

## eLearning at UNM-Los Alamos Faculty Guide

### DRAFT Section #2: Getting Started

Version 0.3    Date: 8/12/09

#### Selecting a Course

Not every face to face course is equally suitable for adapting to an online format. In choosing a course to put online, consider the following suggestions and recommendations.

**If possible, select a course that you have taught before and with which you are thoroughly familiar.** Choosing a course with which you are already familiar and for which you have already created a general organizational framework will ease your transition to online teaching. Your experience with the subject matter will enable you to focus on the process of adapting the course to an online format. While the tools and materials you use in the online class may differ from those used in a traditional course, the general principles and goals that you have created for the class will help focus the online course creation process.

**If possible, select a course that you have taught before in a Web enhanced or hybrid format.** Choosing a course into which you have already incorporated online components will ensure that you are already familiar with some elements of WebCT and that you have considered the differences between the online and the face to face classroom. Choosing a course that is already partly adapted to an online format will provide the easiest path to development of a fully online course.

**Determine whether you will use a pre-built course (e-pack) or a course of your own design.** Depending on the level and discipline of your course, you may find a wide array of pre-built courses that would be suitable for use. Pre-built courses contain content, activities, assessments and assignments, and are available through most textbook publishers. Once you have selected a pre-built course, the materials from the course e-pack can be uploaded directly to your WebCT course site. You may then modify the course materials (by adding readings, reformulating assignments, etc.) to reflect your teaching style and content emphasis. If you are interested in considering a pre-built course, you should contact your textbook representative, the technical representative, or the publishing house directly.

**For your first online course, consider choosing one that does not have technically complex instructional requirements.**

If possible, select a class that is relatively straightforward to teach in an online format. Classes that require extensive hands-on work or interactions, such as science labs, offer special challenges in the online environment. For such courses, pre-built e-packs may be the best option for your first time in an online format.

Consider carefully any course elements you plan to adapt from your ground to your online course. If you are adapting a face to face course to an online format, you may find that some course elements and materials, such as video recordings or quizzes, transfer to the online format easily. Other elements, such as projects or classroom discussions, may require some adjustment in order to become successful in the online classroom. Certain components of the face to face class may simply not be suitable for use in the online environment. These features will need to be re-conceptualized or replaced with activities that utilize more appropriate online learning tools. (The use of unsuitable face to face elements, such as hour-long recordings of lectures and discussions from a face to face classroom, is termed “shovelware” among online educators; try to avoid it!)

If possible, take an online course yourself, so that you can experience first-hand the challenges your students will face. If nothing else is available, at least take the self-paced WebCT training offered by NMEL (see below).

## The approval process (This process is under review)

Once you have selected a course to put online, you must have your online course approved. Approval consists of three steps, each of which requires a separate document.

1. **Proposal.** The proposal is a brief statement documenting the need and justification for this course to be taught online. Ideally, the course will already be or have been:
  - taught in a face to face or web enhanced format at UNM-LA;
  - approved by appropriate Division Heads, deans and departments for UNM-LA instruction;
  - accredited and approved by appropriate state and university agencies in a face to face format;
  - part of an existing certificate or degree program, the core curriculum, or other area for which there is ongoing need or demand;
  - part of a course rotation plan that supports certificate, degree and program completion with a regular and cycling selection of required course offerings.

The proposal should state:

- the reasons that this course is a good choice for adding to online offerings; this element of the proposal might include discussion of enrollments, course frequency, course popularity, course rotations, etc.;
- the reasons that this instructor is a good candidate for creating and teaching an online version of this course; this element of the proposal might include discussion of instructor experience with course material, instructor experience with online teaching and learning, instructor computer skills, etc.;
- the reasons that this juncture in time is appropriate for creating and teaching an online version of this course.

2. **Draft syllabus.** This draft syllabus should include all required components for an online course including:
  - Course description (from the recent UNM Catalogue)
  - Outcomes
  - Tentative schedule of topics and assignments

A template for a syllabus for an online course is included in the “Templates, Checklists, and Boilerplate” section of the UNM-LA eLearning site,

[http://www.la.unm.edu/elearn/faculty/templates/eLearning\\_Syllabus\\_Template\\_v1.1.doc](http://www.la.unm.edu/elearn/faculty/templates/eLearning_Syllabus_Template_v1.1.doc).

3. **Development Plan and Schedule.** The development plan is a brief document outlining the key elements required for complete course development. Also required is a schedule indicating the time frame for completing those requirements.

The development plan should include discussion and scheduling of the following elements; experience in online education or training the instructor has taken should be stated, and if the teacher is inexperienced, plans for obtaining the training should be stated.

- WebCT training for instructor (if required); how it will be obtained.
- Design and development training (if required); how it will be obtained.
- Additional technologies training (if required); how it will be obtained.
- Course layout and design; indicate basic organizational intent.
- Content development; indicate previously developed content as well as that requiring development.
- Alignment (outcomes, content, tools and assessments); indicate how outcomes are supported and measured by content, tools and assessments.
- Trouble-shooting, testing, checking and review of the course; when and how this will occur.
- Pre-semester activities (Welcome Letter, posting syllabus); when and how will these occur.
- Orientation to course; how and when this will occur.

