

eLearning at UNM-Los Alamos Faculty Guide

DRAFT Section #6: Hybrid and WebCT-Enhanced Courses

Version 0.1 August 12, 2009

Hybrid and WebCT-Enhanced Course Types

There are two basic course “types” that allow you to add online elements to your traditional class. These are:

- **Web-enhanced classes**
In web-enhanced classes, you generally hold the same number of face to face meetings as a traditional class. However, certain activities, such as quizzes, discussions, chats, or video viewings, are done online. In this format, you can vary the online elements from semester to semester and gradually become familiar and comfortable with the range of tools that are available in an online class.
- **Hybrid classes**
Hybrid classes generally combine traditional and online classroom methods in comparable or near-comparable proportions. Hybrid c allow instructors to place online those elements of their class which they feel would be best suited to the online learning environment. The remainder of the course is taught in a traditional face to face setting in order to take advantage of the interaction provided by the live format. Many consider the hybrid course to offer the best of both worlds, as it can utilize both online and face to face learning tools for the elements most appropriate to each format. However, it is not a solution for students who cannot come to campus to take the course.

In hybrid courses, the class normally meets face to face for half of the required class meetings. The remainder of the meeting time is used by students to work in an online environment, completing additional assignments or engaging with online materials.

Creating web-enhanced and hybrid courses forces you to consider which activities and content elements are best suited to the online format. This experience will help you if and when you choose to design a fully online course.

Building WebCT-Enhanced and Hybrid Courses

Enhancing your face to face course with online components means more than merely putting your lecture notes or assignments online for students to access. While improved availability of these materials can improve organization for students and faculty alike, the real advantages of enhanced and hybrid courses lie in the rich resources and new course elements that instructors can develop and use.

Online sources and new web tools offer a dazzling and growing array of materials for use in the online classroom. These materials and resources can stimulate student interest and broaden learning

experiences. Designing a successful hybrid or enhanced course requires selecting those online sources, activities and tools that are most appropriate to your subject matter, teaching style, learning objectives and the needs of your students. Successfully matching online resources with these parameters can help ensure a successful hybrid or enhanced course.

Because each instructor will have a unique approach to content and will construct differing learning goals for students, there is no set way to determine which elements of your course to put online or which online tools and resources you should use. However, you might consider the following suggestions and guidelines:

Start small

Commit to putting a single video clip or assignment online before determining to mount an entire series of films or several weeks' worth of homework. One well-chosen clip or carefully designed assignment can often be more successful than a series of films or list of assignments. It will also help you to incorporate feedback into subsequent course design if your initial efforts are limited.

Mechanize

If there is a component of your material that benefits from being made routine, consider using one of the mechanized functions of WebCT for implementing this aspect of your course. Courses that require practice and drill for mastery, such as some foreign language classes, may be well suited for online quizzes or self-checking exercises such as those allowed in WebCT and Respondus¹.

Add media

If there is a component of your material that is highly visual or aural, consider using web-based images, recordings, film, performance or interactive media to allow students to engage this content more fully. If there is an element of your course content that is particularly difficult to convey in the face to face setting, consider whether this element might be suitable to online delivery. American students studying Chinese, for example, might, in some locales, have difficulty finding native speakers with whom to practice their conversational skills. These students would benefit from interactive language programs available online or the asynchronous cross cultural dialogs possible in the international online community.

Reinforce learning with an online component

If there is an element of your face to face class that needs reinforcing, consider developing an online component to enhance this part of the course. If you need more classroom discussion, add an online discussion forum. If students need to use and apply new information after class in order to enhance understanding and retention, create an online review exercise based on the use of these new concepts and skills.

Use online components to align with learning outcomes

Examine the learning outcomes for your course and consider which one might be most naturally aligned with online learning resources and tools. Develop a sequence of content materials, activities and assignments that support this learning outcome in an online environment. Gradually introduce these elements into your face to face course.

For more information

An introduction to hybrid classes is given here:

Carla Garnham, C., and Kaleta, R. (2002) "Introduction to Hybrid Courses," in *Teaching with Technology*, 8.

<http://www.uwsa.edu/ttt/articles/garnham.htm>

¹ Respondus is a software package that interfaces with WebCT. It allows the course designer to create a quiz or exam in a text or MS Word file, and then upload it to WebCT. This is much easier than using the assessment-creation interface that is provided within WebCT. See "For more information" for links.

Young, J. (2002) "Hybrid Teaching Seeks to End the Divide Between Traditional and Online Instruction," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, March 22..
<http://chronicle.com/free/v48/i28/28a03301.htm>

An entire issue of *Teaching with Technology Today* devoted to hybrid courses is available at:
<http://www.uwsa.edu/ttt/articles/garnham.htm>

For instructions on how to add a WebCT component to your face to face course, go to:
http://webctinfo.unm.edu/faculty/change_schedule_type/

You can obtain more information about Respondus here:

<http://preview.tinyurl.com/lhbpor>

http://webctinfo.unm.edu/faculty/third_party.html

<http://www.respondus.com/products/demos.shtml>

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