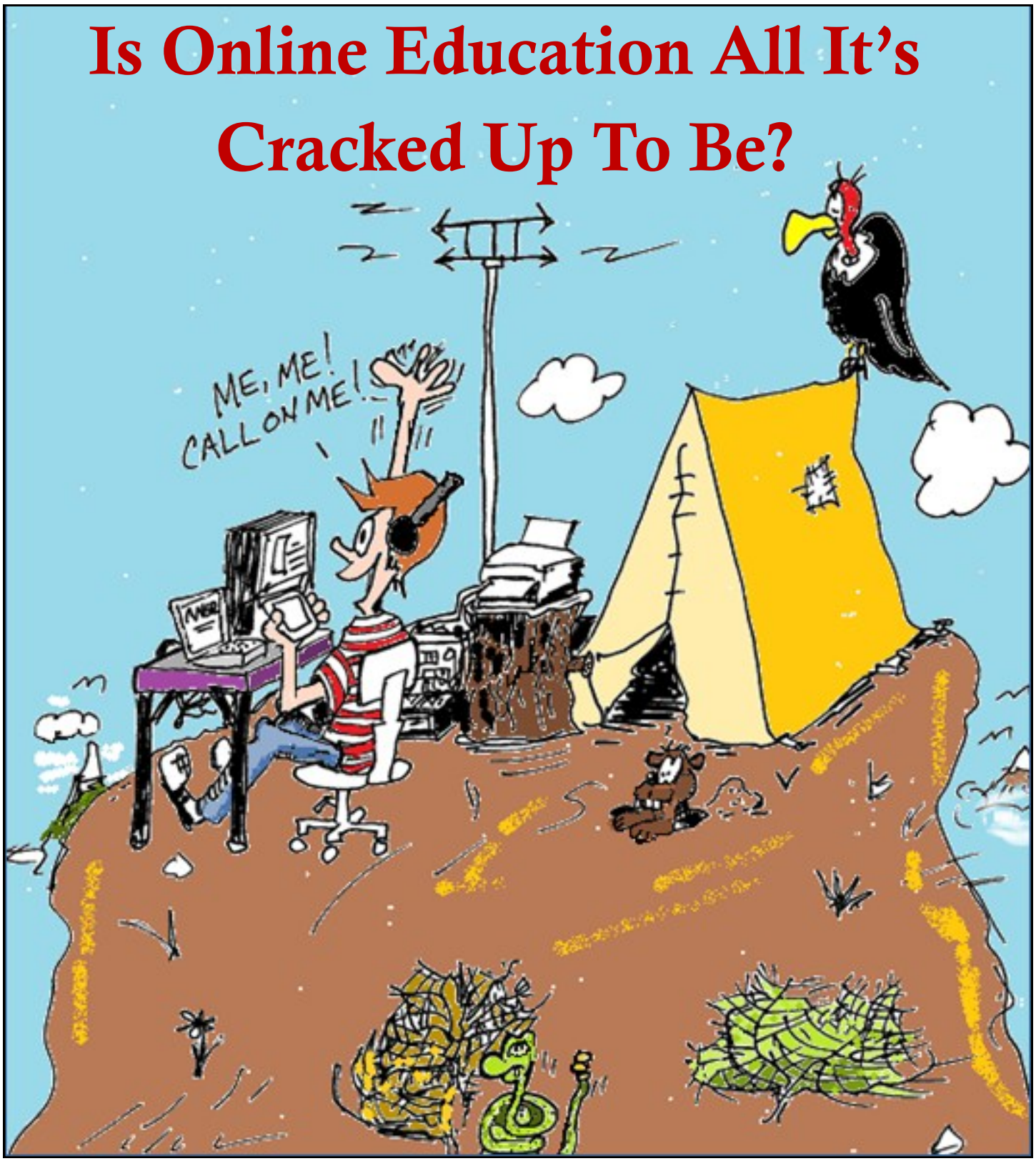
Is Online Education All It's Cracked Up To Be?



FACTC Focus 2012

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Editor's Note

In this edition of the FACTC Focus, we have several articles that address the nitty-gritty of teaching online. A couple of them get into the problems with online teaching. Some faculty worry that online classes may be seen as a cost-cutting approach, or as a route to improving sagging enrollments. How pervasive those bureaucratic pressures might be, the trend toward more online classes is a fact that serious academics should not ignore. However, we ought to be realistic about how time-consuming an online class is for the teacher compared to face-to-face classes (those taught in a classroom with humans facing each other), nor the reality that some classes aren't suited for online instruction. Another important factor is that all students aren't suited to take online classes.

According to Rob Jenkins in his article "Online Classes and College Completion," in the March 13, 2012 issue of the Journal of Higher Education*, online enthusiasts point to a 2009 meta-analysis by the U.S. Department of Education that, they say, shows that online courses are not only cheaper and more convenient but also better. The report looked at 99 individual studies of online learning conducted since 1996 and concluded that "on average, students in online learning conditions performed better than those receiving face-to-face instruction."

But Jenkins points out what he calls "serious flaws in that study", especially as it pertains to community colleges. In the "Effectiveness of Fully Online Courses for College Students: Response to a Department of Education Meta-Analysis," Shanna Smith Jaggers and Thomas Bailey of the Community College Research Center at Columbia University note that only 28 of the 99 studies examined in the Education Department report focused on courses that were fully online. Furthermore, only seven looked at semester-long courses, as opposed to short-term online programs on narrow topics, "such as how to use an Internet search engine."

Moreover, Jenkins writes, "in six of the seven studies, withdrawal rates were not even mentioned, meaning that the research gauged only how well students performed after completing the course. The studies didn't tell us anything about those students who didn't complete the course."

"The more recent of the two," as reported by The Chronicle in July 2011, "followed the enrollment history of 51,000 community-college students in Washington state between 2004 and 2009 [and] found an eight percentage-point gap in completion rates between traditional and online courses."

As the editor of the FACTC Focus, I thought it was pertinent to point out this aspect of Online Learning, partially because of the Washington State study.

So the debate goes on, but no one can credibly deny that online education is growing and that we need to make sure we are offering online courses in ways that consistently keep academic standards high while benefiting students and utilizing faculty talents while avoiding burnout.

*Jenkins' article is worth reading. Go to http://chronicle.com/article/Online-ClassesCollege/131133/ and download the article.

Three Minutes from a Polite Skeptic: Teaching Technical Writing Online

Karen Kurt Teal, North Seattle Community College

I thought when I tried to teach technical writing online for the first time back in 2005 that I would not have tried it again. We were using the earliest form of Blackboard, at that time a pretty enigmatic format. Additionally challenging was the lack of literature on how to teach online correctly. I needed pedagogy--it saved my bacon many times in my grad school days. I felt the online venue was a weak substitute for the actual bricks and mortar classroom, with me giving live personal instruction and students asking spontaneous questions. So I was reluctant when I began to learn the Angel system and build a course. I was wondering what to put in my online class, and I was very uneasy about working all the technology to get lectures to work the way I wanted, and I was dismayed at the loss of immediacy that a classroom offers. So, it took me a very long time to start forming a class "shell."

At first, I just used the "shell," (where you put all your class materials), as a warehouse for my fully on-the-ground version of technical writing. It seemed awkward and kind of extraneous to what I was doing well in person. But the Angel shell provided instantly retrievable handouts and assignments, and both my students and I appreciated that resource. On the down side, students endured taking the quizzes online but complained bitterly. They did not like the deadlines and asked me to reopen the quizzes again and again. It was too tiring to keep track, so I just went back to paper testing. Students did not challenge me on deadlines with this in-person setup. Students were there on the precise day the quiz was given or they were not. I remained firmly entrenched in the bricks and mortar classroom.

So by late 2010, the Angel classroom was still a sketchy proposition to me. I was convinced we could only have meaningful contacts in person, and that the online activity was just, well, an engineer's dream to cut down human contact while having to learn something. And then I started to hear about Tom Braziunas' North Seattle class and how he ran it. Braziunas teaches his Geology 106 class entirely online and he has videotaped lectures, videos that the students like. This intrigued me because I was convinced that what my students needed was the ability to listen to messages repeatedly. I watched my own stepson play and replay movies at home until he knew all the angles and motivations by heart. Replaying shows made him feel empowered. So I wanted to make self-empowerment happen in my class. I also knew that I talked too quickly for some, and too slowly for others. I needed to put a certain amount of control into my listeners' hands. Students want to learn and they want to hear something over and over. I decided to try it: I would learn Angel and figure out how to digitally tape myself using Tegrity.

