

## 10 Things You Should Know About Teaching Online

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### *Key words:*

Teaching online, software, motivating students, evaluation

### *Target Audience:*

Anyone who is contemplating teaching online or has taught online would be interested.

### *Objectives/Purpose:*

To share the experiences of three professors who have taught either graduate or undergraduate courses online.

### *Content/Description:*

Each panelist will provide a brief summary of their experience in online course development and instruction.

- One panelist adapted an introductory course on Personal Finance to teach the same course online.
- Another panelist will discuss teaching a graduate course in Consumer Behavior and the inclusion of research assignments.
- A third panelist will give suggestions for converting a writing intensive classroom course in Resource Management to an online course offering.

The “10 Things You Should Know about Teaching Online” are practical advice about the following items:

- (1) Syllabi (lesson plans or modules). The syllabus should clearly state all information about the course and the requirements for assignments, evaluation, and academic integrity.
- (2) Course content and materials. If students are required to purchase a textbook, this information should be available prior to the beginning of the course. If the course is based on readings, access to the readings should be clearly explained and organized in advance with the university.
- (3) The first assignment (how to get started). This could be a one-page letter of introduction or a one-page resume. The purpose is to have the student feel welcome and to be able to access the software prior to posting the first assignment.
- (4) Motivation (engagement). Assignments should be interesting and motivate the student to participate fully. If students are required to post to a discussion board, the instructor needs to develop assignments (e.g. questions) that are based on real life experiences and show insight on the student’s part.
- (5) Software and support. The instructor needs to learn the software in advance of teaching and/or have a contact person at the university who will respond quickly to questions.
- (6) Evaluation. The instructor needs to consider the method of evaluation carefully. Are students in the same time zone? What is the most feasible method for administering timed quizzes or exams?
- (7) Marketing and accessibility. Is the instructor responsible for marketing?
- (8) Similarities to classroom teaching. The instructor needs to think of each student as a person (not a number).
- (9) Differences from classroom teaching. If a discussion board is used and all students are required to participate, both students and instructor will have the benefit of hearing from everyone in the course. Will the instructor be able to provide feedback to each student using the software?
- (10) How to teach research at the graduate level. The first assignment could be to state a research question to solve a practical problem. The second assignment could be about the method used to answer the research question. The third assignment could be the explanation of a theory and the application of the theory to a research question.

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