman online
Nov. 20 at noon	Leader Interview Summary due
Nov. 20-Nov. 27	No Online Discussion-Happy Thanksgiving!!!
Nov. 28-Dec. 3	Read and comment on Leader Interviews
Dec. 4-Dec. 11	Discuss Section IX from Hickman online AND PLEASE COMPLETE TEQ (course evaluation) online
Dec. 11 at noon	Group Project due

ONLINE DISCUSSION GUIDELINES

Students new to the online environment have no clue what to “say” online. We have found it helpful to provide them models. Here are two examples. Feel free to develop your own examples:

 Introduction to the Course
 Course Objectives
 Textbooks
 About Your Faculty
 Learning Evaluation Methods
 Assignments
 Writing Guidelines
 Due Dates
 Online Discussion Guidelines

 **Example 1:** Online Discussion Guidelines

One of the areas that is a struggle for some students new to the online environment is what to actually say in their discussions. So I'm providing some pointers here.

Although small talk (e.g., weather, sports) is sometimes useful, it should not be the content of your messages in the discussion area. “How 'bout them Steelers” won't count for a lot in your participation grade! :-)

Your comments should address the week's reading. This can include a) agreeing or disagreeing, b) relating examples from your own experience that are relevant, c) asking questions about the material for clarification, d) asking others if they have similar experiences or examples, and the like.

Always let us know what particular material in the book you are referring to--give us page numbers, but be sure to quote, paraphrase or summarize--so we don't have to go back and read the exact part of the text. Support your opinions and ideas with examples, experiences, other readings, or the book's material.

When drafting your online discussion postings, concentrate on the content and logic of your response. I am not concerned about the occasional typo or misplaced comma. I have found it useful to compose longer postings in a word processor (such as MS Word) which enables you to spell and grammar check your posting. Then, you can “cut” and “paste” the posting into BlackBoard.

To make this even clearer, I've included some examples of good postings that follow these criteria

Example 1

I believe that our environment in general has dramatically changed with the development of technology. Technology is propelling a tremendous amount of change outside of organizations as well. While Hickman supports her implications for change concerning the business/organization environment, I don't believe that she provides adequate proof that society has never before experienced such a quantity and quality of change in leadership.

The model outlined of 21st Century Leadership (page 7) has not developed solely due to computer technology. The leadership model is one that has been developing and evolving since the Industrial Revolution. As workers became more knowledgeable, leaders were forced to move from a more classical style of organization and adopt a more human resources approach. While technology may have played a part in this transition, I have to think that it was primarily a result of improved educational opportunities for the middle and lower classes. The common folk acquired more rights and just got smarter.

I don't believe that Hickman supports any implication that our society has never before experienced such dramatic changes in leadership. This may be so for myself as an individual but certainly not for society. If we look back in history, we can find many examples of events that served as a major proponent for dynamic change (quantity and quality). FDR's decision to enter WWII served as a major catalyst for enormous change in our society, including leadership in business. Women left their homes to work, in fact, some never returned in the same inept capacity. African-Americans finally were able to serve side-by-side with whites in the military, Eleanor Roosevelt fought for women's rights during this period, and conglomerates such as Alcoa were forced to relinquish their position and open up markets to other ventures. The war also prompted the development of new technologies, and enhanced production and communication methods.

Example 2

I completely agree with Hickman's assumption that "the environment of leadership is changing quickly and dramatically". Never have leaders and managers been faced with such a myriad of obstacles like changing work environments and diverse workforces as they are right now. Leaders must balance the needs of the organization with the desires of the workforce and that balancing act often leaves the leader stretched too thin. As Hickman writes, "this environment requires leadership that continuously assesses the external environment for the purpose of identifying or creating opportunities and lessening potential threats to the organization". As Mr. Spock stated in a popular Star Trek movie, "The needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few, or the one." The point being that good leadership often results in sacrificing ones' goals, preconceptions, and ideas in order to further the organization. Bennis and Nanus put it succinctly when they wrote, "Leadership in the twenty-first century is not a job for wimps, but then, it never was."

One important aspect of change that leaders are faced with includes the shrinkage if not the removal of middle management. In previous eras leaders were insulated from the daily workforce and the resulting issues by middle managers. However, in today's changing business environment leaders are being forced to confront issues head on and to incorporate the ideas, needs, desires, and talents of the general workforce. As Bennis and Nanus state, "decisions are shaped far less by leadership authority than by collaboration, shared values, and mutual respect".

