



Time Saving Hints for the E-Learning Environment

True to rumor, building a quality online course is a labor intensive process. But, with the labor distributed over a broader period of time, you can make the process less painful. There are many other things you can do to lessen the load, both real time and later down the road.

- Take time to build your course. The first semester should consist of the bare essentials required by your institution. Next, develop a flexible, evolutionary plan for the on-going development of your course and discuss it with your instructional designers.
- Do student surveys focusing on your efforts every semester. Review the feedback with an open mind and carefully consider student recommendations.
- Carefully watch and listen to what your peers in the online environment are doing. On occasion, you may find a rare gem.
- Develop solid friendships with your campus technology providers and instructional designers. You should not be a stranger.
- Know your learning management system (LMS). Never pass up any LMS or related training offered by your campus. If you can't attend see if the session can be recorded or if you can schedule a makeup session.
- Use the LMS tools properly (Assignments in Assessments Huh?).
- Use the grade book properly and release grades to your students.
- When feasible, use examples and learning objects that have already been developed.
- When feasible, use the same examples and learning objects across your courses (Meet the Instructor, APA/MLA Format, Resources, etc.).
- Build detailed instructions, rubrics, and examples for your students. If you arm them with the appropriate information, they won't bother you later.
- Read all of your course mail; reply only once (when appropriate) addressing all issues.
- Show your presence in discussion and other interactive projects, but be patient and give students an opportunity to succeed.
- Use your course calendar or an html equivalent. Questions about deadlines eat up time.
- Establish due dates for assignments and assessments, but consider opening them for the duration of the course. Extending dates can be very time consuming.
- Once due dates pass, consider using the email alert feature so you know when late submissions have been handed in. Looking back at past assignments/assessments is time consuming.
- Back up your course on a regular basis, rebuilding a course is a devastating process.
- Periodically during the term, download grades using a spreadsheet tool.