Fall 2010 Distance Education Survey Faculty Response

After reviewing your student evaluations, what do you think went well in this class?

1. The class went well. Students’ evaluation scores are 4 or 5 throughout all the categories.
2. The data from the survey shows that students were pleased with the availability and convenience of taking an online course. They also were satisfied with the asynchronous learning environment and the interaction with classmates.
3. I think the students received the online portion of the class better than I expected. B/c the course is research students are anxious to start. They took to my in class cheer-leading well and when they found out how accessible I was online they felt better. I also think for all of the issues we had with Wimba they took it well. They worked fine with the chat rooms and were happy that I could give them 1/2 hour individual attention every few weeks. I learned that it is helpful to let them know continuously that they can get help from the helpline.
4. Faculty support of students.
5. It seems that everything went well.
6. I only received ONE response for this course with no narrative text. Thus I am reluctant to characterize the course in any substantive way.
7. Students seemed to feel that the class was well organized and they thought they had the resources they needed to learn the material.
8. Organization, most content
9. Based on feedback from students during the semester, I felt the course was well organized. Modules were interesting and caused students to think about how they would go about teaching students from diverse backgrounds.
10. The class organization was well understood by the students. Students felt support materials were good.
11. Students felt the class was well-organized and that support materials were good.
12. See FINC 4521 01D
13. The students liked the course format and organization.
14. Students like the asynchronous aspects of the class. To keep people on track, I send reminder emails and people liked that.
15. I’m happy about two things last semester: I strove to give the students constant feedback, and I tried to communicate thoroughly and consistently with them (all the more since we weren’t meeting face to face). I believe that a student should always understand why a grade is given and have the chance to correct it on certain assignments if s/he chooses. Nearly every student to whom I offered revisions accepted the offer and earned full credit on the revision. I also posted practice quizzes throughout the semester. I checked CourseDen multiple times per day and posted grades within two days at most. It’s easy for students to feel disconnected in an online course, and I tried to soften those feelings by reaching out. For example, if a student had not submitted two assignments in a row, or was doing great work but then suddenly disappeared, I emailed the student to ask how things were going and to reassure him/her that I was available to help them with the course material.
16. The expectations were clear
17. The online materials were quite useful to the students.
18. Delivery of materials is quick. Flexible schedule that allows working students to take courses they need while working full time.
19. Students liked the learning activities and the on-line classes.
20. Most of the assignment help the students understand the ease of what they thought was
difficult
21. All went as expected
22. see American Foreign Policy - this section is simply the administrative code for the two students who converted to honors credit
23. I liked that you could cover a lot of material in a short amount of time.
24. The respondents seemed pleased with the course content, the way the course was evaluated, and the level of challenge the course posed.
25. The PowerPoint with narration was comparable to face-to-face delivery. Overall student benefit and satisfaction was very good and appreciated.
26. Students appreciated the flexibility of online delivery and the wealth of information, knowledge and skills gained through the varied course activities.
27. The students indicated that they found WebCT Vist to be easy to use and understand.
28. Student attitude toward online learning was positive both at the beginning and end of the course.

What was problematic? What needs to be improved?

