

ONLINE FACULTY RESOURCE WEB SITE

**Seton Hall University
Teaching, Learning and Technology Center
South Orange, New Jersey**

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November 6, 2002

Instructional Design of Educational Technology

Columbia University

PROJECT: ONLINE FACULTY RESOURCE WEB SITE

Client: Seton Hall University

Background Information on Seton Hall and Project

Seton Hall University is the largest and oldest diocesan university in the United States. It is located in the village of South Orange, 14 miles southwest of New York City. The mission of the university is to educate global leaders in a technologically advanced setting with a values-centered curriculum. They have a student body of more than 10,000 students divided among 45 undergraduate majors, 40 certificate and 90 graduate programs. The university is recognized for its online degree programs and technology-enhanced teaching and learning center.

Seton Hall sees information technology as a means for achieving its mission. In 1999 they were awarded the EDUCAUSE award for Excellence in Campus Networking. Fifteen million dollars has been spent on new network infrastructures and services to improve teaching, learning and administration. All residence halls provide data connections. One-third of the classrooms have data and power connections to each seat and built-in computer projection equipment. Included in this initiative is the Mobile Computing Program. Each freshman is issued a laptop computer to be refreshed every two years. Faculty are encouraged to integrate technology within all courses. The underlying approach is to adopt a common interface to online course material, simplifying student navigation of the campus curriculum. To standardize, a Blackboard shell is made for each traditional class. Students and faculty are strongly encouraged to use the basic elements of Blackboard, which include posting announcements, assignments, syllabus, e-mail and external linking.

The *Teaching, Learning and Technology Center* supports and guides the integration of information and instructional technology into educational programs to promote unique, challenging and interesting materials to students. Numerous IT continuing education classes are given for the faculty by the five instructional designers on staff who act as liaisons. These include monthly Blackboard and web development classes.

Seton WorldWide is the online branch of Seton Hall. This division of Academic Affairs functions independently, supporting itself financially through student tuition. Its structure is similar to an Internet start-up company. Seton WorldWide markets its programs as upscale professional career enhancement and customized corporate learning. Seton WorldWide offers six Master's Degree programs, one Bachelor's of Science in Nursing and one certificate program in Education Leadership, Management and Policy. Their online program is based on a learning team approach. All programs involve weekend visits to campus for program residencies. Seton Hall faculty, along with other experts in the field, teach courses consisting of online lecture presentations, teamwork and project assignments.

The focus of this project is the design of professional development materials for the online faculty at Seton WorldWide and the faculty teaching face-to-face courses. These materials will be available as a link from the Seton Hall *Teaching, Learning and Technology* web site and also provided on a CD ROM for Blackboard participants to take home after the completion of the workshops. The Online Faculty Resource web site will sit within the frame on the existing site and visually coordinate. Along with the CD ROM, printed material will be available to complement the Blackboard tutorials with a .pdf version available on the site.

As appropriate, applicable sections will be incorporated into the Blackboard faculty workshops. It is our hope that this project will enhance the faculty's online teaching strategies and skills along with improving their proficiency in the use of Blackboard.

Statement of Need

Using Jerold Kemp's six types of needs (1994), the Online Faculty Resource web site falls into the category of a "felt" need by the Instructional designers in the *Teaching, Learning and Technology Center*, along with management and faculty at Seton WorldWide. While Blackboard classes are continually held, the faculty can return to their offices or homes and have difficulty getting started. Often, time has passed between the Blackboard workshops attended and when the faculty member works on their course. It can be late at night or on a weekend when an Instructional Designer is not available for help. Faculty have problems remembering where to find features so they cannot apply the material presented to their own courses.

It is felt that customized, current tutorials are needed to match and reinforce material presented in the workshops. A "Help" feature on the Blackboard Interface exists and a few Flash tutorials on Blackboard were created in the past. These resources have not provided enough support.