What do others think?



Example 2: Online Discussion Guidelines

Most of you probably wonder how your online discussion (or participation) will be graded. As you already know, you are required to log into the course at least four (4) times a week and contribute to the ongoing discussion. Just like in a regular classroom, each one of your comments will be graded. For example, when you raise your hand in the classroom and voice your opinion of a certain matter, your instructor makes a mental note about the quality of your response and takes it into consideration when determining the participation portion of your grade. By the same token, you will be graded for each bulletin board posting. **DON'T PANIC!!!** This system really isn't designed to lower your final grade. Here's how it will work:

Each week you will have 4 postings;
 Each posting will be worth up to 3 points;
 There are seven weeks during which you will participate in the ongoing discussions, yet you will be graded only for five (out of seven) weeks (this should give all of us an opportunity to get more comfortable in this environment).

For example, let's imagine that each week you accumulate only 8 points. That's an average of 2 out of 3 points possible on each discussion posting (You **MUST** post four times a week). During the course of the term, you will accumulate 56 (8x7) points out of 60 total points (12x5), thus still earning 93.33% of your participation grade. Likewise, if you get stuck working long hours during one week and don't have a lot of time to devote to the class, you can still make up for it.

Most of you will find that you will post more frequently than four times a week. Some students in online courses post as many as 20 messages each week. While I strongly encourage discussion, I will take into consideration only 4 best postings during each week. So, let's say you post 10 times during week 2. I will only take into consideration your 4 best posting for the purposes of the calculation of the final grade.

The TA will be grading your postings and will occasionally send you an email keeping you up to date on your progress. Each posting can be worth up to 3 points. Here's how points work:

0 points

Hello:

I disagree with the statement that people don't share information. This is company specific. Does anyone else disagree?

(Comment: no content, no critical thinking, and no significant contribution to the discussion)

1 point

Hi folks:

I agree with the statement that people don't volunteer information. We implemented this new system in my company and people are reluctant to use it because of internal competition between functional departments. It doesn't make too much sense since we are all working toward a common goal and it's driving the senior management crazy. They formed a team to deal with this information.

(Comment: this posting uses information from the case study but doesn't offer evidence of critical thinking in synthesizing the information from the case study with the real life situation).

2 points

Davenport argues that "managers prefer to get information from people rather than computers" (122). His argument is founded on the assumption that humans can add context and interpret information that managers receive. I have found, however, that my manager prefers to get information from me AND from the computer. While occasionally he asks me to interpret my reports, he really appreciates the fact that all of my reports are readily available online so that he can view them at any time. I only add context and interpret those reports once every month (or more frequently if the information in the report looks odd). I think that the medium for report delivery, therefore, cannot be generalized by a single statement but depends greatly on the manager's preferences and report structure.

(Comment: This posting uses the case study material to challenge some common assumptions. It provides evidence of critical thinking and applies the IT theory to the workplace.)

3 points

This case study states that "managers prefer to get information from people rather than computers" (Davenport, 122). The reasoning behind this statement is the assumption that humans can add value to a report by adding context and interpreting it. For example, Giant Eagle's district manager might not immediately understand why the sale of beef is significantly down only in one store in the district. The store manager might find it necessary to explain it to the district manager as

the customers' reaction to the recent E. coli outbreak in the local nursing home.

However, I find that my manager prefers to get the information from me and from the computer. He is a devoted manager who works late and appreciates the option of having all reports readily available online. He only asks me to interpret those reports occasionally (about once a month) or when the information in the report looks odd. Thus, while I can provide context to those reports, the computer can provide convenience.

It may be, however, that the preference for a certain delivery medium is manager specific. Does anyone report to a manager who doesn't want to get computer reports despite the convenience computers can provide?

(Comment: this posting synthesizes the case study material, explains it, and applies it to a real life situation. It shows evidence of critical thinking and facilitates further discussion of the issue. It shows good writing skills despite a few typos.)

This completes the virtual syllabus development. Many faculty have found it useful to “borrow” from the examples listed above. Some have also found it useful to rename, reorganize, or even add new sections to the virtual syllabus depicted in this section. Again, the examples provided are not meant to be prescriptive but to merely guide you in the development of your online class syllabus.

