UT DALLAS — *e*Learning Newsletter

Issue #27

Helpful Links

UT Dallas eLearning Help Desk

UT Dallas Computing Help Desk

Getting Started With eLearning

eLearning Blog

eLearning Team

UT Dallas Bookstore

Off-Campus Books

Academic Advising

Office of the Registrar

Office of Financial Aid

Galaxy

CourseBook

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eLearning Team

Featured Online Students

Jindal School of Management

School of Interdisciplinary Studies

School of Arts and Humanities

Meet our Faculty

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eLearning Team

The summer semester is nearly upon us and we are working feverishly to prepare your online and blended courses. One of the key components in many online courses is the lecture. Last semester's survey asked about your lecture format preference. We had 600 responses and this is what you said.
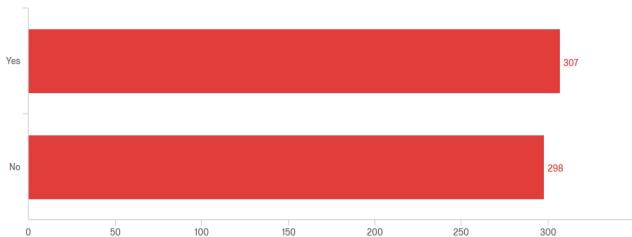
1. Select all lecture formats that you use to view your lectures:
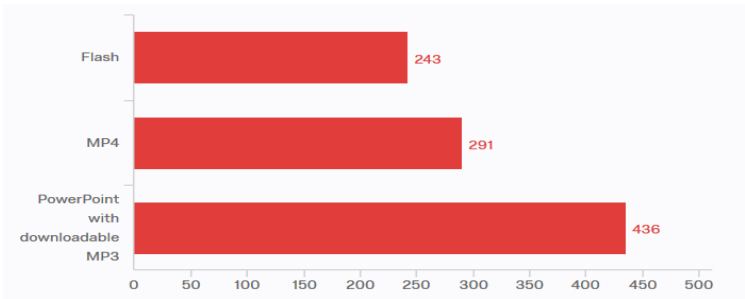
2. Select the lecture format you prefer:
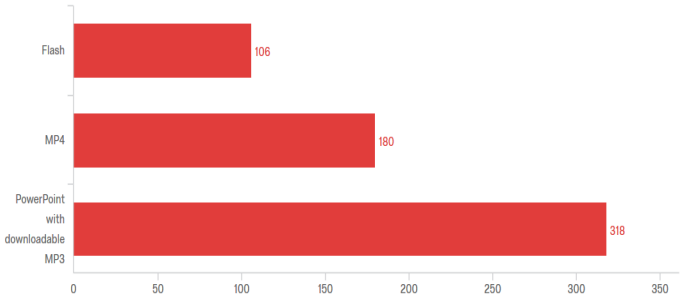
3. If only one format was offered, would it adversely affect your studies?

4. Is there another lecture delivery option that you would like to see implemented? Here is a sample of your responses:

a) Video lectures.

b) Live lectures with chat options.

c) I am behind the tech curve so whatever is user-friendly works for me.

d) No, it's perfect. Though we could use slack for general discussions or to contact professor. I am using that in one of my other class and it's really good. Just a suggestion.

e) YouTube.

The PowerPoint with mp3 audio download remains the most popular, though all provided options are used. Over half of you said your studies would be adversely impacted if only one format was offered. In the comments, we found that there is general satisfaction with the formats provided, but there was a common theme of you wanting to see your professor more. We will bring this up to professors in future course design meetings.

This semester's survey is on student satisfaction with UT Dallas Educational Technology Services. The vast majority of online students at UTD also take classroom-based courses on campus, so some of the survey questions center around the traditional classroom experience in addition to the virtual classroom. If you have already completed this survey, thank you. If not, please take a few moments to share your thoughts.

**Educational Technology Services
Student Satisfaction Survey**

We wish you success in the upcoming semester!