One of the goals of the university is to promote best practices among its faculty. One central place where faculty can get information on pedagogy as it pertains to online education is needed. It is hoped that a review of the distance learning literature as it pertains to distance learning will help faculty create exciting learning environments for their students. To promote a sharing and exchange of ideas, a community section is to be included.

The Online Faculty Resource web site will address:

- Basic skills for Blackboard via camtasia movies, text framework and printed materials
- Course design within Blackboard
- Content of an online syllabus
- Placement of course documents
- Organization of information using folders
- Management of student communication
- Critical examination of the use of the virtual classroom and discussion board
- Best practices of online teaching
- Meaningful assignments for students, reference to Gilly Salmon's E-tivities
- Importance of feedback and assessment
- Discussion of online vs. face-to-face
- Development of a community for online faculty to share ideas, problems, suggestions, comments
- Incorporation of adult learning theory as it relates to online education
- Pedagogy resources on online education, i.e. electronic journal, featured resource pages

A more visual representation of these sections can be seen in the flow chart that follows.

Target Learner

The target audiences for this project are online educators from Seton WorldWide and traditional face-to-face faculty incorporating features of Blackboard into their courses. These are well-educated adult learners, most with advanced degrees in the area of their expertise. They are composed of a wide range of ages and technical

experience, with differing amounts of knowledge of pedagogy theories especially in the areas of online and distance education.

It is assumed that the learners are familiar with the Blackboard interface and are comfortable using an Internet Browser. It is preferred that they have attended the structured face-to-face Blackboard training sessions held on a continuing basis by the *Teaching, Learning and Technology Center*. It is not assumed that material has been retained from past experience or training.

Since this project is multimedia based, it appeals to a variety of learning styles present in the target group for this project. Following Howard Gardner's seven distinct learning intelligences (1985), learner preferences accommodated include:

- **Visual** - by the use of camtasia movies, screen shots and pictures throughout the tutorials, web site and printed materials
- **Interpersonal** - through the community section
- **Intrapersonal** - through the self-paced tutorials, resource links and written guides
- **Linguistic** - through the written material both hardcopy and web
- **Logical** - through the sequencing of information, distance learning tips and, case studies

Types of Learning Outcomes Expected

Robert Gagne (1985) identified five major categories that learning outcomes could be assigned to. Noted here are the categories of outcomes that apply for this project along with examples of learning outcomes.

Intellectual Skills:

Learning an intellectual skill involves learning how to do something. Generally it is procedural knowledge. The tutorials in this project involve many intellectual skills as an outcomes, i.e. the faculty remembering what parts of the Blackboard interface are used to do certain things such as adding an announcement, sending e-mail or posting discussion threads.

Cognitive Strategies:

Cognitive strategies develop over time and help the student retain information or solve a new problem. The learner selects this mode when an applicable learning situation arises. In this project cognitive strategies to be developed include adopting procedures to incorporate the Blackboard interface into a traditional classroom setting, converting traditional material to online, updating existing online content, developing file folder strategies for organization of information and procedures to manage student communication effectively. Another cognitive strategy is to use the web as a resource for obtaining information for online course development and information sharing.

Attitudes:

Everyone possesses attitudes towards situations, people and objects. These attitudes can have a positive or negative effect and influence the learner's choice of action. It is hoped that by providing the online faculty with resources for support and online theory, the attitude of the faculty will be positive toward incorporating the Blackboard interface and technology into their classes.

General Objectives

The objectives below describe desired outcomes from the use of the materials contained in the Online Faculty Resource web site. It is realized that it will be difficult for the designers of this project to directly observe if a faculty member has acquired these capabilities. The success of the project is to be determined through observation, surveys, interviews, the quality of online materials posted and feedback.

Given a course curriculum of their choice, the faculty member will be able to:

1. Identify the feature in Blackboard associated with a particular task by choosing the menu selection and item in the Blackboard interface for the purpose intended.
2. Develop an online course by placing the appropriate course component in the correct physical areas of the Blackboard shell.
3. Identify uses of the Control Panel in course administration by selecting the correct option for the function desired.
4. Adopt a strategy for using folder management by organizing files appropriately.
5. Determine the appearance and structure of a course by using the course options, customizing the navigational buttons that correspond to each area, designating the subject headers from a menu of options and determining whether the feature is to be enabled or disabled.
6. Create an Assessment test by using existing questions from a pool or composing new items.
7. Import existing images or PowerPoint presentations by following instructions provided.

