eLearning Newsletter

UT DALLAS

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eLearning Team

The summer 2015 semester is almost upon us and with it comes the latest installment of the eLearning Newsletter!

Last semester's survey asked about experiences you have had in online courses that stood out, both good and bad. We received 200 responses and here is how you responded to the questions:

Question 1: Please describe the most interesting/best activity you experienced in an online course at UT Dallas.

48 of your responses focused on communication with professors/classmates and examples include:

- "The most interesting thing was the Personal Finance course weekly discussions where we video chat. I found that it was easier to complete and understand others' points of view this way. It was a great alternative to the discussion boards that most online courses require."
- "The most interesting activity was the Collaborate (web conferencing) session - the instructor did a review before the exam."
- "We've gotten to discuss all kinds of topics about computer mediated communication and reading everybody's blogs is sometimes fun! Some of the topics we've had to write about are about documentaries, television shows, and books that I've really enjoyed watching/reading."

46 responses identified course materials/assignments as a point of interest. Examples include:

- "I enjoyed the variety of options an online professor has given us. More than just a discussion post, some professors had videos for us to watch, some provided active external links, and some provided PowerPoints with the professor's voice. For me, all of these styles helped with retention."
- "Reading a capital murder trial transcript."
- "Taking the online quizzes was very helpful in regards to time management. The fact that we can take them anytime during a 1-2 week span makes it great. What also helps is how we are given practice quizzes or study guides to test our knowledge."

Question 2: Please describe a challenging experience you had in an online course at UT Dallas.

46 responses identified the online environment in general. Examples include:

- "It was very difficult to grasp the concepts without being in a classroom setting."
- "Based on my personal learning style, I just learn more and get more (education-wise) from a face to face learning environment than the online one."
- "Typically (online) courses are more demanding."

37 responses identified communication challenges. Examples given:

- "I think the most challenging task has been waiting on email responses from some professors."
- "It takes some time for other people to respond to your questions."

31 responses identified difficulty keeping up with the course schedule. Examples include:

- "Remembering deadlines. When other classes get busier, it's easy to forget you're enrolled in an online course for a week or two, to devastating results. Out of sight, out of mind, I suppose. It's amazing how useful even a once-a-week meeting is to memory."
- "Remembering due dates - I haven't missed one yet, but I am constantly unsure and have to go back in my planner to keep checking when things are due."
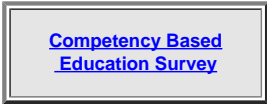
Technical difficulties were listed by 20 respondents. Here are some examples:

- "There was one time when I couldn't connect... internet traffic. I just had to try several times and it was fine. Sometimes it takes several attempts to mute or un-mute the phone, especially when large numbers of people are trying to do the same thing at the same time... all normal stuff."
- "Making sure the internet connection is fast enough while I'm taking any quizzes or tests."
- "It took me about one week to get used to eLearning. That's the only challenging aspect. Once you get to know about

eLearning, it is quite good."

Thank you for all of the great feedback!

For this semester's survey, we would like your thoughts on Competency Based Education (CBE). CBE courses allow students to advance based on their ability to master a skill or competency at their own pace.

**[Competency Based
 Education Survey](#)**

Wishing you the very best in the upcoming semester!

Darren Crone, Ed.D., Assistant Provost, Educational Technology Services

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Featured Online Students

The eLearning Team invites you to meet our students by viewing different student profiles in each newsletter. This semester's featured students are Sukesh Dixit and Parimal Khisti.

Sukesh Dixit

Where do you work?
eBay Enterprise.

What is your position?
SCM Consultant (contractor).

How long have you been there?
2 months.

What do you want to do after you finish your degree?
To pursue a consulting job in Supply Chain Management.

How many online courses have you taken?
I have taken one online course.

Why did you decide to take online courses?
It's quiet and easy. While gaining practical experience doing internship/job, we can strengthen our theoretical concepts, as well.

How is the online experience different from the traditional classroom?
The best thing about taking an online course is that it fits my schedule and based on my work load, I can plan my study. Even for doubt clearance, I can get in touch with the professor through email or call the professor at any time.

What makes an online course effective?
Its interactive videos and slides which gives a feel of classroom teaching.

Who was your favorite professor and why?
It is without reservation that Carol Flannery who taught me "Statistics: Uncertainty and Risk in Business and Operation" was my favorite professor. The energy and enthusiasm she brings to her class is truly commendable and her zeal to make sure her students are learning new things is really commendable.

Is there any advice you can give to other online students?
Plan your study schedule every week and don't leave it until the end to press the panic button at the last minute. Also, take part in the online discussion to interact with fellow students.

Parimal Khisti

Where do you work?
I work at WM Barr.

What is your position?
I am a Supply Chain Analyst.

How long have you been there?
8 months.

What do you want to do after you finish your degree?
Apply my knowledge of operations management to prosper in the field.

How many online courses have you taken?
I have taken five online courses.