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

Top

Featured Online Student

The eLearning Team invites you to meet our students by viewing different student profiles in each newsletter. This semester's featured student is Yuren "Evan" Zhang.

Yuren "Evan" Zhang

Where do you work?

The UTD eLearning Department as a Teaching Assistant.

What do you want to do after you finish your degree?

I want to work for an accounting firm and start my career in corporate taxation.

How many online courses have you taken?

I have taken one online course so far and I am going to take another one in the coming semester.

Why did you decide to take online courses?

The flexibility of the course structure is what motivated me.

How is the online experience different from the traditional classroom?

For traditional classroom, you need to be punctual and attend every class every week; but in an online course, you can progress through the course at your own pace.

What makes an online course effective?

Every class had video lectures, which means you can play the video and review the material as many times as you want. Also, the discussion board serves as a communication channel between students and professors. All students are free to participate in group discussions or assignments.

Who was your favorite professor and why?

My favorite online instructor was Professor William Cready. Through videos, he showed us how fixed costs and variable costs come into the product and the steps to calculate them. He gave us a group assignment which involved baking cookies and calculating the cost, which was very interesting and fascinating.

Is there any advice you can give to other online students?

The only advice I can give is to manage deadlines carefully. Although you may enjoy the flexibility, the constrain is that assignments are timed. So keep deadlines in mind and plan ahead.

If you would like to be featured in the eLearning Newsletter, email us!

Top

Jindal School of Management

Academic Advising

When a course reaches its enrollment capacity, we are unable to register additional students in the closed section. However, you can add your name to the JSOM Course Waitlist in case a space becomes available. If the waitlist is active, the course will show a yellow triangle as its status. (Green circle indicates Open; the Blue square indicates the course is completely closed/full.) To add your name to a waitlist, you must complete the registration request and click the "Wait list if class is full" checkbox. Please remember that adding your name to the waitlist does not guarantee registration. The complete waitlist guidelines are available through the registration page - http://www.utdallas.edu/registrar/registration/.

Corina Cantua, Director | JSOM Academic Advising | corina.cantua@utdallas.edu *| 972-883-5963*

Want to see an Advisor? Join the line from anywhere! Text JSOM to 626-414-3210 or Call: 855-883-5766

Top

School of Interdisciplinary Studies

Chess I and Chess II course expansions

In the fall of 2001, the Chess Online courses began with three-credit undergraduate and graduate courses offered. Dr. Tim Redman was the principal investigator and Dr. Alexey Root was the co-principal investigator on a $50,000 grant to offer education classes about chess via the UT TeleCampus. After UT TeleCampus disbanded, the courses have been offered via UT Dallas eLearning.

The graduate courses were discontinued in the spring of 2015, but the undergraduate courses (ED 4358 and ED 4359) have grown increasingly popular. Up through the spring of 2017, one section of ED 4358 and one section of ED 4359 had been offered. Starting in the fall of 2017, two sections of ED 4358 and one section of ED 4359 will be offered every fall and spring semester. The courses are not offered in the summer. Each ED 4358 and ED 4359 section has a capacity of 24 students. Here are the descriptions of Chess I (ED 4358) and Chess II (ED 4359):

ED 4358 Chess I: Using Chess in Schools (3 semester credit hours) Using chess to teach critical thinking, math, and reading skills in the elementary and secondary classrooms. This course is also appropriate for chess instructors who wish to incorporate additional academic and humanistic goals into their programs. No previous knowledge of chess is required.

ED 4359 Chess II: Institutional and Cultural Contexts of Chess (3 semester credit hours) Examination of the role of chess in history and in contemporary culture and analysis of chess in education. Each student's culminating paper proposes improving an existing chess program or developing a new chess program. No prior knowledge of chess is required.

