

## IDND 30518: Developing and Teaching an Online Course

Instructor: Dr. Donald Vescio

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Office Telephone: 508.929.8157 (Leave a message – I return all calls within one working day.)

Office Hours: M, W 7.00 P.M. - 8.00 P.M. (online via email and chat) and by appointment

Course Dates: September 10, 2007 - October 29, 2008

Course Location: Virtual – it's all online!

Course Times: All course interaction, excepting two simple assignments, will be conducted asynchronously – this means you can work at times most convenient for you.

Course Week: The course week runs Wednesdays through Tuesdays.

Required Texts: All readings will be available online.

### Course Description

This course will provide an introduction to the theory and practice of online course design and pedagogical practices.

Participants will learn how to:

- develop content for online presentation;
- establish dynamic online collaborative student communities;
- assess and test student performance in online learning environments;
- leverage the functionality of common learning management systems (e.g., Blackboard) and content management systems (e.g., Microsoft's SharePoint) to achieve rich and interactive online course experiences.

This course is appropriate for anyone who is interested in teaching completely online or who wishes to augment a traditional face-to-face course with online interaction. Participants will be expected:

- to be able to send and receive email messages and attachments;
- browse websites;
- have consistent access to a reliable internet connection.

All course material will be presented online in an asynchronous fashion, with the exception of two simple synchronous exercises.

### Time Commitment

- Assume approximately two-three hours/week of active work in the course
- All but two activities will take place in an asynchronous fashion--in other words, you will be able to participate in most activities at a time convenient for you.
- There will be multiple scheduled opportunities to participate in the synchronous activities.

## Participation Expectations

- Participation is demonstrated through regular and thoughtful interaction in discussion board and email activities
- Daily participation in the course is much more preferable than batching activity on the day that an assignment is due.
- Discussion board posts should demonstrate some engagement in the discourse:
  - *Really Bad*: "Ditto"
  - *Not So Good*: "Great thought, Jim!"
  - *Much Better*: "Jim, I thought that your analysis of the no significant difference debate missed an important point, that technology-based pedagogies assume a certain level of economic resources. While I agree with you in that technology-based pedagogies..."

## Due Dates and Disaster Recovery

- Unless otherwise indicated, all assignments must be completed by 11.59 P.M. of the published due dates.
- Plan ahead and make local copies in Word or another format of all materials submitted or posted online in the event of systems failure.
- If you encounter specific hardware or network problems that prohibit you from completing an assignment on time, contact me immediately via telephone, email, or fax.
- If you experience recurrent technical problems that prohibit you from completing multiples assignments, you may be asked to re-enroll into the course at a future date.

## Technology Expectations

- Access to a Windows-based computer (Apple will work for most, but not all, assignments)
- Broadband internet connection
- Ability to send and receive email and email attachments
- MS Office *or* OpenOffice (see <http://www.openoffice.org>) applications
- Adobe's Acrobat PDF reader (available free from <http://www.adobe.com>)

## Texts/Content/Assignments

- There are no textbooks to purchase for this course (given the rapid pace of technology change, most traditional print-based texts are out of date prior to their distribution)
- All required readings will be available online.
- At the beginning of each week, I will provide you with an audio summary of the topics that we will explore.
- I will post each week's assignments by 8.00 P.M., Wednesday evenings.

## Course Topics

### *September 10*

- Introduction to Online Learning Management Systems
- Online Instructional Design: Overview of Best Practices
- Discussion Boards

### *September 17*

- Moderating Online Discussion
- Building Online Community

### *September 24*

- Technology-based Response Strategies
- Podcasting/Blogging

### *October 1*

- Online Content and Copyright
- Mechanics of Online Information Acquisition
- Assignment Design

### *October 8*

- Assessing Student Performance
- Online Testing Theory and Practice

### *October 15*

- Workflow and Logistics
- Presentation Formats
- Low Cost Learning Management System Alternatives, Part One

### *October 22*

- The Online Course Syllabus
- Low Cost Learning Management System Alternatives, Part Two

### *October 29*

- Online Course Portfolio Due
  - Sample syllabus
  - Representative assignments
  - Representative transactional activities
  - Representative tests and assessments

## **Evaluation**

1. Regular and thoughtful participation in online discussion: 20%<sup>1</sup>
2. Blog/Online Journaling: 10%<sup>2</sup>
3. Annotated Bibliography: 20%<sup>3</sup>
4. Online Course Portfolio: 40%<sup>4</sup>
5. Self-assessment of Teaching Practices: 10%<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>See [Participation Expectations](#), top of page 2

<sup>2</sup>A blog is a type of online journal; you'll make two to three entries per week on topics of interest to you. The entries can be short, very informal, and even point to other online resources, such as video, etc.

<sup>3</sup>Your annotated bibliography should focus on content, approaches, and strategies appropriate for teaching a course within your specific discipline online.

<sup>4</sup>The following items to constitute your teaching portfolio:

- Full Course Syllabus
- Representative Assignments (first three weeks of the semester/session would be ideal)
- Representative Transactional Activities (really a subset of above; discussion boards, email, chat--if used, etc.)
- Representative tests/assessments
- ~750-1000 word self-assessment: what are your pedagogical values and how will they translate into an online learning environment
- Annotated Bibliography ( a listing of web-based resources that would be of use to faculty who wish to teach online within your specific discipline; there is no specific number of items required for this component)

<sup>5</sup>This is a 750-1000 word self-assessment of your pedagogical values and how they might be realized in an online learning environment.

### Instructor Biography

Currently, I am the Chief Information Officer at Worcester State College. I have been an administrator at Worcester State for seven years; prior to this, I was a faculty member of Worcester State's Department of Language and Literature. As you probably can sense, my professional background and interests are eclectic: my graduate training focused on critical theory, information design, and postmodern literacies; I run a consultancy (now in its thirteenth year) that provides information architecture and design services for application developers in the finance and investment sectors; and I continue to teach a wide range of literature and theory courses on at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

I grew up in a small town on Lake Ontario, spent time in Fairbanks, AK after high school, and lived in most of the New England states. I now reside in Grafton MA, with my wife Elaine, also an online teacher at WSC, and my three daughters: Maggie (16), Gabriella (7), and Chloe (2). Both my wife and I are competitive cyclists (we met many years ago through a local western New York racing club), and I've competed regionally and nationally for more years than I care to admit. Finally, I'm a passionate amateur astronomer who enjoys the night sky with my three daughters, but not my wife, who cannot understand our fascination with little white dots in the sky.