1. Increase the variety of presenting the instructional materials. Encourage more students to respond to the course evaluation
2. Some students prefer more interaction with the instructor. I will continue to make students aware of my availability via e-mail within CourseDen and to make them feel comfortable calling me with any questions/concerns they may encounter within the course.
3. Wimba would not work for everyone all the time. Sometimes we got into the classroom but then were knocked out and others could not enter at all. I like the Wimba Pronto better and some students this semester are finding this easier to get to when I am at home or online in my office. The discussion board icon sometimes stays on even when there are no messages and the students and I become frustrated not finding posts. I need to improve on letting students know how to reaccess their papers once I have graded them online.
4. Acceptability of workable internet profile. Explorer does not always work, yet firefox is not supported by IT.
5. Connectivity to WebCT by a sufficient number of machines to support class.
6. I need to implement more active discussions between students.
7. I only received ONE response for this course with no narrative text. Thus I am reluctant to characterize the course in any substantive way. However, I will note that 'the course is stimulating' question received the lowest of all responses. I will attempt to figure out ways to make the course more stimulating to the students in future semesters.
8. They had trouble with the quizzes.
9. Still some content is not what is possible and more engaging and I have been working on that
10. Students do not enjoy working in groups, particularly when all group members do not participate fully. Even so, it is important for future teachers to be able to work in groups; hence, I will continue to assign group projects.
11. No major problems.
12. Still need to try to increase student involvement in course.
13. Student involvement is always a concern.
14. Many people had issues with CourseDen kicking them off. Someone wanted more hands-on activities.
15. My biggest error last semester was not encouraging students to interact with each other more. There are currently no group assignments in LIBR 1101, but I'm wondering if this is something our faculty might reconsider. I believe group work would help the students feel
more connected to one another and more invested in the course, which is good for all everyone involved! I also didn't ask the students for any introductions (or indeed, anything about themselves) before launching into the first week's work. Last semester was my first semester teaching a college course, but this semester I am doing things differently (more on that below). This lack of connection may have contributed to the low rating for the question, 'I feel more comfortable participating in a class online than I do in a face-to-face setting.' Other factors could have been involved, but I will address the lack of connection this semester and see where things stand in the spring evaluations.

16. Students ability to discipline their time
17. It is hard to get students online. They prefer using the old fashion communications which is emails.
18. Some time explanation of concepts is delayed because of the way of communication
19. I would like to see better student adherence to on-line document deadlines. It created difficulties with grading efficiently, as well as learning.
20. More detailed step by step instruction could be helpful, especially since the book was well received. Training via the web using Captivate will help this
21. All went as planned. My podcasts are of low audio quality. The University should supply all professors with high quality audio recording equipment in order to improve the 'tin-like' quality of the $6 gaming microphone I was using.
22. All went as planned. My podcasts are of low audio quality. The University should supply all professors with high quality audio recording equipment in order to improve the 'tin-like' quality of the $6 gaming microphone I was using.
23. I didn't like that I received an additional 50+ students at the midpoint in the semester-it was a bit overwhelming with grading. Also, there were times when the system would go down therefore learning modules and quizzes would have to be rereleased to accommodate students. I dislike the lack of face to face time with students.
24. Assignment return time was a bit slower than they (or I) would have liked, though I believe it still was acceptable. However, I will try to improve upon this in future semesters.
25. Very large enrollment. Online course enrollment should be limited to 30-35 students per semester max. An excessive amount of online engagement in scoring and returning assignments, engagement in discussion forums and email activity, and general support of individual students was required. Course enrollment exceeded 35.
26. The attitude of the students toward online learning dropped from the beginning to the end of the class. I wish there was more information (comments) to explain why so that I would know what might need to be improved. Students did not completely agree that I was positive about online teaching. Obviously this is something I will have to work to change. The students who completed this survey would prefer face-to-face classes rather than online classes.

What do you plan to change next time you teach the course?