I slowly worked out the little hitches between my camera, my computer and the Tegrity software—I once struggled for a few days because I thought the systems were incompatible, but it was just a dead USB port on my newish computer. Now, with the software working, I look at the camera and become self conscious. I have a small, cheap webcam sitting on top of my computer screen. I have to minimize the playback while I am talking through my powerpoints. I am still nervous about this taping operation, even though I understand that after you hit "begin recording" the software immediately begins to tape. I get it that I can pause the tape if one of the dogs starts barking. When I am done, I know that I can instantly stop and upload the tape. I can even tell my students how long the lecture is before they start watching it. I see my little library of taped lectures growing.

One of my worries is now gone: I often used to think that in the act of taping, I would lose my inspiration to stop and give examples to illustrate my points. I always thought that I had my best insights to the students' difficulties when I was talking directly to them. But now I know that the special insight and exuberance of the classroom is somewhat reproducible in my mind when I think of the phone calls and many emails I have exchanged with students. I can still make meaningful asides while I am taping. Success is really about connection through email and discussions. I remember what they have asked me and I incorporate that into my comments.

So, here is another surprise: once my connection with the student is diminished down to what we say online, there is this fervent intensity to email communication. Because the students know this is the way they are going to get something, they use the channels of communication much more wisely. It seems that class communication has gone from getting lifeless, perfunctory online messages from on-the-ground students, to these multi-faceted, thoughtful messages from my online students. For instance, I know much more about students' circumstances than ever before. I may have thought I got the personal picture in class, but now I think I was a little dumb here. I hear much more now, and it is easier to concentrate on what they are saying because the student competes with no one while he or she asks questions. In addition, because the student knows the communication is entirely private, they say much more. This one communication accelerator has shaken my expectations. I think about the stilted conversations we had in my online class seven years ago. Now we have instant messaging, SMS, discussion rooms and cell phones. The software has improved and the students are much more at ease with virtual classroom connections.

The biggest surprise so far has been the quality of their first analytic papers. Okay, you might ask, "how can a group of students make huge gains in this assignment in one quarter?" I would be a little skeptical, too. But online, the need for an argument, tight paragraphs, and quoted evidence took no time at all to teach. What generally takes two weeks only took one. It was so noticeable that I went searching for alterations in my messages. There were none. It was just that the students hung on longer, replaying my lectures. With most of the on-the-ground distractions eliminated, they learned.

So now I am invested. I am slowly starting to get it, armed with some pedagogy and good examples. I was a skeptic because I firmly believed that this age group, 18+, needs a human in the classroom, meeting with them and making the experience real. But now it seems that virtual presence is growing

powerful. Some of my current students have asked for real meetings, but many have not yet felt the need. I think I will get down to the reality this week with a conference call to the leaders of the group projects—we may need to go old-school for this group work, but maybe not.

Laundry list of course features

- Phone calls to the students who are falling behind
- Frequent email messaging
- Digitally taped lectures
- Discussions with set topics
- Online office hours
- Four writing assignments
- Scaffolded peer review process
- Frequent quizzes on readings
- One midterm
- Teacher is always checking Angel mail

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The Reality of The Virtual

By Jill Lane, North Seattle Community College

Recently, I was teaching a Political Science course online for North Seattle Community College (NSCC). In my class, there were students in six different U.S. states and four who resided in different countries. Our discussions on politics, ideologies, and the economy were extraordinarily rich and diverse. Students were able to hear about other cultures and share viewpoints with classmates who lived in other parts of the world while they lived there. Such timely and geographically diverse discussions might not have happened in a traditional classroom setting in real time, and this example highlights one advantage and positive aspect of online teaching.

The fact is that "for the past seven years online enrollments have been growing substantially faster than overall higher education enrollments. The 2010 Sloan Survey of Online Learning reveals that enrollment rose by almost one million students from a year earlier. The survey of more than 2,500 colleges and universities nationwide finds approximately 5.6 million students were enrolled in at least one online course in fall 2009, the most recent term for which figures are available." (Allen 2011)

As the needs of students change, so must the means by which educational opportunities are provided. Online learning, hybrid classes that utilize online aspects, instructor websites, textbook websites and other new technologies help provide students with greater access to learning. New and different modes of education provide a potentially rich learning environment to benefit students with disparate learning styles and needs. Is online teaching all it's cracked up to be? It absolutely is, and this paper will examine how and why.

Who Are Online Students?

First, consider who comprises the online learning community. Some students do very well in the online environment while others do not. Generally, students who participate in online courses enroll for many reasons such as needing courses for less cost, needing a course that is self-paced as they maintain full-time jobs and/or have children, or because online courses allow the student to live in a location not near the institution of higher learning. Many deployed or active duty military students are looking to online educational opportunities. "At the same time, an increasing number of adult learners are [also] turning to online institutions of higher education (IHE) for advanced degrees and continued professional development." (Johnson 2007)

What kind of students should avoid online classes? Students that need daily contact, whether due to educational experience or learning style, may prefer the traditional classroom setting. Those who need daily social interaction and immediate feedback may also do better in the traditional classroom setting as well as those who have difficulty managing time and need a more structured environment. To a

degree, we as instructors may need gently to guide students toward their best ways of learning.

Instructor Training

Instructor training and support is a critical component to success in online learning and "the instructor's role in the education process is a critical determinant of overall effectiveness" (Johnson 2007). No matter what the setting, an institution which provides more online training and provides continuing support generally has higher instructor and student retention rates.

Tom Braziunas, Associate Dean for e-Learning at NSCC, stated in an email exchange with this author that "an instructor needs the same fundamental teaching credentials, whether teaching in a physical or virtual classroom and regardless of the technology used. The [Seattle] District's college and divisions have requirements and assess these qualifications when hiring faculty. Here at North, an instructor also needs to complete a six-week training course in which the emphasis is on the pedagogy of online teaching (based on national standards and best practices) as well as on the additional logistics and technological skills involved in teaching online. Our goal is also to prepare an instructor for the rigors (time-commitment and organizational challenges) of providing ongoing communication in a virtual environment, a key to a successful student experience. Providing an understanding of how educational technologies can be used effectively, by passing on the insights of colleagues who have learned what works well from their own experiences (in online, hybrid and web-assisted campus classrooms), ensures that 'online teaching is cracked up to be' a valuable option for students."

It is worth noting that in addition to formal training provided by individual schools, the National Education Association has created a Guide to Teaching Online Courses which is available on its website. While the guide is geared toward secondary education (where there is also growth in online learning), many of the principles apply to higher learning, and valuable tips are provided. Other tools for training also exist and ultimately, greater access to materials will only increase due to the growing opportunities provided in this burgeoning field. For example, the Sloan Consortium recently held its 2011 17th Annual Sloan Consortium International Conference for Online Learning with virtual and live options for attendance. In 2010, this conference boasted over 1400 participants (Sloan Consortium, 2011).

Tips for Teaching Online Successfully

Organization, clarity, and presence in the courseroom all contribute to online teaching and learning success and make online teaching worth the effort. How can this be achieved?

Organization & Pedagogical Approaches

Clearly organized courses should be created, updated, and ready to go before each quarter begins. In creating the course, pedagogy should be considered. The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards defines pedagogy as follows:

> Content pedagogy refers to the pedagogical (teaching) skills teachers use to impart the specialized knowledge/content of their subject area(s). Effective teachers display a wide range of skills and abilities that lead to creating a learning environ-

> ment where all students feel comfortable and are sure that they can succeed both academically and personally. This complex combination of skills and abilities is integrated in the professional teaching standards that also include essential knowledge, dispositions, and commitments that allow educators to practice at a high level. (National Board 1998)

In the traditional classroom and in the e-Learning setting, students need to be encouraged to learn. When beginning to create content, the pedagogical approaches need to be evaluated. As in the traditional classroom, online instructors need to be aware of the types of learners that are in their courseroom: visual, auditory, kinesthetic or read-write. ("Effective teaching –," 2008). Software such as ANGEL and Blackboard provide options in which an instructor may easily and clearly organize the courseroom while appealing to a variety of learning types.