Expectations are that the course will be 80% complete by the start of the semester in which it is offered. The development plan and schedule must reflect these expectations. Once the approval documents are prepared, they should be submitted to your Curriculum Coordinator for the first step in the approval process.

**N.B:** If you are proposing an online course that you have not yet taught face to face at the UNM-LA campus, you will need to see your Curriculum Coordinator in order to obtain initial approval for teaching the course, which usually involves obtaining approval from main campus. For this approval process, you are required to present a draft syllabus for the course. The main campus department may also require that you supply unofficial transcripts of your graduate work and a letter of intent.

Initial course approval is granted either from the Dean of Instruction at UNM-LA or from the course's academic department on main campus, depending on the course. This process may take as long as several months, depending on the timing of the request. After this approval has been obtained, follow the steps outlined above.

## WebCT training

If needed, you should plan and schedule your WebCT training. There are currently several ways for UNM-LA instructors to receive training in WebCT.

- Take the self-paced online training course offered by WebCT and NMEL through the Albuquerque campus. To enroll in this course, contact NMEL at [newmedia@unm.edu](mailto:newmedia@unm.edu). Please provide your name, department, phone number, and UNM NetID.
- WebCT and NMEL also offer occasional overviews, workshops and open labs in WebCT training. Listings for these events are posted at <http://newmedia.unm.edu/index.cfm?fuseaction=regsystem.reghomepage&CFID=2690870&CFTOKEN=57675489> These trainings are also sometimes offered through OSET (Office of Support through Effective Technology) during the academic year. You may access the OSET website and view their WebCT training courses at <http://www.unm.edu/~oset/> Please note that

NMEL and OSET trainings may not be regularly scheduled, so contact them directly if you have specific scheduling needs.

- Follow the training in “How to Use WebCT - for faculty” available on the WebCT login page or directly at: <http://webctinfo.unm.edu/faculty/> You will be prompted to log in with your NetID and password. Once you complete login, you are taken directly to the WebCT training website. You can work through the elements of the training at your pace and convenience. WebCT also provides access to comprehensive online help on all WebCT functions.
- Contact the Instructional Technology Center in Building 6, Room 624, on the UNM-LA campus. They offer IT support and schedule classes on specific WebCT topics. For a current schedule of classes, go to <http://www.unm.edu/~itc/> and click on “Workshop and Class Calendar.” You may also contact them at [ITC@unm.edu](mailto:ITC@unm.edu).

It can take several weeks to learn the basics of the WebCT system, depending on your experience with Learning Content Management Systems (LCMS's) and experience with internet technologies. You should plan to complete your training several months before the semester in which you will offer the course in order to allow adequate time for developing, mounting, and testing the class.

## Obtain a WebCT Development Shell

To obtain a WebCT development shell (an online environment in which to develop your course) before your online course has been scheduled, contact WebCT support ([webct@unm.edu](mailto:webct@unm.edu)) and provide your name, phone, UNM NetID, and the name of the course and the semester in which you expect to teach it.

## Listing your course

Once your course has been approved, it will need to be added to the *Schedule of Classes* for the appropriate semester. The Curriculum Coordinator for your area will place the course on the schedule, in consultation with the Dean of Instruction. This is part of the standard semester scheduling process that occurs in early fall (for spring semester) and early spring (for summer and fall semesters). Online and hybrid course are entered into the Banner system during this process and given the appropriate flags indicating course “type.”

However, if your course is WebCT-enhanced, it is up to you to set up the course in Lobo web and add the enhancement. The complete procedure for doing this is outlined in the section on “WebCT Enhanced Courses” in this Guide. For instructions on setting up web enhanced courses through Lobo web, you may also go directly to: [http://webctinfo.unm.edu/faculty/change\\_schedule\\_type/](http://webctinfo.unm.edu/faculty/change_schedule_type/) .

To have your course added to the local UNM-LA list of online courses that is published on the UNM-LA website each semester, contact the Office of Instruction at 505.662.5919, ext 693 or email [jchilder@unm.edu](mailto:jchilder@unm.edu) with the course information.

## Schedule and checklist

As the process of planning, creating and mounting an online course can be both long and complex, it is helpful to set up a schedule and checklist to structure and guide the process. The following is an example of a timeline and course preparation schedule for instructors of online classes.