8. Identify meaningful assignments for online students to develop critical thinking by creating appropriate activities and projects in their courses.
9. Create opportunities for reflective thought by use of the discussion board, projects, readings and assignments.
10. Identify successful online student learning styles by providing appropriate components into the course curriculum.
11. Adopt a strategy for providing constructivist environments by creating meaningful learning opportunities.
12. Identify and adopt best practices for online teaching by incorporating appropriate recommendations.
13. Choose to reexamine their current methods of instruction in relation to other educational theories to provide effective learning environments.
14. Choose to incorporate technology into their traditional and online courses by using the Blackboard interface and working with the Instructional Design team to develop interactive games, web quests, internet searches and post PowerPoint, presentations, etc.
15. Adopt a strategy for managing effective student-student communication and student-faculty communication by identifying potential problems and effective uses of e-mail, discussion threads and the virtual classroom.
16. Develop a sense of community for:
 - a. Other online faculty members by using and contributing their expertise, ideas and suggestions to the community section of the web site.
 - b. Students in their online environment by use of personal web pages, chats, joint projects, discussion threads, etc.
17. Adopt a strategy for:
 - a. Converting a traditional face-to-face curriculum to online.

- b. Updating existing online curriculum using the internet to investigate resources on pedagogy as it relates to online/distance education and course creation by using the electronic journal, resource pages provided and independent searches.

Methodological Approach

The Online Faculty Resource web site uses a hybrid instructional design approach. The Blackboard tutorials, more traditional by nature, sit within a constructivist setting. We have provided numerous ways for the faculty to learn how to use Blackboard effectively and incorporate different pedagogical approaches and theories into their online classes. Other exploratory activities, online discussions, and tips contribute to the constructivist framework.

The section of Blackboard tutorials with the online and printed text uses an objectivist approach. Each step has been simplified and placed into a linear, logical sequence based on the nature of the content and the goals of the faculty member (i.e. sending e-mail to students, posting announcements and assignments). We have determined the logical dependencies between the different Blackboard components. The topics have been divided into small learning chunks following the organization of the Blackboard workshops given by the *Teaching, Learning, and Technology* staff. Reinforcement is given through the tutorials, information on the Blackboard web pages and printed manual, making this section of the site very "content" centered.