Learning Units may include discussion board participation, weekly assignments, quizzes, case studies, etc. To compliment these assignments, the online instructor may utilize technologies such as PowerPoint, Collaborate, Audacity, and Adobe Connect to create supplementary learning materials such as web pages, video conferencing and podcasts which can appeal to the different types of learners. YouTube videos, whether created by instructors or other sources, are also increasingly being utilized by instructors. With ever changing technology, the possibilities are endless and exciting, and "the effectiveness of online learning approaches appears quite broad across different content and learner types." (US Department of Education 2010) In the words of Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard, "Instruction begins when you, the teacher, learn from the learner; put yourself in his place so that you may understand what he learns and the way he understands it."

Clarity & Assessment

In truth, many students may expect that online courses are easier and have fewer demands. At NSCC, the eLearning Support Center informs students of the actual time demands required for online classes, and instructors can let students know what will be expected from them in the course set-up. Online courses are indeed real classes, and the demands, quality and content depend largely on the instructor and school, just as with a traditional setting.

More formal assessments provided by such means as grading rubrics and examinations may help students understand expectations, thus eliminating frustration. Informally, instructors may determine success and help with learning by collecting information through observation and inquiry. Does the work of the students reflect what has been assigned? Can anything be changed to help clarify expectations? Also, in addition to letting the students know when assignments are due, instructions should also give students a time frame in which they can expect their instructors to respond to them.

If student evaluations are distributed at the end of each quarter, instructors can use this feedback to help them improve courses and teaching methods. However, for issues of timeliness, I recommend informal inquiries during the actual class, especially when utilizing new technology or assignments. A few weeks into each of my courses, I send an informal request via private email that asks stu-

dents how they are doing and asks for suggestions on how I might improve their learning experiences. This has proved very helpful and also solidifies teacher/student trust and bonds.

Presence in the Online Classroom

New technology has provided instructors with many new ways to communicate, and it is critical that this communication is both frequent and effective. "Effect sizes were larger for studies in which the online instruction was collaborative or instructor-directed than in those studies where online learners worked independently," according to a 2010 study by the US Department of Education. Effective and active instructor participation contributes to the overall success and worth of online teaching and learning.

Presence in the classroom helps promote community and a feeling of efficacy and ownership. Course community begins with an introduction and builds from there. I would recommend that each instructor post his/her introduction with course expectations but also with something personal that helps students understand more about the instructor and his/her personality. If a student who is new to online learning is overwhelmed, clear course organization, policies and assessments (noted earlier) may be referred to in order to help the students succeed. In communicating with students, sharing personal experiences and practitioner knowledge, especially as it pertains to the subject matter being taught, has received very positive feedback for me. This highlights to the students why an instructor is the expert, makes the subject more "real" to them, and also strengthens the student/instructor relationship.

Presence in the courseroom also helps prevent plagiarism and issues of integrity in the courseroom. My subject matter, political science, itself can be a contentious subject. As such, I provide a "netiquette" policy that compliments the College policies. A constant presence online in the courseroom helps provide a feeling of safety whereby active participation and debate can occur. I have also found it helpful to post plagiarism policies throughout the online courseroom with reminders for written assignments. My constant presence not only solidifies a relationship with students but also reminds them that I am engaged. In truth, "fully involved teachers are the linchpin of quality online education" (National Education Association 2011).

Online Learning & the Future

What is the outlook for online learning? Student interest would indicate continued use, and likely growth. The US Department of Education found that "students in online conditions performed modestly better, on average, than those learning the same material through traditional face-to-face instruction" (US Department of Education). For many students, online learning is the best option. For some, it is the only way to balance a career and family while trying to get their education or continue it.

"Policymakers [have] reasoned that … online education initiatives could be justified on the basis of cost efficiency or need to provide access to learners in settings where face-to-face instruction is not feasible." (US Department of Education) At this point, students are coming to expect that all classes, even brick and mortar campus classes, will contain an online component, and they need the flexibility

such classes offer. So, is online teaching all it's cracked up to be? Yes, online teaching is a viable and good option for many learners and for many instructors as well. With new and current technologies, the possibilities are endless. I love being a part of it!

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Balance

By Angela Russell, Wenatchee Valley College

(Ed note: Angela Russell teaches math)

I'm exhausted. For the past few years I've been teaching both face-to-face and online classes. Both types during the same quarter…except for a lovely summer quarter when I taught exclusively online.

I've been trying to figure out what is taking so much of my energy. Typically, I just blame the online classes, probably because that's the 'new' thing that's different from the thirteen previous years I've spent teaching. But, as I think deeper, I've come to realize that when I have both types of classes, I want to do make sure both classes get ALL of the bonuses from both formats.

My online students have online homework, videos, quizzes…so do my face-to-face students. My face-to-face students hear me lecture and work problems; now I videotape my lectures and copy them into my online classrooms. A face-to-face student needs to make up a test, so do four online students. Face-to-face students get a verbal reminder about upcoming test dates; I'd better make sure I type in a reminder for my online students' upcoming due dates. Oh, and while I'm on the site, I might as well click over to the face-to-face students' site to post the announcement I made in class, just in case. Click, wait. Copy, paste.

None of these things are 'big' in and of themselves, but as an aggregate, they're exhausting. Click, wait, copy, wait, repeat. Then there's the mental fatigue: Did I get the assignment copied into *all* the classes? Did I remember to change the due dates for all of the students who have emailed me in two different sites? Did I copy the message into all of the possible places my students might look? Save my lecture in the myriad of formats my students might presume to want?

Sure, I hear you…just train your students to look in only one place. For students doing college level math, that works better. For my developmental math students, it seems to be just another un-climbable hurdle. Maybe it's because I can empathize with them.

I first started my online teaching career right before a Blackboard/Angel flip-flop. I couldn't believe the frustration I had whenever any small thing wasn't right before my eyes or found in a way that was intuitive **to me**. When I had to spend 30 minutes looking for the right button to click to get whatever it is I wanted, I got mad and resentful. Did I pester my IT person with "where is it?" questions? Daily. Do I still sigh loudly and peevishly when my students do the same thing to me? Unfortunately, yes.

What's my plan? I'm going to try sticking to one teaching platform at a time. either all online or all face-to-face. I'm going to try not to think back on the glory days when I just walked into class, lectured and left. I'm going to try to remember to instill in my students (and me) the mantra that my daughter knows so well…"Be happy with what you've got. It could be a lot less."

Not for Everybody

Lawton Fox, Melissa Madsen as interviewed by editor Mark Doerr

Ed note: I interviewed Lawton Fox and Melissa Madsen about their experiences with online teaching. Fox, Ph. D. Botany, is a retired tenured botany and biology instructor who taught at SFCC for many years. He is currently teaching one or two classes a year.

Melissa Madsen, MS RD CD, is an adjunct faculty member at SFCC, and teaches Nutrition Online; Madsen works full time job as a clinical dietitian in an acute care setting.

One concern Lawton Fox has as someone who has taught online classes is that "Not every course is suitable for online teaching." Fox, who taught botany at Spokane Falls Community college from the late 1990s until his retirement last year, said,"teachers may come up with ways to approach such classes in an online environment, but the results may not be the best for students."

Fox and Melissa Madsen, who also teaches online at SFCC (nutrition instructor, adjunct faculty), shared their thoughts on online teaching with Mark Doerr, editor of the FACTC Focus.

"I was an adjunct trying to become full time," Fox said, "and I taught an online class. This was in the late 1990s when WAOL was first started. I taught Biology 101 (which is now Biology &160) online but students still had to come to campus for labs, so the lecture part was one hundred percent online, but the labs had to be done on site.

"I think (doing labs online) is a bad idea," Fox said. "The important aspects are learning how to use the equipment, how to manipulate the equipment, how to take care of the equipment. Learning how to participate in a lab environment is important. Students need to learn how to be safe around explosive or dangerous materials. It's difficult to see how that can be done online."

Fox used a practicum exam as an example. "Suppose the student came into class and we had 25 microscopes set up. The lesson is for the student to go around to each microscope and tell what she sees through the microscope. Each student gets a set amount of time at each microscope in which she can view something in the microscope and answer a question about what she sees."

Fox then compared that to an online setting in which the student will take an exam by sitting at a computer. This student is also supposed to answer questions based on observations, but in this case, the images are on the screen. Digitized images of specimens appear and the student has to answer the questions based on these images. These may seem like similar experiences, but Fox says they are substantially different.