1. Doing it. Incorporated video clips in the course.
2. I would like to incorporate more group work so that students feel connected with classmates throughout the online learning experience.
3. I plan to have better chat sessions with the groups that we declare. This will mean getting the students used to Wimba at the first class meeting. Hopefully I will be able to have one of the tech assistants come and talk to them. I also plan to have files for students to access stating trouble shooting issues.
4. Move course to a N structure from a D.
5. Require students to post at least one response to another classmate.
6. I will continue to integrate more diverse types of assignments, and I will also attempt to include more interactive content.
7. I may extend the time allowed to complete the quizzes since this seemed to stress the students.
8. Some of the content, some of the discussions as 20 discussion is difficult to cover with three sections
9. I really don't see anything that needs changing. I've already addressed the issue of students' concerns about non-participating group members by having them complete an evaluation of their peers' contributions and collaborative efforts and assign them a grade, which I take into account, when assigning grades for the project. I will continue to gather resources that I believe will make an impact on students' critical thinking skills related to teaching students from diverse backgrounds.
10. The course will be changed to have less than 50% instruction via distance learning.
11. Lecture modules are under revision, but it will likely be Summer 2011 before they are complete.
12. It is possible the text will change. Group projects may be included to encourage more student interaction.
13. I will add a participation component to the grading system. Every week, students will have a little assignment to do.
14. This semester, I added Introductions to the first week's discussion. I have asked each student to tell me about themselves, and I posted as well. To the extent I am able, I want to give the students a sense of community and investment in the course and their student colleagues. Second, I have assigned credit values to two assignments that students had to complete last semester. It is possible that this contributed to the students feeling the course was a lot of work for a 2 credit course. Assignments should have purpose; and if it's important enough to ask students to take time to complete it, I should take time to give the student a grade. This semester I will publicize the course evaluations much earlier so that I can receive more than a 25% response rate and get some useful data. I have also made visible two additional course menus in CourseDen: the Roster, so the students don't feel like they're on an island in the ocean; and the course Calendar, to facilitate planning.
15. More emails
16. Preparing more videos for the course.
17. I plan to prepare more files, web links to help students find more materials to support the course
18. I will give them more time to complete assignments so that they can be graded in the assignment dropbox more efficiently
19. More Captivate modules
20. I will update the texts to the most recent version. I am considering this course for conversion to 100% online, but most likely will not as the time, effort, and expense is not justified.
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22. The list is too long to fit here. As a team taught class with a colleague in Europe I felt that there were many things that could have been improved. Most importantly the way that the course was set to fit the European school term confused the students in the US. When I teach in this program again I will make major changes to the course organization.
23. Not sure at this point—it's a fairly set course within the program, so there probably isn't much that can be changed.
24. More diversity of assignments and also more interactive content.

25. Scoring rubrics for discussion forums to support more comprehensive discussions across students.

26. Students indicated that there was not enough academic advising related to distance learning prior to the course. While I post links to the tutorial for CourseDen it is obvious that information needs to be more directly shared with students. I may even make completing a tutorial a requirement for this course since it is one of the first courses students complete in the program. This may be why some are uncomfortable with online learning, it is still new to them.

What was the largest adjustment you made in teaching a distance course and how was this addressed?

1. Improving skills and knowledge for online instruction. Participating workshops and share experience with colleagues.

2. Learning to accommodate student learning via the discussion board was key in creating an effective online learning experience. Asking the right questions in order to foster collaborative dialogue that leads to increased student mastery of course objectives is an art.

3. I had been teaching online as a hybrid for awhile now so the only adjustment was trying to use Wimba classroom which both myself and the students never really used to the fullest capacity.

4. Management of various levels of tech ability of students. Result in keeping delivery content simple as possible.

5. Ensuring that the student receives information as offered and delivered. If the sly is too long they will not read it, it if is too short in lacks sufficient information.

6. Not having the face-to-face communication. I asked students to post pictures of themselves in the roster so I could make the connection between them and their 'anonymous' emails and discussion posts.

7. More diversity of assignment types - I added discussion questions and a variety of different assignments, all of which I believe was useful and successful.

8. I had to adjust to communicating with students entirely online. I worked to make sure that my written communications were clear.

9. Finding enough time to format and design the online delivery to make the content relevant and complete.

10. I worried about the lack of face to face interaction, so I created podcasts and powerpoints with voice over to encourage students to feel a connection with me. I also kept in regular contact with students and responded to them promptly to make sure that their concerns were addressed. Teaching online does not allow me to be disorganized; if modules are not presented in an organized fashion, students may be apt to feel that online courses are not as effective as face to face classes, and I don't want that. I want students to feel that they are getting their money's worth and learning much to help them become better teachers.

11. The biggest adjustment is that the entire course should be complete at its start.

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13. I've been teaching distance ed for a while now. The main thing is making sure my materials are updated. If you are starting from a previous semester's materials as a base, it can be hard to catch everything.

14. The largest adjustment was realizing that I would never see most of the students' faces, and the impact this might have on their learning or my ability to teach. This is why I made such an effort to email students and keep them informed. There's no reason for multiple students to
say to an instructor, 'You never told us that.' I don't want to be the kind of teacher who expects students to read my mind and work miracles. :-) I'm here to help them succeed. All of us must use the tools available to give this outcome the best chance of success. Online courses have many challenges, particularly the lack of human contact. Indeed, a student's response to the question 'What did you dislike about the online portion of this course' was: 'Sometimes, it would be nice to have face to face class just to have that connection.' To compensate for this loss, I greatly increased my email communication with students and left extensive feedback on the assignments leading up to their final project.