■ PLANNING THE DISCUSSION AREAS

Aside from developing the Virtual Syllabus, you will also need to define the discussion areas prior to the beginning of the class. Think of discussion areas, or forums, as different rooms in a building on campus. You might have one room designed to serve as a classroom, another room to be your office, several rooms allocated to students to work in teams, etc. While this scenario would be difficult to implement on campus (due to a shortage of space), it is possible to implement it in the “virtual” classroom.

HOW DO I ORGANIZE THE ONLINE DISCUSSION?

You can define separate discussion areas for all of your online activities. For example, you can have one discussion area designated for student introductions; one designated for important announcements; one designated for student questions to you; one designated for a topic, week, or any other class component; etc.

We have found that the inclusion of the following discussion areas in your online course can make the online discussion more organized and easier for students (and you) to navigate through.

- **Introductions** - use this discussion area to post your introduction, but also ask students to post their introductions in this area;
- **Ask Your Professor** - instruct your students to use this discussion area to post their questions to you; since these questions are posted in a “public” discussion area, all students can benefit from your answers (unlike with private mail which should be used for “confidential” questions and answers);
- **Important Announcements** - reserve this discussion area for important announcements, such as deadlines, additional instructions, and the like;
- **Week 1 ... Week 15** - you might want to organize the online discussions into different areas by weeks, specific dates (e.g. 09/01/99 - 09/07/99), or topics (Machiavelli's Prince, Plato's Republic, etc.). These separate areas will make the discussion more manageable;
- **Team 1, Team 2...** - you can also allocate separate discussion areas for each small group of students where only the members of the group can meet and work on group projects; and
- **Student Union or Cyber Café** – you can provide students with a discussion area (that the instructor does not have access to) where they can post birthday announcements, seek help from their peers, and the like; this fosters the sense of community online.

TEACHING ONLINE

As you can see, a good online course requires a great deal of pre-planning. To this point, you have developed course materials and planned your discussion forums (the virtual syllabus and the discussion areas). However, you still need to think about how to actually “teach” online. In this section, we will outline some strategies that can assist you with facilitating online learning.

■ ONE WEEK BEFORE THE CLASS STARTS

POST A GENERAL “WELCOME” MESSAGE IN THE DISCUSSION FORUM AREA

Generally, your students will receive their login identifiers and passwords for your online course about one week prior to the class start. Before students start logging into the course, make sure you post a message in the discussion forum area, which a) introduces you more informally than the virtual syllabus, and b) welcomes them to the course.



Example: Welcome Message

Hi folks:

Welcome to the introduction to the graduate study of leadership for fall 1999. I am really excited about welcoming you to this online program. I've been teaching online since 1996, and I think that as you become more adept at this mode of learning you will join me in agreeing that it can be a very powerful way to learn.

Since this is an introduction, I'll tell you more about me. I grew up in Hershey, PA. I have to add that since everyone thinks it's great to come from a town that smells like chocolate. And, no, I'm not sick of the stuff...I still love chocolate...I guess it's in my bloodstream.

I earned my Ph.D. in social psychology in 1994 from the University of Pittsburgh, focusing on groups and organizations. I've taught since 1986, and have been at Duquesne teaching leadership and related topics since 1994. I have experience in marketing research, administration, health care research, and counseling. I love to teach because it gives me a great excuse to keep learning. I'm looking forward to getting to know each of you and to introducing you to the MLLS online. Don't hesitate to ask me for or about anything. I want you to get comfortable and jump into the learning experience.

Best regards, Marie

ASK STUDENTS TO INTRODUCE THEMSELVES

We have found that an assignment which asks students to post a paragraph or two about themselves works great in the online environment (you could ask them to state their name, where they work, what they do, what their interests are, what they expect from the course, etc.). This assignment serves several purposes: a) students get to know each other, b) it “breaks the ice,” c) students learn how to use some of the features of WebCT prior to the course beginning, and d) students have enough time to contact technical support before the course starts should they experience any technical difficulties.



Example: A “public” message asking students to post their introductions

Folks:

All assignments are listed in the “Assignments” section of your online course. Make sure you go over the assignments promptly since the first assignment is due no later than June 1, 1999. This first assignment involves logging into your course and posting a one-paragraph introduction of yourself in the discussion forum.

Boris

WELCOME STUDENTS INDIVIDUALLY

As students post their introductions, send them a private mail message within WebCT welcoming them to your class. Remember that for most of them, this is the first time they are taking an online class and they can experience high levels of anxiety. It will also provide an opportunity for them to respond to you privately with any comments or questions they might have.