"The student doesn't get a chance to focus the microscope herself because the image on the screen is already focused." The real-lab experience of dealing with the equipment can't be duplicated online. "The (online) student doesn't have to learn how to look through the apparatus to see what's there. So there are a number of those kind of experiences that don't come into play when they see the digitized on screen image compared to the microscope image."

A comparison can be made to using a textbook. Images in textbooks are "like the classic image of an organism, a plant or specimen, idealized and generic. When a student is actually looking at material, an actual specimen, the characteristics are going to be there, but not idealized. The student has to interpret what she sees in real life." The textbook image or the on screen image which is probably used in an online class means that the ideal version has already been provided and the student doesn't have to interpret what they've seen in real life compared to the idealized images with which they've been taught.

"Imagine what happens when a diagram shows the student all the parts of a flower," Fox said. "This diagram can be found in a textbook or in an online image. The diagram is complete and the flower will obviously have all the parts. The relationships of the parts are shown and each part is labeled. But if you get a real flower in front of a student, that flower is not going to be as perfect as the diagram. It will vary in a number of ways. The flower will have the same parts in the same orientation, but the student is going to have to interpret what she sees in relation to the diagram. It's not easy to see that." Fox said that this is part of the teaching of botany, to help the student learn how to interpret reality based on the idealized examples.

"The student may see something that looks hairy here, looks like it has glands there," Fox said. "The student has to adjust the microscope to identify various parts of the actual specimen." That's part of the learning experience in a lab and is one reason why labs are important.

Fox also pointed out some of the challenges of learning to use an actual microscope. Each microscope is a bit different. The adjustments might vary just a bit and everyone should have to learn to grapple with a microscope that has a dirty or fogged up lens. This happens often in real life. Those are just examples of the way students have to learn to struggle with scientific equipment. Whether in Botany, Biology, Chemistry or any other lab science, learning to use equipment and real life samples is a critical part of the learning process. How do we deal with that in online classes?

Beyond the mechanics of learning, Fox and Madsen addressed some of the fundamental issues with online learning. "I think students should have to qualify to take online classes," Fox said.

Madsen added that reading comprehension tests should be required because so much online learning is based on reading material online.

Also, some method to assess student motivation would be very helpful. Online education requires self-starters and if the motivation isn't there, students will have a more difficult time than in

faced-to-face classes since the propensity to let the work slide is greater without that in-classroom guidance and pressure. A student who has less self-motivation will likely at least go to a face-to-face class and get the motivation and encouragement, negative or positive, that helps them get the work done. No one is around for the online student to go to, a live person who can give encouragement when needed. At least no one in person.

"Strategies I use to keep students engaged," Madsen said, "include weekly deadlines for quizzes and discussion board interactions. if I see that a student has not completed these—especially early in the quarter—I send a personal e-mail to the student but it is still up to the student to engage in the communication…on their terms in a sense…because it is up to them to write back and engage. In a face-to-face class, the instructor has the benefit of body language and visual cues; is the student showing up to class on time, is he prepared for class, does he interact with other students in the class, etc."

Madsen mentioned a B student who was doing well in her online class and suddenly disappeared. "No work was getting done, no messages were coming in. Efforts to contact the student online were not working." Madsen said she was at a loss. At least in a face-to-face class, the student might have dropped by to discuss the problem or Madsen might have seen the student on campus and had a chance to chat. She did admit, however, that students do disappear from face-to-face classes, but "what's frustrating is that online, you're not going to see them in the hall. You can't at least make them feel guilty for not showing up." She said the online classes and communication had a less personal feel about it in spite of all the techniques she has learned to make online classes and communication feel more personal.

Online classes are time consuming for the teacher. Timely feedback is critical. Madsen said "I'm in contact with students seven days a week and feel like I have to be available that much." She will check email for her online classes most days in the morning and when she gets home from work (she also works as a clinical dietitian at a local hospital and teaches as an adjunct). 45 minutes to an hour is a light day for one class. Usually she spends an hour-and-a-half to two hours in the evening and each weekend day.

Fox said that he remembers spending significantly more time with the online class than with face-to-face classes. He says he thinks the pay ought to be higher for an online class with an equal number of students as a face-to-face class. Grading assignments can take an entire day because everything has to have a writing component to it.

Another concern is how to tell if the student is doing his or her own work. Madsen said, "I tried to be specific enough in my assignment so students can't just go online and cut and paste something rather than write it themselves. That takes more time."

"It's time consuming for each step," Fox said. "Just the time consequences of reading an online piece of work means longer hours because the process is cumbersome. A student files an assignment so I have to go to dropbox, open it, open the file, read it, evaluate it, open the box to respond. That's way more time consuming than getting a hard copy and grading it." The process for hard copies in a face-to-

face class is that the students usually hand in the assignments all at the same time, then we grade them rather than opening a program, opening another part of a program, then opening a part of the part of the program then reading the assignment, opening another part of the program to respond. When dealing with hard copies, teachers read them, grade them by writing on the pages, record the grade then move on. A teacher in a face-to-face class can cover several assignments in the time it takes an online teacher to grade one.

Madsen added that students add to the cumbersome aspect when they aren't familiar with the technology which is an ongoing problem. A student of hers recently submitted six files instead of one file with all the parts of the assignment in the one file as requested. "If they make an error like that, I ask them to resubmit it correctly, but that delays the grading and feedback."


In classroom education

In one class, students must notify a proctor to arrange a testing time. Madsen said a student just recently e-mailed her and said she couldn't find out where to locate a proctor. This was a bit frustrating for Madsen because she had spent a lot of time designing the course so it would be easy to navigate and the information on how to find a proctor was easily available online. Time taken to answer simple questions that students should be able to track down use up valuable time to help students in areas that would improve their learning.

In a face-to-face classroom, these issues aren't so cumbersome. The question and answer process is faster and it's easier to follow up to make sure the directions are understood. Dealing with students in a group is obviously more efficient. "Online, you're dealing with students individually far more often than in face-to-face classes," Madsen said. "Despite using group e-mails and discussion boards, attempts to communicate to the class as a group, there is never a guarantee that the student will read the information and interpret it as it was intended. Again body language and visual cues really help here." And how does one judge body language through a computer?

Online education

This brings up the question of whether it is good to deal with students differently. Fox said that might be true in some cases, but "the more

operations you do with anything increases the chance for having more problems."

Madsen said that in an online class, the teacher doesn't get the benefit of the classroom buzz." The teacher doesn't get in on the student to student chit-chat that can clue a teacher into misunderstandings. "One student made a comment, 'since you don't work on Sundays, I'm going to have to wait until Monday for feedback.' I never announced online anywhere or any time that I don't work on Sundays, but somehow that buzz was floating around among the students online, but I couldn't pick up on it because I wasn't part of the communication among students. My sense is that in a face-to-face classroom, I probably could have picked up on that."

Fox said conversations online aren't the same as in a group with students in a face-to-face situation. "Discussion boards. Sometimes students will get into a good discussion with depth, but my experience is that they generally won't get into involved discussions online. I'd post a question and give them points for responding and more often than not, I got minimal responses. They'll do whatever they have to to get their five points for the week, but not much beyond that."

Madsen and Fox agreed that online classes offered a lot to certain students, but students need to be assessed for their abilities to handle an online class just like they are assessed for their ability to handle math and English classes. And anyone teaching online should be aware that to do it right, the online teacher faces a more cumbersome and time consuming process.

Radical Online Learning: Breaking Down All Four Walls of the Classroom

By Barbara Simmons, Spokane Falls Community College

Online education presents widely expanded boundaries for our teaching methods. Our teaching is no longer constricted by the four walls of the classroom and the 50 minutes of the class period. With open web resources and applications multiplying monthly, we educators can ask ourselves, "What would I *like* to be able to do in my classroom, with my students?" Once that question is answered, chances are there is a Web 2.0 application to fit the job.

That was more or less the message Jim Groom of the University of Mary Washington (UMW) delivered on November 9, 2011, at an SBCTC sponsored workshop in Bellevue. His mission was to teach a group of community college teachers from around the state about how he, as an Information Technology (IT) professional and instructor, and his colleagues are re-envisioning online education. Groom criticizes standard higher-ed approaches to online learning technology, arguing that in the world of digital education, what's been imagined so far is just a reconfiguring of what's come before as we move from email accounts to file sharing to Learning Management Systems. Groom believes that Learning Management Systems like Angel and Blackboard are quite limited and limiting compared to what is available in open source resources and tools like Googledocs, Wordpress, or Weebly. Groom says we should be asking ourselves, "How can we use more of the digital world to teach in new ways?"