For Fall 2017, the course numbers are **ED 4358 0W1 83856** (second 8-week section of Chess I); **ED 4358 0W2 87374** (full-term session of Chess I); **ED 4359 0W1 83881** (second 8-week section of Chess II). For the second 8-week courses, instructor permission must be obtained by the Friday before the second 8-week session begins. Chess I and Chess II may be taken in either order and both courses may be taken in the same semester.

Students should contact Dr. Alexey Root aroot@utdallas.edu for permission to enroll in any of these sections.

Alexey Root, Senior Lecturer| School of Interdiscoplinary Studies | aroot@utdallas.edu *| 972-883-2323*

Top

Educational Technology ED4372
(Offered in Fall and Spring)

Designed and delivered by UTD alumna Dr Rebekah K Nix, ED4372 Educational Technology is an eLearning course suitable for anyone interested in learning how to use technology to enhance the understanding of any subject.

- It's online... *done entirely over the Internet!*
- It's practical... *relating to what is real, suited for actual use!*
- It's asynchronous... *at your own pace within a schedule!*

Having earned her doctorate via distance, Nix is particularly sensitive to accessible design and time allocation in online courses. She actually worked through each of the ED4372 lessons to ensure a reasonable load from the standpoint of student, instructor,

and administrator. Students should budget at least 3 hours per week for this study – 2 for reviewing the lessons and assignments, like reading articles and the discussion board notes, plus 1 or more each week to work on the course assignments and projects. As noted in the course Syllabus, the learning outcomes for ED 4372 are aligned to SACS (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools) standards and the mission of UT-Dallas' Teacher Development Center:

1. The student will be able to execute the educational technologies utilized in an asynchronous, online course.
2. The student will be able to choose tools and resources to improve educational practice within their field.
3. The student will be able to construct electronic media to support their ideas for enhancing teaching and learning with educational technologies.

Part of Nix's goal is to help you learn how to 'speak the language of Ed Tech' so that you can work effectively and efficiently with the variety of tools and resources, especially people, that are and will be available to you. Given the current trend toward open source items and abundance of reputable shareware, you are not required to purchase or use a certain version of any software or a specific type of hardware. The required textbook provides a solid background on the latest and greatest examples. Find out more at http://www.utd.edu/~rnix.

"Teaching is not a science; it is an art. If teaching were a science there would be a best way of teaching and everyone would have to teach like that. Since teaching is not a science, there is great latitude and much possibility for personal differences." (George Polya, cited in O'Conner & Robertson, 2002, from Egbert, 2009, p.4) In order to survive professionally these days you need to know how to leverage whatever is available to you in the present moment and/or be able to figure out what you need to get to make the right things happen! A lot of that has to do with simply asking the right questions. That's what we practice together in ED4372. Three related Projects serve as the main focus of the course. The activities and notes provided in the Lessons help you develop your ideas and design your plan. Detailed in the syllabus, final grades are based on:

10%   submission of the **class Surveys** (complete or incomplete scores),
20%   participation in the **Group discussions** (that develop your Project overall),
30%   achievement on the **weekly Quizzes** (which cover the textbook readings), and
30%   performance on the **Project tasks** (including a peer review cycle) and
10%   **Final Exam** results.

Rebekah K. Nix, Senior Lecturer| School of Interdisciplinary Studies | rnix@utdallas.edu | 972-883-2730

Top

School of Arts and Humanities

Patsy Totusek , PhD   Karen Baynham
Senior Lecturer   Senior Lecturer & Basic Course Director, COMM1311

Survey of Oral and technology-based Communication COMM 1311

COMM1311 is not your typical core-required course. With 44 sections offered for the 2017 Fall Semester, you can select from three different instructional formats. Six of the sections are a traditional face-to-face format, 25 are a hybrid format, and 13 are an online format. The assignments are designed to meet the course objectives are fundamentally the same for all the sections, but the method of delivery varies. Which is the right format for you? To answer that question, we consulted some students currently enrolled in face-to-face, hybrid, and online COMM1311 sections.