Example: A private “welcome” message

Hi:

I just want to send you a private message welcoming you to the course. Feel free to use the private email function to ask me questions or discuss items you'd rather not bring up in the discussion forum.

Marie

■ THE FIRST “DAY” OF CLASS

ANNOUNCE CLASS BEGINNING

Because students are not required to “physically” show up in class (which marks the class beginning), some of them might feel confused as to what to do after they post their introduction. To alleviate any confusion, post a message in the bulletin board that announces the official start of the class and outlines the plan of action for the next week or so.



Example: Class beginning announcement

Most of you are probably asking yourselves as to where we go from now... We will follow the regular case study schedule (as outlined in the calendar). The first analysis of a case study (Saving IT's Soul) will be done by me and posted by Monday. You can refer to your virtual syllabus to find out the deadlines for your postings.

Unfortunately, this 2-week break from classes is over and we have to start working. Enjoy the rest of the weekend and make sure you read the case study by Monday. As always, if you experience any problems with your schedule and can't log in (or if technical difficulties prevent you from doing so), please let me know immediately.

“See” you online!

Boris

MODEL ONLINE BEHAVIORS

It is important to “model” effective online behaviors for students to follow. While most students know exactly what to do in the traditional classroom, they still don’t know what to do online. Therefore, if students are required to read the course textbook and summarize a chapter of it, you might consider “modeling” this behavior by summarizing the first chapter yourself. This will provide a framework for students to use as the basis of their assignments.



Example: Chapter summary posted by the instructor

Saving IT's Soul: Human-Centered Information Management

In “Saving IT's Soul” (1994), Davenport argues that the purpose of delivering information to employees within an organization is often overlooked in lieu of developing sophisticated computer systems that promise, yet fail to deliver increased productivity and efficiency.

While developing an IT system, companies often make incorrect assumptions because they fail to realize that: a) information evolves in many directions, taking many meanings, b) people don't share information easily, and c) changing an IT system won't change a company's information culture. Thus, companies often try to enforce simplified versions of information in an attempt to make it uniform without realizing that this lowest common denominator often fails to deliver. For example, one department's definition of a “customer” may differ from another department's definition. When simplifying the definition to meet everyone's needs, the company risks losing valuable information.

Furthermore, that fact that managers get two-thirds of their information from face-to-face and telephone conversations is also often overlooked. This would imply that complex, sophisticated, and rather expensive IT systems fail to deliver what they are supposed to: information used in decision making processes. One could argue that managers need context, which is often difficult to obtain from a computer. Another reason for this could be because of information overflow: we tend to get bombarded with information so we learn to ignore it. However, Davenport argues that there isn't necessarily too much information. This overflow is merely a result of worthless information (such as birthday announcements, retirement plans information, etc.) that we are exposed to on a daily basis. The right information, which can help us in performing our job duties, is often lost among numerous pieces of worthless information.

Companies also waste resources in trying to locate that “right” information amidst endless collections of internal and external documents. Some companies

tried to deal with this problem by introducing GroupWare (such as Lotus Notes), information maps, or information guides. While all three approaches have as an objective easier access to information, a company can't forget that employee training is of crucial importance. Employees who don't know how to use systems to access information cannot perform their job responsibilities effectively. Furthermore, some companies have realized that the true value of accessing information comes from accessing people who created it (who can provide context).

Rather than blaming technology for failing to deliver, Davenport argues that we must remember that even the most sophisticated IT system cannot necessarily control information due to its very nature of being ever expanding and unpredictable. It's not the computer who manages the information, it's the people who use it (or don't).

POSE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

We have found that to facilitate learning in the online environment, it is crucial to engage students in an asynchronous discussion. Through this discussion, students can enhance their critical thinking skills by learning how to apply, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information (as in Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Goals).

Post discussion questions in the discussion forum area. It is generally a good idea to keep the number of questions relatively low - e.g., one or two per week. Furthermore, students (and faculty) find it easier to “navigate” through the discussion if you post different discussion questions as separate messages in the discussion forum area.



Example: Discussion Questions

Folks:

In Section One, Hickman features articles that support her contention that the environment of leadership is changing quickly and dramatically. In fact, the implication is that never before have we experienced such a quality and quantity of change.

Do you agree with that assumption? Why or why not? Please support your assertions with information from section I, information from outside sources, or your experiences.

