What went well in Distance Learning Courses?

1. Cascading Exams over the Text, where exams would close over an extended period of time.
2. Communication protocols used to address the short falls of distance education. Daily web posting were used to communicate in mass to the students, followed by individual e-mails.
3. The course seems to be a hit with the great majority of students. The organization of the course site, the tutorials, the content, and the tutoring (both online & f-2-f) seem to get great comments from students. Overall, the entire course went well.
4. This is the most students I have ever had to respond to the on-line survey. I think it overall went well. I believe my flexibility and theirs is apparent.
5. I have taught this course many ways; however students express the blending of face to face with online is the right level of support and interaction.
6. This course only had 6 students respond. That's a very small %, but this is also the last time this course will be offered in our program of study. So I can't be too judgmental.
7. Students were actively engaged in developing plans that were relevant to their work. They learned valuable lessons in the seminars that contributed to their development as school leaders.
8. Students like the flexibility that the web-based learning provides.
9. Student engagement in the face to face seminars.
10. They enjoyed having the opportunity to discuss sensitive subjects, like race, both in person and online.
11. The students understood the assignments and found the presentation of material good. Also, understood expectations and the grading system.
12. Students felt the online course was well designed. They all indicated that feedback was quick and timely.
13. Many students mentioned how helpful the videos were for this course content. Organization was said to be incredibly organized and perfectly paced. Students liked being able to see all requirements and assignments at the beginning of the semester.
14. Students liked being on line, but what sometimes upset that I did not participate enough during the time allowed for their discussion of each topic.
15. The communication with students went quite well in this class. Students feel that they got help from me timely.
16. Improved student accountability for the material
17. First - I am disappointed that only 16 of 36 students completed the online evaluations. The majority of the responding students were challenged and felt that the class resulted in learning.
18. The review of the data as reported revealed that the class as a whole went very well. The students participated in the learning experience and felt supported when I was available to answer their questions personally.
19. "Student enthusiasm and participation was outstanding. I had time to develop and post all units before their class began so I could focus on dialogue with students."
20. The class went as planned and the student performance was above my expectations. The online portion of the course served its purpose and it was effective at communicating the desired information to students.
21. The course performed as planned. As the first run with this format, I feel the course worked just fine.
22. The students enjoyed the hands-on learning. Perhaps, I need to focus more on the hands-on stuff rather than lecturing more
23. Although the class was online, I made myself continuously accessible (cell phone number provided), as well as responded/provided feedback within a timely manner.
24. Students seemed to find the course relevant to their program of study and to the portfolio exit requirement. They believed that the course prepared them for future courses which are the intent of SPED 6721.

What was problematic or should be improved?

1. Spam filter stopping e-mail attachments requiring individual approve for release.
2. Time management. Attempting to deliver the same quality of content to students where research papers are assigned and graded resulted in a massive amount of time spent at the computer during the term.
3. None was mentioned over which I have control or would not compromise the integrity of the learning experience & the rigor needed for the course. Giving more time in an open-book quiz will surely invite less preparation ahead of the quiz.
4. Some students are not aware of online resources, such as the library databases.
5. This was/is a course that has had little on-line activities in the past, I made it 50/50 and I believe it worked out well for the last class.
6. Students were overwhelmed with the amount of material presented online. I need to limit the number of posts each person can put on the discussion board. Some students did not want to read so many of others' posts.
7. Online learning was not interactive enough and did not have enough engagement with new information.
8. Since the evaluations of the quizzes were subject to the final question, there was some confusion. I give credit for student feedback for their answers which were correct but disagreed with the fixed answers found on CourseDen.
9. Some wanted more F2F contact. Difficulty finding partners for projects, lack of personal interaction, and one wanted immediate feedback rather than waiting on an email or discussion reply. Suggestion was made to offer optional live chat once a week.
10. Some students mentioned that an early online training session before classes actually start would be advantageous. One student would like to see possibility for late submissions, after midnight on due date.
11. This is a very hard class to take online, and there are always some students who fail to realize how much effort needs to be put into the class. I am not sure how to make it more clearly to them.
12. "Need to have course twice weekly instead of the scheduled once weekly. These students were unfamiliar with CourseDen/Webct (juniors), not used in pre-requisite courses for testing, etc. Would like to see CourseDen instruction as a standard during student"
13. This class did not like the online component (60%) and are not interested in a completely online course; further, about 70% of the members of this class did not feel more comfortable participating online when compared to the face-to-face setting.
14. One thing that I have identified as being problematic is the syllabus quiz which had 2-3 questions about where certain information can be found. I will change the way that the syllabus is uploaded in the course from a MS word format to a PDF format.
15. In this course, there were no substantial problems with the online portion. The quality of the online materials could be improved to take greater advantage of the interactivity online, but this will require slow modification over time to ensure that.
16. Some students have difficulty with the interface. Computer savvy students found it "clunky". Less computer savvy students felt it was fine. I should point out that I specifically asked about these things in the course, so my answers reflect anecdotal
17. They wanted me more involved with the online discussion. The journaling idea did not work. They turned in a word attachment at the end of the course instead of doing entries all along the way as I had wanted.
18. I need to get more training on features like Camtasia and Wimba. I've had the training in the past, but separate from the class and without application, I lost it/forgot what was learned.
19. SPED 6721 is one of the most difficult courses for students and instructor when it is taught during the short summer term. Some students felt that they did not have enough time to do the readings, but I do not think that the amount of reading was unrealizable.

