Faculty Perspective: DL Best Practices

Online Learning – Faculty Perspective

VCCS New Horizons Conference – April 2005

Faculty discussed several issues and suggested best practices to help students succeed in online classes. Faculty used a variety of techniques to conduct online classes and to support student success.

Here’s what they said:

- Provide specific deadlines, due dates
- Provide clear, complete information/instructions
- Provide incentive to keep students on time – extra points for taking tests before deadline
- Provide follow-up – On Monday, remind students what is coming due
- Provide a calendar with key dates, deadlines, assignments
- Provide f2f orientation and walk students through critical elements – BB accounts, email, course navigation
- Use interventions – email is excellent for this
- First assignment – email it back with a checklist
- Emphasize time management
- Use discussion forum for student issues – build FAQ’s
- Provide a student center – student to student communication/discussion/help
- Give points for discussions to encourage participation
- Grade group activities; have students grade each other

Online classes and workload – managing the online class

- online classes take more time
- # of students in class – what is optimum; what is manageable; (many different approaches)
- discussions demand great deal of time
- don’t grade every assignment
- writing courses are intense, demanding
- emphasis is on the learner

Make-ups

- No make-ups!
- No make-ups but ..... have student do double assignment on next activity
- Give 4 tests – count 3 highest grades
- Make all tests available – let student decide when he takes them
- Require a portfolio – all work must be there