Marie

■ FIRST WEEK OF CLASS

FACILITATE ONLINE DISCUSSION FREQUENTLY

Most students in online classes do not know exactly what to do when they first experience the online learning environment. Your frequent facilitation of the online discussion is necessary to set the right tone for the rest of the class.

Engage students in discussion by:

- providing **formative feedback** on their postings,
- asking them to **apply, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate** information,
- **summarizing the postings** of several students and posing further discussion questions, and
- providing students with **additional resources** pertaining to the discussion (such as web sites, journal references, books, etc.).

Your postings should be frequent so that students know that you are “there” to help them cope with the course. Typically, you should post after every five to six student postings. Here are some faculty postings from actual online courses:



Example 1: Faculty posting

Ted:

That was an interesting comment. It seems that for you, leadership is increasingly important because of the accelerating rate of change. What kinds of leaders should we have? Should they relate to us differently than before?

Marie



Example 2: Faculty posting

Jim and John: You both posted solid responses to my questions. I have another question though: do you think that IT systems partially fail to deliver because “computer geeks” fail to communicate with users? For example, if I was building a database for PPG, I might assume that the word “color” (and all of the representations thereof) are uniform throughout the organization... I might fail to assign an RGB (red-green-blue; remember HTML?) code to the color and hence further define it... After all, if we store color in the database, then we

need a text field. If we want to store its code as well, then there is one more field to create and a lot more memory to waste...

Boris



Example 3: Faculty posting

Jane: you support Hickman's point in this first section...things are very different now than they have ever been... Fred would say (from his earlier posting) that it's premature to say that.

What does the rest of the class think?

A note here. I will never answer the question I posed...I WILL challenge you to think and respond...I believe that education is about adopting a viewpoint based on sound logic and support. Two viewpoints might be equally sound...and so we have a dialogue...

Marie

SYNTHESIZE CLASS DISCUSSION

We have also found it useful to synthesize the week's discussion in a summary such as this one:



Example: Summary of week's postings

Dear all:

It is time to wrap up this case study and move onto the next one. However, I have a few closing comments: It seems that this particular case study stirred up a lot of emotions. Being IT savvy, it is often difficult for us to understand the other side of the coin: the non-technical end-user. However, in order to implement a successful IT system, we must keep in mind that an IT system does not only consist of the technology used in building it. It also consists of users who will be using it (or will refuse to use it). Therefore, to implement a good IT system, we must think of technology and end-users. The case study emphasizes the fact that we must question our assumptions (such as: if we build it, they will use it) and approach the implementation of IT with the end-user in mind. We must consider how this new IT system will affect the company's communication culture. We also must be considerate to the needs and concerns of the end user.

As a class, we did a survey of end users and found out that some of their issues are as follows:

- Bad experiences with technology glitches: unable to recover files, computer freezes, and the computer doesn't always do what it is supposed to do.
- Lack of training: there is no time to receive training; training received was poor and intimidating; training is not available;
- Unreliable help: when help is available, it is not understandable; help is not available or is not available when you need it most;
- Feature Overkill: too many features make software too complex and too difficult to master;
- Learning curve: it takes too long to become comfortable and learn how to use well;
- Fast Changing Environment: technology changes too fast so there is a feeling that you can never keep up with it.
- Information Overload: too much, in too little time;
- The Big Brother Syndrome: A feeling that everything you do on a computer gets recorded and monitored by a third party.
- Attitude Issues: a feeling that only secretarial personnel should be typing and that typing one's own letters is beneath them;
- Job Security: a feeling that computers will replace people;

All of these concerns are real and can be easily justified. While we might disagree with some of the concerns, our task is NOT to be judgmental, but rather to try to figure out how to overcome these concerns. For example, when it comes to job security, we may ask senior management to formally disband such concerns. When it comes to too many features, we may decide to build a system in stages: adding features as time goes by. And so on. I introduced this case study first because I firmly believe that these are some of the issues that should be in the back of our minds constantly. So, please keep every thing that we discussed so far in mind when approaching other case studies. Also, remember to build this model into your group project.

Boris

■ THROUGHOUT YOUR ONLINE COURSE

PROVIDE CONTINUOUS FORMATIVE FEEDBACK

Online students can sometimes feel lost in the online environment. For many of them, your class will probably be the first educational experience online. To help them become better online learners, make sure you provide formative feedback on their progress. Private mail is particularly useful for this. The following messages were sent to students via private mail or email.