## UNM Best Practices Online Sample Checklist<sup>1</sup>

1. Select a course for online development.
2. Discuss with your department chair, Curriculum Coordinator, or Division Head the need for the online course you would like to teach.
3. Complete proposal, draft syllabus, and development plan.
4. Obtain necessary approvals, including principle or departmental approval, if required.
5. Plan and schedule your WebCT training. Contact NMEL staff to discuss available training and resources. Request your WebCT development shell. Review publisher resources to determine available e-packs and files.
6. Complete WebCT training.
7. Add course to Class Schedule.
8. Add course to "Web enhanced" sections, if necessary.
9. Add class to listing of online courses.
10. Develop a checklist for the completed course.
11. Begin to design and develop your course material:
  - Design organizational structure of course
  - Create course materials (outlines, lecture notes, solutions, audios, videos, PowerPoint presentations, quizzes, discussion board questions, etc)
  - Create course tools (syllabus, assignment schedule, rubrics, guidelines, etc.)
  - Modify available course material
  - Create orientation information and materials

### To be completed at least one month before the course will be offered

1. Have entire course reviewed by peers and/or students.
2. Revise course based on feedback from review.

### At least the week before the course starts

1. Obtain your class list from Banner
2. Communicate with students via external e-mail and Welcome Letter. The letter should contain the following information:
  - Course access information
  - Textbook information, including ordering

---

<sup>1</sup> Based on the model plan provided by the "Best Practices Online" Task Force Draft 2006 <http://facultyonline.unm.edu/docs/unm-best-practices-online.pdf>  
Ann Brooks compiled this outline for use in the Anderson Schools of Management (2006).

- Instructor contact information
- Information about online courses, including computer requirements, course expectations, tips for success, and technical support resources (refer students to the eLearning at UNM-LA: Student Guide at [http://www.la.unm.edu/elearn/eLearning\\_Student\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.la.unm.edu/elearn/eLearning_Student_Guide.pdf) )
- Syllabus
- Assignment schedule
- Any special requirements of the class (i.e., proctored final)

Another sample “checklist,” provided by the Instructional Technology Council, is available on the following page. This checklist provides a more course-specific list of items to consider and assess in the development of an online course.

DRAFT

## Sample Course Review Checklist

**Announcements** – current, informative (updated at least 1/week)

**Meet your Classmates Discussion** – Professor is present, informative, sets tone for students

### Course Information Documents

- Welcome is indeed welcoming
- Course Goals and Learning Objectives are clearly stated and aligned with assignments and assessments
- Assessment – grading info and rubrics are present and clear (rubrics may be in modules)
- Course Learning Activities – described clearly for students; I can find them in Modules
- Course Schedule is well developed – easily understood calendar, activities, due dates
- Students are given information about how to get help and further training on WebCT in course documents as well as Welcome Letter

### Introductory Module

- Forms a bridge between the content and the technology of the online delivery
- Students have an opportunity to practice discussions and assignments
- Directions are clear

### All Modules

- “Your Responsibilities” outlines the timeline, activities, etc. OR hotlinks to Course Schedule/Calendar

### Mini-lectures

- Title includes a numeric marker and a topic that tells students what it contains [ex: 2.1 History of DL]
- The document is easy to read (good font, not cluttered with different font colors, white space in text)
- Good length for web course – about three screen scrolls
- Visuals are used to enhance the message
- The professor is socially present (speaks in first person, sense of humor, examples, etc.)
- Contains info that guides learners in preparing for related discussions or assignments
- Multimedia elements (hotlinks, audio, etc.) enhance learning vs. add distractions

### Discussions

- If discussion/interaction is used, the questions/directions are clear
- Students interact with each other and threaded discussions unfold (vs. 1 answer/person)
- Sections are organized by room or group if there are many questions or leaders

### Assignments

- Directions for assignments are clearly stated
- Due date in title is helpful
- There is indeed a place for students to submit the assignments listed in Activities/Schedule!
- Submit to class selection is checked off if students are to use this option

### Talk with the Professor

- This section is present so that students can easily access the professor

### Sense of Teaching Presence

- This appears in the module structure/content +/- during/concluding the module

### Optional sections

- Small Group Discussions or Reports are designed and communicate expectations
- Web Searches – encourages students to search for related websites, critique them, share information about materials.

### **Optional Modules**

- Project or Presentation Modules
- Explains project or presentation and expectations of student
- Maps out what assignments are due when
- Provides for activity to be submitted in 'chunks' (encourage progress, discourage cheating)
- May encourage peer reviews to allow for interaction with other students, tighten up work

### **Exam Modules**

- Quizzes or exams may be housed in a separate module that can be kept locked, then open only for the period of time stated for the quiz/test.
- If you require that an exam be proctored, you need to make arrangements for this and let students know the process well in advance of the exam.

### **Course Rubric**

- Evaluate your course against one of the course rubrics provided at the end of Section 3 of this Guide.

DRAFT

## Table of Contents

<b>DRAFT SECTION #4: GETTING STARTED</b> .....	<b>1</b>
SELECTING A COURSE.....	1
THE APPROVAL PROCESS (THIS PROCESS IS UNDER REVIEW).....	2
1. Proposal.....	2
2. Draft syllabus.....	2
3. Development Plan and Schedule.....	3
WEBCT TRAINING.....	3
OBTAIN A WEBCT DEVELOPMENT SHELL.....	4
LISTING YOUR COURSE.....	4
SCHEDULE AND CHECKLIST.....	4
UNM Best Practices Online Sample Checklist.....	5
Sample Course Review Checklist.....	7

DRAFT