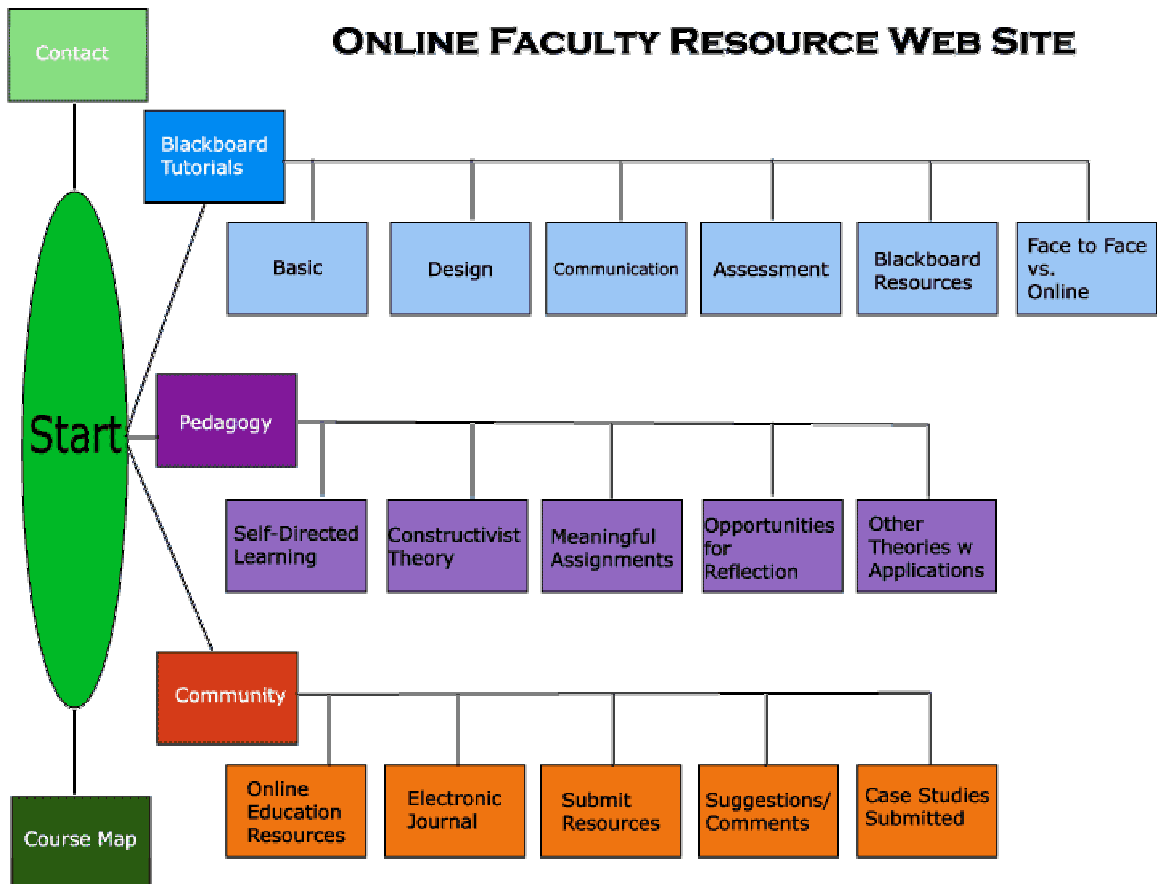
The rest of the site uses the constructivist approach. The faculty member can control the time, location, content and pace of the instruction. They can take the tutorial modules out of sequence if desired and can repeat sections for enhanced learning. To promote a social environment, we are creating a collaborative learning

environment through our community section that includes discussions on online vs. face-to-face traditional learning, eliciting feedback from faculty in the form of suggestions and ideas, and case studies of approaches they have taken. We have encouraged discovery learning through electronic journal hyperlinks and featured resource pages both on Blackboard and Online/Distance learning. This allows the faculty to explore materials and construct their own knowledge based on a practical application. To promote critical thinking we are presenting multiple perspectives in our Pedagogy section by applying alternative views of how these different concepts and theories can be applied to online instruction with actual examples.

We feel that we have also presented, via the nature of the site itself, how traditional content can marry with constructivism. Our site is rich in providing the faculty many resources designed to meet their needs. This provides yet another example to faculty of the exciting possibilities open to the educational community to facilitate learning using technology.

Conclusions

This project is being developed with Danielle Salomon, and Instructional Designer at Seton Hall who is an Ed.M. student at Columbia University. It has grown dramatically in scope from the initial plans proposed in September of 2002. For the purpose of the project due date, only a prototype will be developed along with the skeleton framework with the hopes that other designers will continue to develop the site. This site is scheduled to be presented to the Seton Hall faculty in January of 2003 for feedback and evaluation.



BLACKBOARD SUBSECTIONS

Basics

Adding an announcement
 Assignments
 Syllabus
 E-mail
 Grouping Users
 Links – Seton Hall Library and External

Design

Instructor Control Panel
 Course Settings
 Course Images
 Course Utilities
 Faculty Information
 Student Web Pages

Course Calendar

Communication

Discussion Board
Virtual Chat
Digital Drop Box

Assessments

Types of Questions
Question Pool
Grade Book

Resources - Blackboard

Online
Manual
Reference Links

Face to Face vs. Online

Discussion
Tour through Online Classroom

** All sections will have distance learning and course design tips.