Example 1: Feedback via private mail or email

Sally:

I'm glad you got up to speed so quickly. Your second response was right on target. You referred to the book, drew on your own experience, wrote clearly and concisely, and exhibited critical thinking.

Keep up the good work.

Marie



Example 2: Feedback via private mail or email

John: I am concerned about your progress. Your last posting was almost 10 days ago... What is happening? Please let me know if there is anything I can do.
Thanks. Boris

ANNOUNCE UPCOMING DEADLINES

Although you may have all deadlines listed in the calendar section of your online course, perhaps even in the virtual syllabus, you shouldn't assume that students will remember when something is due. Just like in a regular classroom, it is a good idea to “announce” upcoming deadlines and ask students if they need further clarification of the assignment.



Example: Deadline announcement

Folks:

Just a reminder that your first paper is due at my computer by noon on Sat. the 13th.

PLEASE look over the guidelines and criteria for papers as you write your paper. I am certainly willing to review early drafts.

ALWAYS explain and discuss concepts that you use from the Schein book in your paper--don't assume the reader knows what they mean. You are also showing your mastery of this material.

Questions? Please try to post them to the public discussion area so we can all benefit.

Thanks.

Marie

■ AT THE END OF YOUR ONLINE COURSE

ASK STUDENTS TO FILL OUT TEQS

Although Duquesne University, in compliance with the decision of the Provost, does not take into consideration the Teacher Effectiveness Questionnaires (TEQs) of online courses for the first two years of a faculty's online teaching in consideration of tenure or promotion, we still administer the online version of TEQs to assist you in improving your online teaching methods. TEQs in online classes, unlike in the traditional classes, can be accessed at any time during the last week of the course. Just like with regular TEQs, students can only fill them out once.

Toward the end of your online course, you should remind your students to fill out the online TEQ form.



Example: TEQ reminder

Hi folks:

We have developed a method for you to fill out TEQs (Duquesne's version of teaching evaluations) online. However, we will be asking for a bit more feedback than typical TEQs do, since this is such a new format. So please mark your calendars for March 14-20. These are the ONLY days you will be able to access the TEQs. I will NOT be able to see the results until after your grades are in. Also, given the way the system is designed, you cannot get your grade UNTIL YOU COMPLETE THE TEQ.

Thanks!

Marie

ASK STUDENTS TO “WRAP UP” THE DISCUSSION

A few days before the official end of your online course, ask students to “wrap up” the discussion and submit any assignments due (or past due). You may also want to provide them with information about when they can expect their final grades, when their access privileges to your online course will be suspended, etc.



Example: “Wrap up” message

Folks:

Almost at the end of our online class, I just wanted to remind you about the deadline for the final project. It is due no later than Saturday, July 24, 1999 at noon. All past due projects will be penalized with a 10 point deduction. Also, please don't forget to fill out TEQs if you haven't already done so. On Monday (July 26) your course logins will be suspended. Your final grades will be turned in on the following Wednesday.

We should use these last couple of days to wrap up the discussion.

Boris

ANNOUNCE THE END OF THE CLASS

At the very end of your online class, post a message in the discussion forum area announcing the end of the class. You may also want to provide students with a mechanism for submitting any past due assignments (such as your regular email) or with information how to contact you should they have any questions about their final grades.



Example: Class ending announcement

Dear all:

I guess we have come to the end of this class. I hope you enjoyed it as much as I have. I know it was frustrating at first getting used to this new environment (for me as well) but I truly believe that we would never achieve this level of discussion in a regular classroom.

Originally, I wanted to post all of your projects in the Presentation area of WebCT. However, I realized that most of the projects exceed reasonable download times by far (I don't think anyone would want to download a 3 MB

PowerPoint presentation) so I had to give up on that idea. I am planning though to burn a few CDs with all of the projects and make them available in the Saturday College office (I still have your regular email and will let you know; probably some time next week).

It was a pleasure to have all of you in class and I wish you all the best in life (and for those of you who are not graduating yet – in future classes). If you are graduating, I will see you at graduation!

Take care,

Boris

SUMMARY

This booklet has taken you, the future online instructor, through three phases of translating a college-level course from your face-to-face to an online version: 1. pre-planning, 2. planning and developing the course, and, finally, 3. teaching online. When undertaking this process for the first time, you may feel a mixture of many emotions including anxiety, enthusiasm, trepidation, and excitement, among others. We felt the same way at first, but have discovered a renewed excitement and enthusiasm for teaching as we moved to the online environment.

