# CONVERTING A REGULAR LEARNING COURSE INTO DISTANCE COURSE

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A methodology for converting a regular course into distance course is presented. The structure, design issues and examples from the distance education course "Web technology" are discussed.

Keywords: distance education

## 1. Distance courses cultural consideration

- Frederic Turner, 1800, University of Wisconsin
- University of Phoenix, Columbia University
- Immediate Feedback
- Intellectual property
- Faculty workload / faculty development
- Motivation
- Reward

## 2. Distance education theories

- *Theories of independence and autonomy*. According to these, the essence of distance education is the independence of the student. It takes in consideration the amount of learner autonomy and the distance between teacher and learner
- *Theories of industrialization of teaching.* They share a view of the distance education as an industrialized form of teaching and learning. Mechanization, assembly line, mass production, and standardization are some of the characteristics it possesses

- *Theories of interaction and communication.* Holmberg (1985) states, "Distance teaching will support student motivation, promote learning pleasure and make the study relevant to the individual learner."

## 3. Distance courses definitions

- Separation of learner and teacher geographically and in time
- Technical media joins learner, teacher, and content
- Two-way communications so learner may engage in dialogue with the teacher and/or other learners
- Learners taught as individuals due to an absence of a learning
- Group with occasional face to face meetings

## 4. Distance learning technologies

- *Correspondence study* refers to distance education based through the postal service and printed material
- *Prerecorded media* is instructional technology based on electronic reproduction of audio and video recordings
- *Two-way audio technologies* refer to audio communication from teacher to audience, and vice versa.
- *Two-ways audio with graphics* is the same as above with the addition of electronic displays that synchronously transmit the information stated on a display board
- *One-way live video* refers to communication from teacher to students through the use of video transmission systems similar to instructional television fixed services
- *Two-ways audio*, one way video can be understood as for in which some T.V. shows interact with the audience
- *Two-way audio/video* refers to complete interaction utilizing videoconference professional systems

- *Desktop two-way audio/video* are the systems based on regular microphones and cameras connected to desktop computers that utilized high-speed network connections

## 5. The conversion process

- Instructional System Design ADDIE Model (Assess, Design, Deliver, Implement, Evaluate)
- Develop instructional strategy
- Develop and select instructional materials
- Design and conduct formative evaluation
- Revise instruction
- Design and conduct summative evaluations

## 6. Distance course contents

- Course information
- Staff information
- Streaming video sessions
- Course documents
- Additional course documents
- Assignments
- Communications Tools

## 7. Distance course technical issues

- Proper choice of the background color and the lettering color
- Proper choice of letter type
- Organizing the text content related to the use of hyperlinks
- Proper choice of visuals, which to be included in the text
- Use of graphs and charts in the texts to visualize the content
- Observing uniform design in the making of each session
- Consistency in the content structure

- Links to other WWW sites related to the learning material
- Students evaluate all developed courses materials

## 8. Distance course requirements

- Clearly supportive to the learning objectives
- One that learners find attractive to learn
- Available to the learners – where and when they need it
- Convenient for the learners to use and to control the timing and their own place of learning
- One for which the learners can quickly acquire the skills to use effectively
- One that the instructor have the skills and know how to use effectively
- One that relates clearly to other media
- One that both instructors and learners can afford to use

## 9. Distance courses tools providers

- WebCT
- Blackboard
- TopClass and WBT in training market
- Question Mark (computerized assessment)

## 10. Conversion steps

- Assess needs to identify goals
- Analyze learners and contexts (student-teacher, student-content, and student-student), use different learning stiles (http://www.thomasarmstrong.com/multiple_intelligences.htm)
- Conduct instructional analysis
- Write performance objectives
- Develop assessment instruments
- Develop instructional strategy
- Develop and select instructional materials
- Design and conduct formative evaluation
- Revise instruction

- Design and conduct summative evaluation

## 11. The distance course "Web Technology"

- Course information
  - Course objectives
  - Course topics
  - Course grading
  - Course policies
- Staff information
- Streaming video sessions
- Course documents
  - Program examples in HTML, JavaScript, Perl, PHP, MySQL, Java applets
  - Video tutorials for Adobe Acrobat, JavaScript, Internet, HTML, Web Applications Designing, Web Pages Discover, FrontPage, Internet Graphics, Illustrator, Photoshop, Web Graphics Programming
  - Link to a list with connections to Web sites with related to the session information
  - Session quiz
  - Wrap-up part
- Assignments
  - Every week quiz, taken automatically
  - Program assignments
  - Midterm exams, containing multiple-choice questions and programming assignments
  - Final exam, contains project programming assignment and multiple choice questions
  - Self-test questions and answers to self-test questions.
- Communications
- Design issues
- Technical issues

## 12. Conclusions

- Long-term process of trials and errors
- The quality of the distance education

- Distance education is an other type of education
- Changes in culture, relationships and technology

**Relevant bibliographic citation on the topic**

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