Face-to-Face Format (Meets twice weekly)

Jawaher Azam, Junior Biology major comments: *I've personally enjoyed and greatly benefited from taking COMM1311 in this format. An obvious upside is the ability to practice speaking multiple times in ungraded class exercises where a discussion on strengths and weaknesses can take place. Getting immediate comments from the instructor is helpful, and presenting in front of classmates who provide feedback helps you know where you need to focus. Lastly, the opportunity to create long-lasting friendships with classmates that you see regularly helps create a comfortable learning environment and also allows networking.*

Hybrid Format (Meets once weekly)

The hybrid sections meet in class only once a week and the rest of the teaching and learning is facilitated online (50% in class, 50% online) via eLearning. In this model, we create two communities for the students – the in-class community and the online community and we engage in both "spaces" throughout the semester using rich media and a variety of communication methods weekly. The major speeches are performed live before classmates. Minor speeches are virtual, videoed in a setting of the students' choice. There are weekly deadlines, digital Discussions, peer reviews and peer responses, online quizzes and assignments, as well as a team project.

Mira Ibrahim, Sophomore Biology & Pre-med major comments:
The hybrid version of COMM 1311 is a great way to complete this type of course, as the advantages it offers are endless. This "hybrid" of the class allows for effective time management for most students, such as myself. In class, my peers and I would complete the required oral reports and team projects and presentations, but we would also have the chance to meet with the professor and have face-to-face contact with him/her so that we could easily ask any questions we had in regards to the class. The fact that our weekly quizzes, among other assignments such as discussion posts, were due online was a very good and productive method of progressing through this course. This not only allowed us students to remain engaged and in contact with one another online while outside of class, but it also catered to each person's schedule. Most importantly, the online work we had to complete complimented the ideas and topics we covered in class that same week.

Online Format (No class meetings)

Patrick Doyle, Freshman Finance & Economics major comments: *I needed a class that I could complete any time of the day so that I could intern during the week and have my classes more concentrated. The online format is incredibly convenient for a busy schedule. The ability to record a speech multiple times presents multiple advantages and benefits for growth to the student. The student can address mistakes and is able to make a more perfect speech. Students can feel more confident in the result compared to a speech given one time in a face-to-face section. In my opinion, this is the most important factor when choosing this class as it has allowed me to find and eliminate filler words in my speeches. If you are considering taking this class online, I recommend that you do your assignments on time and don't ever hesitate to ask the professor questions!*

Top

Meet Our Faculty

Patsy Totusek, PhD

Dr. Totusek teaches COMM1311. This class covers three essential survival tools: public speaking, interpersonal communication, and team methods. Her research interest is the art of scholarly teaching. She uses research results, the best practices of others, and student feedback to make her instruction more relevant, challenging, and fun! The syllabus is constantly changing as she learns, edits and creates.

Dr. Totusek likes to give students every opportunity to do their best. If students are willing to invest in the course, she is willing to invest in them. She gives extra credit to those who meet with her for individual consultations to review draft assignments. She likes knowing the career goals of her students so she can suggest specific UTD opportunities that might help them develop relevant skills.

In her words: My greatest satisfaction comes from seeing my students achieve. I remember Sheena, who initially could not say a word in front of the class, but with some extra tutoring finished the class with an A. I remember John, who had panic attacks at the thought of giving a speech, but with help from a UTD SOAR advisor and extra practice sessions exceeded the class requirements. And I remember Calvin, an ex-vet, single parent, full-time employee, who won a speaking contest by sheer grit, determination, and long hours of practice. Calvin was the first in his family to ever win a competition. As they say in the commercials, "Priceless."

After working her way through grad school as a teaching assistant, she held an administrative position for the Austin Independent School District. She followed this with a long stint as a homeschool mom for her three sons. After that, she taught locally at Brookhaven College and Richland College before coming to UTD in 2014.

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Top

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