How do you get started? Like the Nike ad says, “Just do it.” Use this booklet to help you put your course online, open it up to students, and jump in. You will discover a teaching environment that is interactive, flexible, and far more “human” than you ever imagined. We wish you great success, and we hope you will contact us if you have any questions about teaching online. We’d love to talk with you and share what we’ve learned.

Also, as we continue to improve this manual, we welcome your suggestions, ideas, and examples. We will add them as we try to make this manual as inclusive as we can.

APPENDIX A: CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

This section of the faculty guidelines for online teaching contains excerpts from our collection of over 1,600 student TEQ submissions. Through this information, we tried to present you with the student view of online learning. Through their comments, students expressed their opinions about those aspects of online teaching they found most effective and those aspects of online teaching that—in their opinion—could be improved.

■ ASPECTS OF ONLINE TEACHING STUDENTS FOUND MOST EFFECTIVE

The following are some of the (unedited) comments provided by students who perceived their instructor as an excellent online teacher (i.e. they awarded the instructor “strongly agree” on the TEQ question “Overall, the instructor is an excellent teacher”).

- This course allowed us to focus on learning at our pace, while being able to utilize the time and skills of our classmates. The instructor allowed us to post during our required times and responded immediately and in-depth. He really made me think.
- Steering group discussion an integrating the reading assignments into everyday practical applications. The instructor also summarized and explained each weeks reading assignment, which helped the student to understand the most important concepts.
- The interaction and comments which were provided as feedback. I appreciate the promptness of responses and the enlightened responses from the professor as well as the TA.
- The instructor did not lead the discussion but guided it.
- The most important aspects of this instructor’s teaching was her patience and also her love for the subject that she was teaching. This was prevalent in her communication within the discussion forum. She made the subject very interesting and always peaked curiosity.
- "Mini-lectures" were very helpful
- He provided questions that caused me to see both sides an issue. This is a very difficult task, especially when dealing matters of law and helped me to bring into focus a better understanding of justice.
- Application of current events in the discussion forum clearly brought alive the social aspects of textual material.
- The instructor proposed excellent questions to start each week’s postings. This prompted very interesting discussions surrounding the text and real life scenarios. The instructor responded very considerately and in a thought provoking way to the students’ postings. The instructor’s questions and responses help to spur additional conversations during each weeks discussions. The instructor was also well prepared and very knowledgeable on the subject matter being taught. I thought that the instructor did a very nice job in bringing this subject matter to life and keeping it interesting.

- The timely responses to questions posed.
- I think the instructor does an excellent job of bringing out the more subtle aspects of the subject and pointing out erroneous conclusions made by students in a positive way. The instructor is very knowledgeable and passionate about what she is teaching and thinks it is important for us to know.
- VERY thorough in her responses to our postings.
- The most effective part of the instructors teaching was his feedback. The instructor gave great feedback which helped to promote critical thinking. I think he did a great job.
- His ability to discern or separate facts and issues.
- He was involved with the discussions. He made sure everyone remained focused.
- She provided real life cases which are relevant to our business life.
- The reading materials used were provocative and relevant to deeper thinking on leadership issues. The thought provoking concepts were challenging to routine and accepted patterns.
- He came up with very challenging questions that really made you think and analyze content. I learned a ton from this class. He also answers questions extremely quickly.
- Online interaction with the class. Evident, SINCERE interest in the class and the students.
- Total involvement. Joy of teaching. Mastery.
- Relating real world scenarios to text books theories
- This course was very well organized.
- Facilitation of this class was very effective. The instructor allowed students to freely discuss issues and would "jump in" to clarify areas where the discussion was getting off track. Many times the instructor posed probing questions in order to uncover key information. Very Well Done!
- Knowledge of the subject matter. 2. Open-minded and objective in scrutinizing student work. 3. Permitting the discussions to proceed with only constructive criticism.
- Whenever he is discussing IT and the online environment, a student knows that he is very passionate about his beliefs. In turn, his beliefs definitely affect the atmosphere of the online environment in a positive manner. His fascination with IT is contagious, which means that a student is more than willing to "go the extra mile" to learn as much as possible about the subject. His methods of teaching are conducive for learning, and he is personable.
- What else can one say about the faculty member as a person and instructor? She is inspiring, knowledgeable, charismatic, and student oriented. Therefore, her methods of teaching are the best. It is my belief that any student who takes her class will quickly see her conviction to the topic of Effective Leadership. In turn, as a student of her teachings, I have become the teacher of my employees.
- The class format was well thought out. The documentation provided to understand how to navigate is excellent. This online class restored my faith in online learning. A previous experience with an online course from another college left me a little wary about trying another online course. I am glad I decided to take this class online.