What do you plan to change based on student feedback?
1. Reduce the research paper content to accommodate the uncontrollable class sizes.
2. Based on the majority of students input, I will try to keep doing what I am already doing. I anticipate natural progression and update of course material. This course is revised annually during the summer months.
3. I will add more on-line lessons. Seems I'm doing a pretty good job.
4. The normal updating and refinement of the curriculum.
5. Clearly defined grading system; better training for performance coaches functioning as teaching assistants.
6. I will limit the number of posts each person can put on the discussion board or not make it mandatory for them to read them all.
7. Use a larger variety of presentation materials. Extension of resources for problem solving exercises.
8. I do allow for late submissions during fall and spring semesters, but summer session is so short that it would not be practical to allow for late submissions on all assignments.
9. Perhaps add more student/instructor online interaction - a discussion board may be stimulating for this group.
10. Schedule the course for more than 3 1/2 weeks.
11. Writing or changes in language can be first up, since they are easier topics, to ease students into learning about linguistics. Put phonetics back up earlier in the course, before Morphology and Syntax. Change Syntax assignment.
12. Adding an additional face to face session, even if it is an optional session to address student concerns and questions.

What was the biggest adjustment required for distance instructors?
1. Loss of face to face contact. No distance education course can equal real time interaction with a group. Lack of non verbal quest or reading a crowd.
2. After having taught online for so many semesters I have come to accept the issues associated with connectivity not being seamless or transparent.
3. Packaging the course for asynchronous delivery. I normally spend the entire summer creating the course and its content. The development of extensive & high quality online offerings will grow with appropriate incentives. Online classes take a great deal
4. Deciding how to promote the necessary interaction
5. This was the first time this course was taught in the first semester of our new performance based program.
6. Simplify; simplify all things such as directions, assignment directions, and quiz and exam directions. Examples and more examples
7. The lack of direct student contact was addressed primarily by providing additional presentation materials and utilizing email to answer questions.
8. The largest adjustment I made was to limit the number of students in each group. I made that quite clear in my syllabus so students formed their groups with a limited number of students.
9. Technological innovations...love the graduate students in distant learning department; they were very helpful in addressing issues that would arise in the system.
10. I have taught distance courses frequently - am always interested in learning new strategies.
11. The largest adjustment that I made was in allowing the students to call, text, or email me anytime. I was always available via blackberry. It became a very taxing to do this, but given the student population and generational differences.
12. Becoming comfortable with the use of WIMBA. I had very good technical support although there are continuing problems with consistent audio quality.
13. Getting materials in a format accessible to all students required modification of some course materials (newer version of Office to older version).

How was the level of student services, DDEC, and instructor support?
1. Based on the respondent size of 8 out of 37 there are serious issues with the current design of using online evaluations as direct substitutes for in-class surveying.
2. The people who provide our local non-academic support are simply fantastic! They are hardworking and pleasant. However, I would like two issues to be addressed: the first issue, updating of course rosters.
3. Students are just not aware.
4. Again, students are not well-versed with these resources.
5. Student rated help at 3.5.
6. Most students reported that distance help was very useful (4.5).
7. Rating was 3.6. One student mentioned in notes that the one time she called help line, there was no assistance for her.
8. Graduate students from distant education were wonderful!
9. I did not perceive any difficulties for students - it did not appear to be a problem for students according to the surveys.
10. DL folks are great. However, the DL Course Evaluation says little about the course content or the instructor.
11. Only 2 students responded and these two students were very positive about online learning.