



Quality Distance Education: Class Activities

Students rely on class activities to learn course content, understand new information, and develop skills. In a distance education setting it is important to provide students with activities that connect them to the content, the instructor, and their peers. Not only can you adapt your traditional classroom activities for your DE course, you can also create new activities specifically for the online environment, many of which can be self-regulating or automated. Here are some ideas:

- ✓ **Drill and practice** (WebCT Quiz/Self-Test)
- ✓ **Games and interactions** (DE Development)
- ✓ **Flash cards** (DE Development)
- ✓ **Group research projects** (WebCT Presentations)
- ✓ **Research activities** (WebCT Assignments, research web sites)
- ✓ **Online discussions** (WebCT Discussions, Chat)
- ✓ **Peer evaluation** (WebCT Discussions, Mail, Presentations)
- ✓ **Labs** (DE Development, WebCT Assignments)

The key to success with any activity is **relevance** and **regularity**, that is, make activities clearly relevant to course goals and objectives, and require students to engage in activities regularly, e.g. on a weekly basis.

If you're interested in having DE help you **create effective learning activities**, talk to your DE Instructional Designer, or call Janel at x8990.

WebCT Tip of the Day: Discussion Topics

The WebCT Discussions tool allows you to manage different topics or forums where students can publicly post and reply to messages. Try using an icebreaker topic, like Class Introductions, to get students talking. Make another to deal with Frequently Asked Questions. A great way to get students thinking, talking, and learning is to write a question for each lesson, and post that question in its own topic corresponding to each lesson.

To encourage activity in the discussion topics, require students to make regular postings to each topic as part of their grade.

1. If the Discussions tool is not yet set up in your course, you can add it through the **Control Panel > Add Page or Tool > Discussions**.
2. **Enter the Discussions** tool via the Course Menu. You will see a list of available topics.
3. From the **Actions** menu on the right-hand side of the screen click **Create Topic**.
4. Type in a **topic name**.
5. Click **Create** (**Figure 1**).

Figure 1 Enter a topic name and click Create.

For more info on this aspect of WebCT, call the TETC at 863 6127.



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This Month's Workshops and Trainings

Title	Date	Time	Place
Digital Images: Scanning	7/6	3-4pm	LC227
Digital Images: Photoshop 1	7/6	4-5pm	LC227
WebCT Quizzes	7/11	3-4pm	LC227
Presentations w/ PowerPoint	7/13	3-4pm	LC227
Design Basics for PowerPoint	7/13	4-5pm	LC227
Excel in a Nutshell I&II	7/27	3-5pm	LC227

To sign up for these workshops and more, visit our website:
www.uvsc.edu/disted/tetc/workshops

Drop By the TETC in LC227

We offer an open-access curriculum development technology lab for all UVSC faculty. Our normal hours are 10am-4pm, M-F. You can drop in and use the equipment, or **make an appointment to receive some one-on-one training and help**. We've got slide, print, and document scanners, audio/video equipment, a DVD←→VHS converter, and more!

Did You Know?

DE Development's job is to design and create media-rich components for your DE courses. You provide the content and we'll take care of the technology!

On Topic...

Lawless, Clive and John Richardson. (2002). Approaches to studying and perceptions of academic quality in distance education. *Higher Education*, 44: 257-82.

Leeder, Dawn. (2000). From Linear Lecture To Interactive Multimedia Module: A Developer's Perspective. *EMI*, 37:4 –Euro Education.

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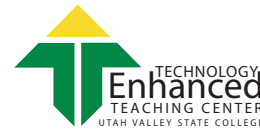
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This newsletter was published for Distance Education by the Technology Enhanced Teaching Center at Utah Valley State College.

For more information on this newsletter or how you can contribute:

Technology Enhanced Teaching Center, c/o Jared Stein,
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Orem, Utah 84058-5999

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