Program Development

Before a course can be developed for online offering, certain preliminaries need to take place in the academic unit. This is usually coordinated by the program director.

1. Identify program standards/objectives.
2. Identify learning outcome measures (assessments), and insure that they precisely measure the objectives. (Know how to use Bloom’s taxonomy.)
3. Map objectives throughout program matrix to individual courses.
4. Insure that prerequisite courses are properly sequenced and adequately prepare students for the next, higher course.
5. Insure that online courses are “equivalent” to the face-to-face versions.
6. Insure that faculty know which specific objectives relate to their course and how they will assess the objectives.

Course Development

Online courses are very different from face-to-face courses. We need to think from the perspective of the students.

- Use logical, consistent navigation in courses in a program
- Avoid instruction from textbook the first week of class if at all possible.
  - Students will have technical problem.
  - Students will be added late to your course.
  - Students won’t have text books.
  - Use the first week to do things without losing ground:
    - Allow students to become oriented to the class
    - Student introductions to peers
    - Student pre-tests
    - Student surveys
    - Read articles (pdf, Web, etc.)
- Use learning modules to structure learning events/units:
  - Give explicit guidelines for each unit of instruction; use an overview page
  - Give explicit instructions for each assignment, etc.
- AVOID DUPLICATION or REDUNDANCY! (Time management strategy)
  - Develop a course schedule with exact due dates, and do not repeat this information in other areas/documents of the course.
  - Use generic due dates in assignments, projects, etc. (use “Due Sunday at 11:00 PM” for example.)
- Be consistent in the way you do things in the course.
- Respond to student questions in a timely manner.
- Establish clear guidelines/expectations for class discussions; grade important discussions.
- Ask for student feedback at the end of each learning unit; this will inform you of what is working or not.
- Check settings and due dates against the course schedule for quizzes, assignments, etc., BEFORE the course begins.
Online Teaching: Lessons Learned

John O’Malley
Perspective

- WebBSIT Program
  - Non traditional students
    - Mainly working full time
    - Experienced in IT
    - Earning degree to advance in ranks
  - Courses
    - Created by others
    - Facilitating
    - Wide variation in # of students
    - Not on GSU schedule necessarily
Teaching Issues

- Content not yours
- Textbook not your choice
- No course guide
- Course content is good
  - Discovery method
- Facilitator not correct
- Assignments designed for course creator technology
Student Issues

- Work schedules
  - Late assignments
  - Varied schedule due to field
- Time zones
- Wide variation in knowledge
- Tunnel vision
- Group project scheduling
Technology Issues

- WebCT – do I need to say any more?
- Student internet connection problems
  - There are dialup connections!
  - Consider problems worldwide – not just local
  - Good teaching moments for IT
- Server problems
  - No way to contact students