- Feedback - this certainly helped to keep you focused on your responsiveness. He continually gave feedback to all students. This aspect kept the class alive.
- Relation of his life experiences to the text
- Clear language in questions and in expectations.
- It made a very boring topic interesting and challenging. The instructor gave us various sites to read and current information throughout class. Very good class.
- His ability to engage the student with thought provoking questions which ultimately led to higher thought.
- The instructor obviously read each posting with a great deal of detail. He has a keen ability to generate further thought on postings that provided a new insight or perspective. He was especially effective in keeping the course and content on track and relevant.

■ ASPECTS OF ONLINE TEACHING STUDENTS FELT COULD BE IMPROVED

The following are some of the (unedited) comments provided by students who did *not* perceive their instructor as an excellent online teacher (i.e. they awarded the instructor “strongly disagree” or “disagree” on the TEQ question “Overall, the instructor is an excellent teacher”).

- Be more available. Discuss the course through on-line discussion as the students have to respond to questions. He needs to provide the student not only with reading material, but actually discussions explaining the subject.
- There is no substitute for constant guidance and feedback in the online environment. That was totally lacking in this course. The instructor must be online much more often in order to engage, facilitate, and nurture. His comments lacked depth and sincerity. The course notes were vague and unclear. When asked for clarification, he avoided the issue. Perhaps the best way to improve his effectiveness would be to avoid the online environment. If his effectiveness is not any better in the classroom, then perhaps retirement is the best option.
- Chapter summaries were posted along with the answers at the end of the chapters, but I think I could have benefited from discussions on specific key concepts where the instructor leads the discussion perhaps in a chat room.
- Focus the course more toward the online format: rather than one assignment for all, foster online discussions that provide much wider focus and encourage broader learning. This way, we all read the same things at the same time, and saw each other's opinions about the same things. We weren't encouraged to bring up different ideas or discuss with each other concerns, questions, or branches of the initial ideas presented. Also, on-line course participants may have chosen the format due to time constraints. One group project is probably a good idea. But every other week, it is difficult to have schedules coincide for meetings, etc.
- Could be more involved with the online discussions. TA handled the class for the first 5 weeks - no involvement from the professor.
- Provide more extensive lecture notes.

- Follow the syllabus
- Learn how to lead an interactive learning experience and construct an actual course on this critical topic.
- Outline due dates and keep discussion forum focused
- The teacher did not even respond to online questions or post at any time until after the 4th week of class when everyone started to complain. We received no feedback thru the entire course on any type of grading that was being done even when asked. It will be interesting to see how grades are assigned for the final grade since I have no idea where stand in this class because of poor feedback on the instructor's part.
- Better communication online. I felt that I never really knew what was going on. The website was difficult to follow and the professor took too long to respond to questions. Some of the questions were never responded too.
- The instructor should take an active part in the discussions. He should be able to rein in some of the aggressive students and encourage less verbose students to do critical thinking and writing.
- Quicker feedbacks on assignments.
- Show up and add a few comments.
- Papers that were due during this course were not graded until a month after they were due. Once returned, comments were very vague and not helpful in determining what needed to be done the next time to improve your grade. Also, the first paper due in this class was the only one I received back in the mail with written comments- the second paper was never received through the mail, I was only notified of my grade through private mail. This was very discouraging!
- By ensuring that every student is involved in peer conversation. I not once in this course had any human intercourse in my posts. There was no reciprocation. It was one-sided. It seemed as if, I was excluded in conversation. If you doubt the validity of my response check the pots. The instructor did back to me a couple of times, and did give me encouragement, but I never did learn my mid-term average after asking several times.
- Be available and answer questions, and actually join in on the discussion board.
- It was very difficult to get feedback from him as far as grades and if papers were received. He did not answer e-mails when posted to the private mailbox.
- Respond to students' requests for feedback. I had no idea of how I was being graded, no feedback from my first paper, whether or not I was contributing enough, etc. Even after sending emails requesting feedback, I received none.