College IT was organized around email in the early 1990s with the tradition that you use your email account while you are present at the college but not after you leave. Shared files and netstorage were radically new ten years ago on campuses. But now email addresses, websites, and shared storage are all easily available for free from open sources: Googleapps, Dropbox, Wordpress, etc. Groom believes that LMS systems are good tools for managing students' grades but poor tools for sharing applications and information. He likes open resources because teachers and students control them rather than the college IT department. In addition, the spaces we create in open resources may be more "permanently" ours. Through the work of Groom and his colleagues, UMW Blogs have become a teaching, publishing, and storage platform for students and instructors both.

Groom urges colleges to run a site where all course work is collected, saying that if we share our good work, it will start to inform web users. Groom cites a number of unusual successes in the online courses at

UMW. Student- and-teacher-created blogs and courses are drawing notice and participation worldwide. A UMW blog on banned art is the number one Google search result for "banned art." A UMW site on the 2008 financial crisis gets fifteen thousand hits a month and is becoming an open educational resource. Literary journals are created and maintained. In a UMW journal of art history in Venice, students complained about Calvin Klein ads on Venice buildings, and an ad executive got on the blog and responded to them. This blog gets 50,000 views a month. A site with 18th century audio—aural poetry attracted the attention of a Saudi Arabian school which used the site to learn English. On a Looking for Whitman site, classes from different universities came together to co-create a blog about Whitman. As a result of this blog, a class in Serbia looked at gayness in a way that was still radical in Serbia.

No limits are made in how students can use the space. Groom believes that authority, trust, and editing naturally occur across your network as a college—the community has a relationship with the college already. Students love having a link to add to their resume that leads to something real (resumes and portfolios are increasingly digital). UMW Blogs contain course spaces, club spaces, department spaces, blogs about travel abroad, a newspaper, a radio station, and student portfolios of work completed.

One of the biggest advantages of this use of space is that Really Simple Syndication has allowed students to aggregate their work from 15 different courses, and has allowed teachers to aggregate the blogs of 30 different students. In essence, the work can be done in one domain and imported into another.

Some concerns about this new structure exist. It split the college's IT infrastructure. Now twenty percent of UMW courses run through UMWBlogs (100 courses of 600-700 in any semester). About fifty percent of the faculty altogether has participated in some way with the project. There are concerns about control—what might people post that is objectionable? Groom's answer is that 99% of good work is prevented by fear of 1% objectionable work. The college adopted open resources as an online teaching platform not by declaring an initiative or policy, but by making space available and letting students show how to use it; they backed into it by creating a platform that defaults to open resources. If we believe in equal access to information, we will see that promoted here. There is always an option to make information private. Concerns about FERPA are addressed by giving students the option to password protect whatever they want and manage the amount of data they save or don't.

Groom discusses a particular online Digital Storytelling class of his own, which became an "open educational experience" when Groom built the course up beyond the fifty formally enrolled students using a Twitter network. Approximately four hundred non-credit-earning students joined in to do the assignments and participate in the course along with the fifty enrolled students. Groom used Twitter to help himself build a network of people who he trusts to check his teaching and learning. This network audience immediately checks for quality resources which he and his students produce in their online classes. Enrolled students got online the first day of class, completed the first assignment, and found people around the world (who had already done the assignments) voluntarily poised to critique their work immediately. The students discovered they soon had a large audience far beyond just their classmates and teachers. As a result of this course, Groom hired someone who took the class for free because his work was so amazing. A teacher in Japan designed his course to feed into Groom's Digital Storytelling course site and get some of this feedback energy. Students were dissatisfied with Groom's assignments and began creating their own, ranging from video

games to television shows.

Groom quotes Gardner Campbell as saying that we have all this potential in our use of open resources, a "bag of gold" that we just aren't using. Campbell and Groom ask why we are rejecting this bag of gold. They argue that open source applications need to be integrated into the college community. Groom asks us to take our courses out into the world via the Internet. Digital culture is changing the way we live and learn, how we think, communicate, and envision space, and it needs to change our educational practices, as well. Groom urges us to ask not "how do we use this piece of technology in our classes," but the opposite question: "What do we want to be able to do in our classes?" Once we have asked this wide-open question, we can begin to find the open resources we need to be able to access easily in this age of digital plenty. To do this takes a certain tolerance of risk on the part of teachers.

Experimenting within the online space, allowing ourselves to be taught by those who we are supposed to be teaching, is part of the process.

Groom's work can be accessed through his website: adoptingopen.umwblogs.org

Is Online Teaching All It's Cracked Up To Be? YES!

Christopher Gildow, Cascadia Community College

Online learning is a big part of any college's curriculum structure. It allows students whose lives and jobs interfere with their ability to get to campus every day an alternative that lets them stay in school. Distance learning means what it says; I teach an online Art appreciation course and I've had students from Spokane to Boston to Asia take my online course. It's the only way they could possibly do it.

I've been teaching online for four years and find the more proactive I am in course design and engaging student's learning the better the outcome of the course will be. Most students want to be successful. By offering them clear direction, knowing how to navigate through learning platform software and making yourself available, students have a much better success rate in online classes.

Teaching online is much like teaching face to face: the only way to make it successful is to prepare ahead, communicate to students what the expectations are and be flexible as you go. I normally have 24 students in my online course each quarter. That's about the upper end of the capacity spectrum for class size.

Online teaching extends the classroom into cyberspace and uses it as a resource for a high quality education. No matter what you might think of the .com world, the internet provides thousands of top-notch academic and research websites, image databases and resources from every discipline. Not making use of what the internet offers would be a disservice to learning in today's world. For example, I provide a list of External Links in my online class that students use throughout the quarter. I know the integrity of each link, and by directing students to use them in research they avoid information from inferior sources. It takes time to find the good links but it's time well spent.

The best online learning platforms offer a structure that allows for easy access to course content, communication venues and the uploading of files. My course uses a hard-copy textbook plus online lectures, links, notes and image files for each week's content. There are emerging alternatives to the traditional (and expensive) textbooks that are used in courses of all formats: face-to-face, hybrid and online. These alternatives include:

- e-books students can rent from their campus bookstore. The cost is lower than purchasing the textbook and they can 'return' it when the term is over.

- Open source digital textbooks are offered at little or no cost. The Washington State Board of Community and Technical Colleges has just created an Open Course Library of some 45 entry-level courses. These are complete digital textbooks – including content, images, learning activities and assessments. All have a $30.00 cost limit, and many are free.
- Other open-source materials are available online. For example, MIT has an extensive list of open-source courses. Another is the Universal Digital Library through Carnegie – Mellon University.
- Digital Image Libraries. I teach an online Art appreciation course, so finding good quality image databases is important. Most galleries and museums around the world have official websites, and some offer high-resolution images from their collections as open-source material. An instructor or student can download these without charge or copyright infringement. The Los Angeles County Museum of Art is just one example: it offers up to 2000 images from their collection as open-source material. Be sure to confirm the image rights policy with any source you may use.

It's important to give students clear directions in online courses. An easily accessed, understandable syllabus is a must. It should be placed near the top of your course information for quick reference.

Take the time to be clear about course obligations. For example: since their access to the class is often at different times of the day some students assume online classes are open-ended. Unit or weekly directions need to include specific expectations and deadlines for student work, as well as clear lines of communication between student and instructor. Most online courses use discussion forums and email to communicate. New technologies such as Tegrity allow for full audio/visual recording of lectures for students to access in real time or at a later date. I include a Student Lounge discussion forum in my course. It's a place for students to go with questions, ideas and resources they can share with any other student.

One of the first things you discover teaching an online class is that it takes more time than you expected: this is true for students and instructors. The level of training an instructor receives makes a big difference in how they can manage their course. All colleges have an eLearning director and support staff offering workshops, seminars and classes on how to better support online teaching, whether it's reviewing the nuts and bolts (and bells and whistles) of a particular online platform or helping instructors and students become more competent with online tools and communication systems. And like the rest of today's campuses, the IT department is an integral link to online learning. My suggestion is get to know some of the IT staff on your campus. You'll need them as a resource sooner or later, and it helps to know who to go to with an issue.

On the issue of student behavior in online classes: rarely do I get a student who is disruptive or disrespectful to others. I have a Netiquette explanation in my online syllabus that outlines expected behavior from students and the instructor. It's a good resource, and it helps inform students of their expectations.

