



Chapter VIII

Delivering Course Material via the Web: An Introduction

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ABSTRACT

The trend toward the use of the Internet in academia is clear with the number of courses using the web for the delivery of course materials ever increasing. There are many positive reasons for using the web in a course, but this raises a number of new issues for faculty, including the time needed and salary concerns. We present a table of six levels of web site use and discuss the major problems associated with the creation and development of web courses. Practical suggestions are offered for dealing with problems from the authors' experiences and the research literature. The final section covers global enrollment, the electronic university, and the trend toward use of the web for the delivery of course materials.

INTRODUCTION

"Education over the Internet is going to be so big it is going to make e-mail usage look like a rounding error."

John Chambers, Cisco Systems
New York Times,
November 17, 1990

There are currently over 500,000 courses now available in some form on the Internet (Stevenson, 2000; Telecampus, 2000; Yahoo, 2000), and the media suggest that there will be 2.2 million students taking at least one college course over the Internet by 2002 (Thornton, 1999). Table 1 lists the top 10 eSchools (Stevenson, 2000). The number of universities offering web-based classes is expected to double from 1,500 in 1999 to more than 3,300 by 2004 (E-Learning,

Table 1: The Top 10 eSchools

| School | URL (web address) | Notes |
|---|--|--|
| California Virtual Campus | www.cvc.edu | California coalition offers over 2,000 online courses. |
| Indiana University | www.Indiana.edu/~iude | General studies program for multidisciplinary degree. |
| Penn State | www.outreach.psu.edu | All online students are assigned an advisor. |
| Rochester Institute of Technology | distancelearning.rit.edu | In top five of U.S. online degree providers. |
| University of California at Berkeley | learn.berkeley.edu | Excellent academic reputation with wide range of courses. |
| University of Maryland University College | www.umuc.edu/distance | Has 14 online bachelor's and 10 master's degree programs. |
| University of Pennsylvania | www.upenn.edu | Wide range of courses from liberal arts through medicine. |
| University of Washington | www.outreach.washington.edu/dl | Innovative course design and good support for online students. |
| University of Wisconsin | www1.uwex.edu | More than 150 online courses including business courses. |
| Western Governors University | www.wgu.edu | Degree credit also available for life experience. |

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