
1c. “Teleconferencing/Distance Based Learning: What it Takes, How to do It”

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Distance Education

The Education part of Distance Education
Distance Education (Academe, 1998)

- Definition: process whereby the education of a student occurs in circumstances where the educator and the student are geographically separated, and the communication across this distance is accomplished by one or more forms of technology, typically electronic, such as television and computers, though, strictly speaking, not limited to these media.
- Much of the technology can be applied to on- or off-campus programs.
- On-campus use is usually labeled “flexible learning.”
- Some institutions use only distance education: Britain’s Open University, Western Governors’

University Accreditation of on-line courses—FISPE standards (Rucker, 1998)

- Has the method of delivery been approved by faculty curriculum?
- Have the mechanisms of interaction among faculty and students been organized?
- Have learning outcomes been clearly defined to serve as the basis for assessment?
- Has faculty oversight been established?
- Have faculty been trained?
- Is there a system in place for assessment of individual student achievement?

- Is support staff available to assist with the technology?
- Is there an accurate representation of the distance education in advertising?
- Are admissions procedures in place to ensure students’ ability to benefit from college-level work?
- Have students been apprised of services such as book stores, counseling?
- Are library resources provided?
- Is there evidence of commitment to support the program, e.g., three year budget?

Issues in Distance Education (Academe, 1998)

- Intellectual Property Rights
- Faculty Workload and compensation
- Class size
- Learning assessment and accreditation

University of Utah—EDNET system

- 15 years old
- 220 sites
- Analog switching permits mixed technology—T1, MPEG, and fiberoptic, microwave connections
- Satellite
 - Not two way video
 - Phone hook-up

Classroom Issues

- Microphones
 - Teacher
 - Students

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- Lighting
 - Camera Tracking—technician’s panel for switching and tracking
 - Videotaping of classes for backup
 - Policy needed

Usual Teaching Issues

- Content
 - Organization
 - Syllabus
- Time Frame
 - Getting to class early
 - Lead time for syllabus, exams or mailouts
- Numbers of students and sites

TV Newscasting as a Strategy (*Hegge, 1993*)

Clothing and Jewelry

- Use trim neat clothing; bulky and loose clothing makes you look heavier
- Avoid blacks and whites, plaids, stripes or busy patterns
- Solid deep colors are best
- Avoid blackboard color
- Glittering jewelry glares
- Tinted glasses—raccoon look

Television Posture

- Relaxed and alert
- Avoid jerking movements or pacing
- Look at the camera at least half of the time

Television Speaking

- Moderate conversational rate, not too fast
- Coughs or sneezes will sound like eruptions—turn or cover the mike
- Varying the scene on the TV—avoid a talking head

On-Camera Delivery

- Well-paced—130 to 180 words/minute
- Interesting—variety and vitality
- Consistent—from beginning to end
- Natural—conversational
- Confident—avoid “deer in the headlights”
- Smooth—confidence, experience, and preparation

Group Interactions

- Provide instructions to all the sites—fax if complicated
- Monitor or interact with off-site students
- “Let’s go to St. George and ask Marcia about...”

Visuals

Television Speaking

Use of Animation/Action

- Videos
- Use of the Internet
- Graphics/animation in slides

Augmenting Teaching with Powerpoint (Bartlett & Nelson, 1998)

- You won't have to turn your back on the students
- KIS—Keep it simple
 - Create basic course outline in text
 - Embellish late
- Test color and fonts—from where the students sit

Using Slides (Powerpoint)

- Correlated with the syllabus
- Don't have to give the students everything
- Extra time to teach since students were not taking notes
- Easy to prepare slides if you have a digital copy of your content or lecture notes

Resources

- Library—ACRL guidelines for distance learning— see: www.ala.org/acrl/guides/

Acknowledge Technical Difficulties

- Might maintain either the video or the audio signal
- Check on trouble reports if there is a disaster

Managing the Technology

- Get the local students to use the microphones
- Ask students or technicians for feedback
- May augment with the Web
 - Replacement classes
 - Testing

Recommendations

- Allow more time
- Don't let the technology control you
- Work with your technician
- Relax and be a “ham”

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