One area of concern in online teaching is with collaborative learning activities. The nature of an online course makes it more difficult for students to work together, given their more independent access times. But

collaborative projects are important in any learning environment. To make it easier I inform students well in advance of a collaborative project, create teams with a maximum three members and a discussion forum where each team can communicate, share files and other information. I follow up with each team during the week to deal with any issues that may arise.

Another drawback to online teaching is that, well, it's online. There is no real venue for face-to-face interaction between students and their instructor. Almost all surveys of online students and instructors rate this lack of personal interaction as a concern. One way around this is to develop a hybrid course, where during the week you have one or two days in the classroom and the rest of the week's content online. If that is not practical, then you must make your online course as user friendly as possible. The first week of class I ask each student to introduce themselves, explain why they're in the class and what their future plans are. Moreover, I ask them to upload an image of themselves so all of us can put a face to a student's name.

Keep in touch with students, respond to discussion forum posts and give each student feedback on each learning activity and assessment when you grade their work. I like to attach an image or link with my feedback as an example that supports what they've been learning.

Some students should avoid taking online courses, or at least become more informed about them before signing up. They can do this by communicating with both the instructor and the eLearning staff ahead of registration. Students who are not self-motivated have a difficult time with online learning. Generally students with language issues need more time for their reading, learning activities and assessments.

In the end, the quality of online learning depends not so much on the platform used, but on the instructor's commitment to design and administer a course that motivates and challenges students to want to learn. Online and distance learning work. They help keep learning quality high and overall costs down. And there are good support systems in place to help instructors and students become successful.

The Commitment Factor

Spokane Falls Community College film instructor Mary Hyatt discussed teaching Current Global Cinema as an online course in an interview with FACTC Focus editor Mark Doerr

The instructor often has a closer relationship with students in online classes, Hyatt said, because she communicates with them individually almost daily. This involves talking back and forth about all kinds of things like their interests, their hobbies or problems they are having. "I know more about online students than the students in the class of fifty that meets in the (face-to-face) classroom."

Hyatt's online class has 25 students enrolled. "That's the perfect number," she says. "I can work with individual students that way so it's a good balance, and I prefer not to have a higher number of students in the class than that. We do get paid for any over that number, but I prefer to keep the number of students in my online classes at 25."

The current assignments include weekly essays and a requirement to participate in an online discussion (on the discussion board) in which the student must post at least ten paragraphs totaling from 500 to 750 words.

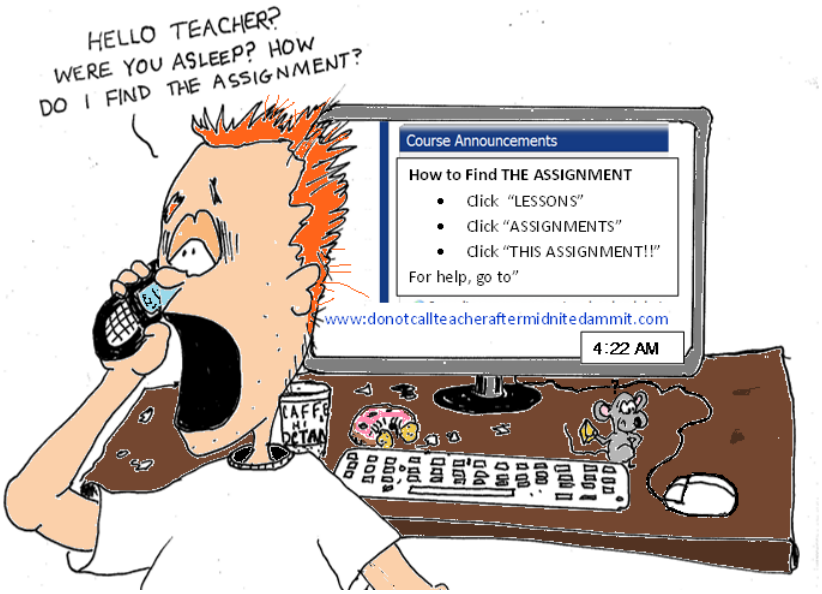
Hyatt says she doesn't set a specific time for "meeting" with students online. She says she is available seven days a week from the time she gets up until she goes to bed (5 a.m. to 9 p.m.). I asked her if this drives her nuts, but she said that it doesn't because she gets to know the students and have great discussions with them. That way a lot of interaction takes place. She chatted with students about issues she raised about the Korean film "The King and the Clown." "Students were amazed how a film about 15th century Korea reflected the way North Korea is today. I hadn't really thought about it until the students started discussing it. I learn from them online when they bring up ideas that had never occurred to me."

About the daylong schedule, Hyatt also said, "I check the Angel classroom early in the morning and then at least six more times during the day, with my last check being before I go to bed. I read their new posts on the discussion board and try to give them feedback and encourage more discussion." She gave an example about a student who recently responded to the themes in the Iranian film "Song of Sparrows." "Part of my response was, 'one element that needs to be pointed out, though, is the negativity towards capitalism. As our hero moves to the city, you see him become more and more like a capitalist. Many scenes show him losing who he was at the beginning of the film. By the end of the film he is hording all of his possessions, like the blue door. Eventually his useless accumulations all crash down on him.'" That's the kind of give and take, Hyatt said, that makes online classes particularly useful.

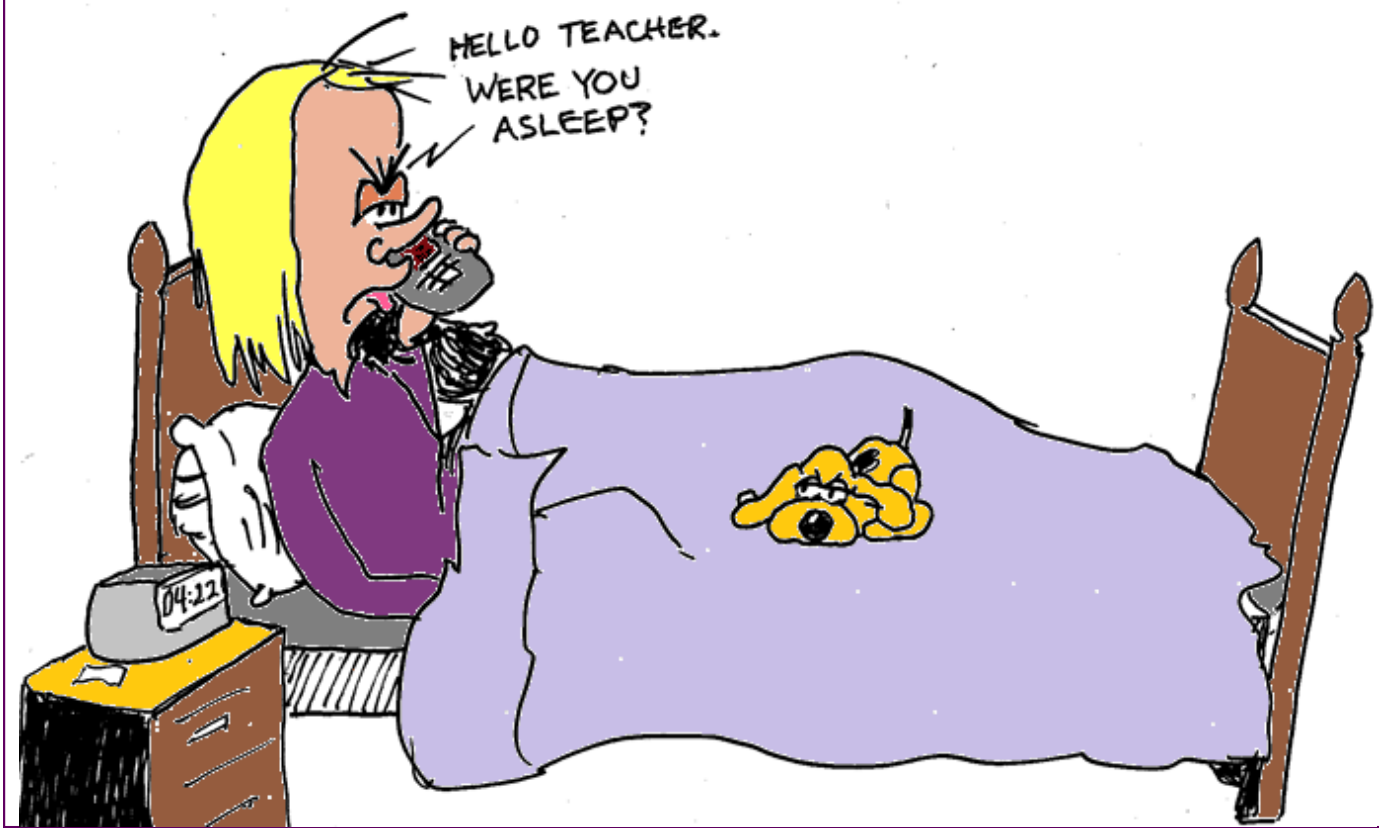
She says the teacher does have to require students to get involved, but when prodded, the students generally do get into the discussion. The requirement brings the wallflowers out and gets them involved. "It's important for the teacher to respond to questions, to also respond to other responses to encourage and

open up the discussion." Hyatt says she gets frustrated when she hears comments about other online instructors who don't interact with online students as they should.