15. Proctoring exams on campus
16. Typing the materials and making videos for the course.
17. I have to think of an easy way to explain the concepts because we have no blackboard to draw as in the traditional way. I had to spend much more time to prepare files (type-setting text math formulas)
18. I am fully comfortable teaching an on-line course.
19. Getting the students excited to see how relevant this course is after their first statistical course taken from the math department
20. I implemented the use of graphics tablets in grading. It ended up adding to grading time as they locked me to my desk and did not allow me to grade on the fly.
21. see American Foreign Policy
22. The incorporation of students from the entire USG meant that I had to cope with 29 different drop dates, holiday closures, etc. I was also amazed at the number of students who signed up for a 100% online class who are technophobes and lack basic computer skills.
23. Just finding the time to remember to check it sometimes. I was travel a bit and the holiday break lapsed the course, so I would often have to play catch up on assignments when I returned as I did not always have internet access. Online courses require a lot of time management and when you have face to face classes on top of online classes it's sometimes difficult to find a good balance between both.
24. More diversity of assignment types - I added discussion questions and a variety of different assignments, all of which I believe was useful and successful.
25. Not much adjustment required, as I am experienced in the delivery.
26. No significant adjustments other than handling large student enrollment. Increased online engagement to support quality of course.
27. I've only ever taught this class through distance so there was not a lot that I needed to adjust.
28. I have been teaching this course as a distance course from the beginning. The biggest adjustment from a face-to-face course is trying to get to know my students from a distance rather than by seeing them and interacting with them face-to-face each week.

After reviewing student evaluation questions, what do you think of the level of non-academic support provided for this course by student services, the library, the distance education center, and the instructor?

1. Students are reasonably well supported. Could improve the video conferencing channels such as Wimba Pronto.
2. I believe student support services and accessibility to media and technical support is excellent.
3. I think the services are fine. It takes the students having initiative to call or email for help. They do not always do it even though I continue to suggest they get help.
4. Sufficient
6. It seems students got the support they needed when they needed it.
7. Not clear how these are addressed in the questions asked.
8. It seemed to be appropriate.
9. No problems here
10. The resources available to students are excellent; whether they access these resources is a different matter. I really got tired of saying, in a nice way, that they should not consider me their technical expert but should call Distance Learning. As it is, I relied on our Distance Learning department regularly to address issues I encountered or that students encountered to make the class run smoothly. They were wonderful.
11. They seemed sufficient.
12. They seemed aware of the ways they can get help.
13. Student services received very good ratings (median score of 4/5) for advising, financial aid, and career services. Library services have continued throughout the renovation, scheduled to end in spring or early summer 2010. As a library faculty member, I have made every effort to communicate renovation announcements to students in a timely manner when necessary. Distance Ed has been incredibly helpful. I don't know what I would have done without this incredible group of people, especially Kevin, Matias, and Carlos. I have called with questions a few times, and I made liberal use of the CourseDen workshops offered last fall. The student evaluations recognize DL's support: the question 'The Distance Learning helpline was helpful to me’ earned a median response of 4/5. I encouraged students to visit me during my Reference desk hours and communicating frequently through email and CourseDen Mail. This course is a small step on the way to our students' final goal: graduating from UWG.
14. The testing center was great.
15. According to the evaluations, distance education center did not help my students much. But the students liked the technology (WebCT) used for the online course. They believe the online material provided by the instructor was very useful.
16. I think the support from the services and center were very prompt and overall great.
17. I have had no problems with non-academic support. Our distance education center is superb.
18. No problem with the information which was given
19. insufficient data for a meaningful conclusion
20. insufficient data for a meaningful conclusion
21. It appears to be adequate, but I did not utilize any of the additional, non-academic resources. I think there should be more training provided by the university to help set up and manage online courses. I attended one workshop that demonstrated what others did in their classes, but the information didn't necessarily apply to my course.
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23. I am really not sure how to answer this question based on the questions asked in the survey.
24. The level of academic support seems to be adequate.
25. Yes, non-academic support was adequate.