Why did you decide to take online courses?
It is extremely feasible to complete courses online. The main benefits include time flexibility, the opportunity to learn class material as many times as you want, being able to communicate with each and every classmate, the ability to express your thoughts more clearly, and archive class material for future use.

How is the online experience different from the traditional classroom?
The experience is tremendously different. I can take classes whenever I want; I can remotely complete my degree while sitting in a different city; and the roster feature offered me the opportunity to make good connections with all of my classmates. I can personally contact my professor as many times as I want. There are availability constraints if you plan to visit him in his office.

What makes an online course effective?
The opportunity to go over study material a number of times. You can actually listen to whole lectures. It makes it so easy. In an actual classroom setting, you have only a limited amount of time to hear the lectures and process the information in our brains.

Who was your favorite professor and why?
Professor Abhi Biswas. He laid out class materials in an enjoyable and easy way. He responded to emails very promptly with precise and knowledgeable replies.

Is there any advice you can give to other online students?
If you want to get a degree by balancing your work schedule, this is the best opportunity.

If you would like to be featured in the eLearning Newsletter, [email us](#)!

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Jindal School of Management

New Graduate Electives for 2015-2016

Several new electives for the JSOM MS and MBA programs will be offered during the fall 2015 semester. These include:

- HMGT 6320 by Professor Fleming
- OPRE 6332 by Professor Ramanathan
- OPRE 6341 by Professor Honhon
- MKT 6339 by Professor Rajaratnam
- MKT 4330 by Professor Edsel

For complete information, see http://jindal.utdallas.edu/mba-programs/pmba/#02-online-courses or contact me as shown below:

Larry Chasteen, Director JSOM Online Programs| chasteen@utdallas.edu | 972-883-5853

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School of Arts and Humanities

Misty Hawley

Emerging Media & Communication at UT Dallas (EMAC)

The EMAC program offers a really good foundation for people trying to go into the rapidly evolving world of media. Technology has changed so much and the program realizes the importance of student knowledge advancing along with it. Social media and online technology are ubiquitous and necessary parts of the information process. Finding new ways to streamline information and share it is what gives the program life. EMAC offers students a look at the old and the new and helps them discover advanced ways to mix both. In this area of study, students are more than just a number. They are the focus and the heart of everything the program and the professors are trying to achieve. Critical thinking is not only expected, it's paramount.

Misty Hawley, Communications Manager, Eugene McDermott Library| EMAC | mdh106020@utdallas.edu | 972-883-4951

School of Interdisciplinary Studies

BIS 3190 - Library Research Skills

Learning proper research skills and information literacy is imperative in college. BIS 3190 helps students effectively explore and examine the library tools necessary to succeed in class. Developed by an instruction librarian at McDermott Library, BIS 3190 provides a step-by-step introduction to resources and best practices for student researchers. Students will learn how to locate information within Eugene McDermott Library as well as the internet. Topics include fine-tuning research topics, conducting research using scholarly resources, and organizing information for a paper. Plagiarism, copyright and citation management are also included.

The material is flexible enough that first-year students could easily complete the course while juniors and seniors will still find the information beneficial. McDermott librarians teach this course.

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Meet Our Faculty

Dr. Umit Gurun

Dr. Umit Gurun is an Associate Professor of Accounting at UTD. He also serves as an associate editor at Management Science (http://pubsonline.informs.org/journal/mnsc). His current research areas include financial media and asset prices, advertising financial products, immigration networks in financial markets, and patent litigation. He received his PhD from Michigan State University and was a visiting faculty at the University of Texas at Austin (2010-2011) and Harvard University (2014).

Dr. Gurun currently teaches ACCT 6344, Financial Statement Analysis at UT Dallas. This course analyzes financial statements for evaluating firm performance and risk. Topics include interpretation of financial statements and footnotes, managers' incentives for earnings manipulation, comparative analysis of firms, and ethics in financial reporting. Students will have the opportunity to develop skills and understanding of the integration of strategy, accounting, economics and finance. The course also provides a framework for business analysis and valuation using financial statement data in a variety of business decisions.

Chris Edwards

Chris Edwards works in the Eugene McDermott Library at UTD. Mr. Edwards is an Instruction Librarian for the First-Year Experience Students and the Liaison to the Veteran Services Center. He teaches workshops on RefWorks, a citation management software that is available to all UTD personnel, students, and alumni. He also teaches BIS 3190, Library Research Skills, since the course was launched in the spring of 2010.

Mr. Edwards has been working in one academic library or another since his freshman year at Texas Tech University. He loves hearing interesting questions and surprising answers, and enjoys helping and getting to know people.

Mr. Edwards received his Bachelor's Degree in 2003 in Theatre Arts and English from Texas Tech University and received his Master of Library Science from The University of North Texas. He is a member of the American Library Association, the Texas Library Association, and the Theatre Library Association.

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Newsletter edited by Rita Cubie, Administrative Assistant, UT Dallas eLearning Team