Online etiquette isn't usually a problem, Hyatt says, "because when something shows up, because I'm online constantly, I catch inappropriate discussion. I can stop it right away." One example was when a student posted her own views on homosexuality in response to the Korean film. Hyatt said she erased the offensive parts and let the student know what was okay and what wasn't. "Online instructors who don't stay on top of messages sometimes run into problems. Teachers should constantly monitor what happens in the online classroom, just like we monitor and stay on top of discourse in an on-campus (face-to-face) class."



Many online resources are available where the instructor can direct the students. Regarding original research on the period of time of the film "Kings and Clowns," Hyatt guides students by giving them some websites to go to then encourages them to use these websites as starting points for doing further research. She also doesn't use a textbook for the class because of the large availability of relevant online sources. "This," Hy-



att adds, "may be particular to teaching film courses, but textbooks wouldn't be addressing what (film related content) is going on in India, Korea, Japan—the latest films in a number of countries."

When asked what could be fixed about online classes, Hyatt said "the selection of instructors needs to be screened. The teacher must love the modality. It's a different way to interact with students."

One concern about online courses is how an instructor knows if the person who is doing the online work is actually the student who is enrolled in the class. "I was hired as an instructor, not a police officer," Hyatt said. "However, I should be able to tell if a student is doing the work. Cheating could happen in a regular (face-to-face) class. How would we know as teachers if some mom wrote all of her son's papers? Students who cheat, cheat themselves."

These aren't the sort of problems she usually deals with, though. "Immediate emails from students usually involve computer problems, family emergencies that prevent the student from meeting deadlines, requests for more clarity on an assignment, additional film recommendations, a glitch in Angel not posting a grade, appreciation for my suggestions of how to improve papers or posts, and so forth."

But Hyatt does give herself a break from time to time. "If I go out of town, I always take my lap top, but I warn students that I may not be as available as I usually am."

Not So Distant Anymore

Warren McLeod, MA, South Puget Sound Community College

Distance education has existed since the end of the 19th century although not in the form we are used to seeing today. Lemak, Shin, Reed, & Montgomery (2005) found that schools such as Illinois Wesleyan University, Pennsylvania State University as well as the University of Chicago offered students the opportunity to earn degrees through correspondence programs (as reported by Daymont & Blau, 2008). Technology certainly has progressed over time and it is not surprising that the way distance education is offered has evolved as well. I took a distance education course while earning my bachelor's degree and this entailed tuning into a cable channel at a specific time to watch the pre-recorded lectures. At one point when my schedule changed, I could not access the station at the prescribed time so I was allowed to check out all fifteen volumes of video tapes to watch at my leisure.

My experience with online has come a long way since those "dark ages" of technology as I have been teaching an online course for a community college in another state for five years. I also teach online classes through my present college by offering several of my face-to-face courses in an online format as well. I have earned two Master of Arts degrees online, and although there were residency requirements for the programs, the vast majority of the programs were in an online format. I am a strong advocate for teaching and taking online courses and fully support the trend towards online courses.

With the exponential growth of the Internet and the World Wide Web, students who choose to pursue distance education have more resources available to them. The types of interacting programs in use today seem almost endless. Names like Angel, Drupal, Tegrity, Blackboard and Elluminate to name but a few are all becoming commonplace in the educational setting. Technological advances only ensure that the list of available teaching portals will continue to grow for educators.

Are faculty getting the training they need to teach online?

With all of the technology available to us, one would think that faculty would be getting the training needed to effectively teach online courses. However, in 2002 an online survey was sent to sixty-four faculty who were teaching online and thirty-five responded. 89% of participants in the survey indicated they had received "some" training with half stating the training did not prepare them to adequately teach online courses (Pankowski, 2004). What can be gleaned from this study is that the majority of faculty had received what they felt was adequate training in the technical aspect of online teaching that involved how to use course management software (CMS) such as Blackboard, Web CT and Angel. What seems to be missing in faculty training for teaching online courses is in the area of pedagogical training. One cannot simply take the principles and techniques used successfully in a face-to-face class and expect it will be effective in the online setting. Each course will have its own set of challenges and what works with one may not necessarily work in another.

One way for faculty to prepare for teaching an online course is to have taken one as a student. Once a faculty member has experienced an online course from the viewpoint of a student, their entire perspective can change. I have found this to be true. What frustrated me most as a student was a lag or in some cases a complete lack of interaction and feedback from the instructor. Having experienced this as a student, I strive to make sure it does not happen in my classes. Students know they can access me either by e-mail through the course, my school e-mail or by phone. One of the big differences between face-to-face classes and the online environment is the feeling of isolationism that one can develop. This is one of the unexpected results of not having the face-to-face interactions with other students and the instructor. I have taken courses where the other students and I taught ourselves through e-mails and discussion postings. Having been an online student, the faculty member will be in a much better position to know what expectations a student will have in these types of courses. More importantly, they will know what can be extremely frustrating about online courses and work to overcome those issues. Faculty should read discussions and e-mails every day even if they do not post or answer the e-mails daily. Replies to e-mails should be within twenty four hours of reading them.

Another effective way for educators to become trained to teach online is to be involved in the design and development of the classes they are going to teach. Walking into an already prepared course may save the faculty some time, but it actually limits the faculty's ability to develop their own personal touches. By actively participating in the course development, faculty will know each aspect of the course even if they have never taught online before.

What are the students' expectations of these courses?

For each reason a student seeks to take an online course, there are different expectations about the course. There are the students who choose an online course because they believe that online courses are easier than the traditional face-to-face classes since they do not have to travel to a specific location for a specific time. Other students simply do not want to face the parking nightmare that many campuses are experiencing with increased enrollment. Finally there are students who choose to enroll in online courses because of time and/or distance issues. This becomes problematic when trying to develop course expectations during the development of the course. Students who are looking for a "simple" or "easy" class may quickly be overwhelmed by the course work and established deadlines. You will find that some students may have no idea what they are expecting from online courses and then there are the "online pros" who have taken many, if not all of their courses online. This last group of students are the easiest group to manage as they tend to be more motivated, self-driven and have experience in navigating online. The best way to understand what a student's expectation is from an online course is to find out in the very beginning what motivated the student to take the class online. One time to do this is in the first of the required weekly discussions. I ask students to introduce themselves, tell everyone why they chose an online course and, most importantly, what their expectations are from the class. This allows the faculty to be able to know if students have realistic expectations that coincide with the established course expectations.

What are the best practices for teaching online to meet these expectations?

When developing an online course, just as with face-to-face classes, it is important to establish the course expectations prior to the start of the class. It is equally important to have the course expectations clearly outlined for the students to see starting with day one. I have found that the expectations can be broken into several groups. The first is to post the school's technical requirements so students can know if they are utiliz-

ing the correct system. If their computers do not support the system requirements they will have trouble accessing some of the aspects of the course. This is something the students need to work out with the school information technology administrator and is not the responsibility of the faculty member.*

The second group of expectations is what you actually expect from each student. Having clear and realistic course expectations can help students understand what they will need to successfully complete the course. This includes the assignments and full instructions, the due dates, and where to post the finished products. The last group involves feedback for the students' progress. A grade book that is accessible to the students needs to be created and updated as soon after the assignment is due as possible. In my experience the on line students really need this ability to track their progress versus the traditional face-to-face students.

How do we as online educators ensure students fully understand the expectations so they can know if your particular course is one that really should enroll in? Frustration for learners commonly will ultimately lead to frustrations for instructors and thus their institutions. Faculty and schools may want to consider adding a detailed list of course expectations into the school's course catalog. Another option is to offer a short video tutorial outlining what the course expectations would be prior to students enrolling. This would give students the opportunity to determine if they can meet the expectations prior to enrolling.

If this is not possible or practical it is imperative that the expectations are outlined in several locations for students. We all list the expectations on our syllabi but in an online course there are many other areas where these expectations should be listed. Prior to the beginning of the course, I create a welcome message in the e-mail portion of the course where I outline the expectations using the exact wording as it appears on my syllabi so as to reduce confusion. I have also found that using the calendar feature of online courses is extremely helpful in keeping people on track for the expectations. Students are able to click on each week of the course and the assignments for that week are available for them to review. It is important to have the calendar completed fully before the course begins as you will find those students who operate two or even three weeks ahead. I have received a tremendous amount of positive feedback from students about using this calendar feature for having all expectations and assignments clearly laid out.

Finally it is important to remain flexible in the course expectations by continually reviewing them after each semester/quarter. Evaluate your course expectations with the overall student outcomes. The students should be asked about how they feel the expectations and their learning outcomes. I do this by posting my last weekly discussion by asking what they feel about the course. If they had their expectations met and what suggestions they may have for future courses.

The growth of online teaching is inevitable and may someday surpass the face-to-face offerings. The success of these future students rests with the faculty who develop and teach these courses. When developing a course we each have our own expectations of what we want the students to learn, but we must remain mindful that the students may have a different set of expectations. By establishing a clear set of expectations, making sure potential students understand them and remaining flexible faculty can better prepare themselves to teach in the online community.

(ed note) *Many of our community and technical colleges provide specific support for learning*

management systems that support online courses and the contacts for those support personal are generally available in the learning management system user information sites.

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Dressing for Tegrity

A Short History of Salaries

Tenured Faculty Salaries
Presidential, Chancellor Salaries
(see details on the following pages)

Tenured Faculty Salaries

Latest Available Figures

(2009-2010)

FACTC will update these figures in the online publication of FACTC Focus as they become available)

Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges
FY 2009-10 Full-Time Faculty Salaries Comparison by District

District	Average Salary	Average Starting Salary	Masters w/ 13 Yrs Experience	Highest Salary	Lowest Salary
Shoreline	$ 60,349	$ 54,774	$ 62,783	$ 64,784	$ 42,749
Highline	59,625	***	59,785	75,633	49,220
Bellevue	58,821	49,365	65,313	67,206	48,288
Renton	58,581	51,715	62,810	68,051	48,041
Bellingham	57,702	52,949	58,000	60,996	36,057
Yakima Valley	57,665	***	56,988	60,594	54,387
Seattle District	57,488	52,676	56,268	71,999	50,360
Green River	57,486	53,683	58,785	63,565	39,936
Columbia Basin	57,205	45,000	48,000	80,528	45,000
Skagit Valley	57,190	50,356	55,951	65,821	45,389
Tacoma	56,824	54,500	55,500	80,234	42,000
Edmonds	56,736	***	56,723	63,953	46,083
Lower Columbia	56,161	***	57,016	65,213	46,477
Wenatchee	56,089	50,871	63,073	64,429	42,737
Olympic	55,797	45,199	47,364	65,125	37,261
So. Puget Sound	55,457	47,521	55,528	70,393	47,521
Walla Walla	55,339	47,700	48,400	67,950	45,700
Cascadia	55,163	51,125	51,100	67,231	46,600
Big Bend	54,987	50,769	52,560	63,380	43,328
Centralia	54,830	47,313	47,313	66,844	42,000
Clark	54,764	45,399	55,854	67,016	43,932
Grays Harbor	53,935	***	46,804	60,897	35,379
Spokane District	53,743	44,730	48,739	69,433	44,730
Bates**	53,483	55,422	74,970	93,273	48,863
Everett	*53,364	47,701	52,173	64,973	47,018
Lake Washington	53,361	52,598	56,080	64,228	43,127
Pierce District	52,929	44,888	49,803	73,389	43,404
Clover Park**	52,444	51,412	73,807	73,807	47,825
Peninsula	51,322	***	53,958	64,517	43,382
Whatcom	49,737	***	44,102	65,638	35,833

5-Year History of IPEDS Average Salaries	
FY 2009-10	$55,982
FY 2008-09	55,320
FY 2007-08	52,520
FY 2006-07	50,766
FY 2005-06	48,883

Top Quarter #1
Quarter #2
Quarter #3
Bottom Quarter #4

* The average faculty salary reported in IPEDS in 2008-09 was too low due to data reporting errors. Corrections in reporting have been made and are reflected the 2009-10 average faculty salary.
** Majority of faculty on eleven/twelve month contracts and are included in the starting, highest and lowest salaries reported. However, the average salary includes only nine/ten month contracts.
*** No new full-time faculty hired in 2009-10

Prepared by the SBCTC operating budget office:

http://www.sbctc.edu/college/finance/2009-10-ft-faculty-salary-report-by-qtr.pdf

Presidential, Chancellor Salaries

ADMINISTRATIVE AND MID-LEVEL PROFESSIONAL SALARY SURVEY
2011

101.0 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF A SYSTEM OR DISTRICT (PRESIDENT/CHANCELLOR)
Directs all affairs and operations of a higher education system or district. Each subordinate campus has its own President or Provost, administrative offices and independent programs.

102.0 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF A SINGLE INSTITUTION (PRESIDENT OR CHANCELLOR)
Directs all affairs and operations of a higher education institution **or** of a campus within a system.

COLLEGE/DISTRICT	ANNUALIZED SALARY	YEARS OF SERVICE IN PRESENT POSITION	SUBSTANTIAL OTHER DUTIES	REPORTING RELATIONSHIP
Bates	$140,000	1		Board
Bellevue	$165,900	22		Board
Bellingham	$168,200	0		Board
Big Bend	$155,075	16	Y	Board
Cascadia	$185,000	1		Board
Centralia	$152,754	9		Board
Clark	$166,260	5		Board
Clover Park	$173,686	4		Board
Columbia Basin	$195,000	3		Board
Edmonds	$185,000	0		Board
Everett	$186,664	5		Board
Grays Harbor	$149,000	7		Board
Green River	$200,000	1		Board
Highline	$173,400	5		Board
Lake Washington	$165,000	0		Board
Lower Columbia	$165,240	13		Board
Olympic	$178,957	7		Board
Peninsula	$165,000	10		Board
Pierce-District 11	$186,612	6		Board
Pierce-Ft. Steilacoom	$148,223	5	Y	CEO Multi-Campus
Pierce-Puyallup	$148,223	0	Y	CEO Multi-Campus
Renton	$175,000	1		Board
Seattle-District	$215,000	2		Board
Seattle-Central	$180,000	1		CEO Multi-Campus
Seattle-North	$175,000	1		CEO Multi-Campus
Seattle-South	$175,000	1		CEO Multi-Campus
Shoreline	$186,921	5		Board
Skagit Valley	$160,037	8		Board
South Puget Sound	$168,422	5	Y	Board
Spokane-District 17	$210,000	0		Board
Spokane-SCC	$147,900	3		CEO Multi-Campus
Spokane-SFCC	$147,900	0		CEO Multi-Campus
Spokane-IEL**	$142,800	4		CEO Multi-Campus
Tacoma	$187,500	14		Board
Walla Walla	$157,570	23		Board
Wenatchee Valley	$177,462	6		Board
Whatcom	$178,500	4		Board
Yakima Valley	$139,691	16	Y	Board

**Institute for Extended Learning

2010-11		2009-10	
AVERAGE	**$170,471**	Average	$168,252
MEDIAN	**$170,911**	Median	$167,341

For more information on administrative salaries, go to

http://www.sbctc.ctc.edu/college/_hr_adminsalsurvey.aspx

FACULTY ASSOCIATION
OF COMMUNITY & TECHNICAL
COLLEGES

Faculty at Community and Technical Colleges in Washington State must be active in the discussion of important community and technical college issues. We network with each other, with other higher education organizations, with legislators, and with state board staff and administration. If your community or technical college is not represented at FACTC, we invite you to join us.

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FACULTY ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGES with the purpose of present-ing diverse views on faculty issues. The opinions presented herein are not necessarily the view of FACTC, its officers or representatives.

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