

Build a Dynamic Syllabus

A Faculty Focus Session

<http://www.unm.edu/~tetrain/DynamicSyllabus/>

Session Description

Do you currently have a syllabus posted online? This workshop is designed to expose you to the types of interactive and dynamic elements that can be added to your online syllabus to help turn it into a key player in communicating to and with your students.

Objectives

1. Explore elements of interactive, dynamic syllabi
2. To compare different on-line syllabi, analyzing their strengths and weakness
3. To identify ways to incorporate dynamic elements into an online syllabus, including:
 - o Email and page links
 - o Graphics and video
 - o Communication tools such as threaded discussions, live chats, and email lists
 - o PDF files
 - o Documents that can be downloaded (ie. Word or PowerPoint documents.)
4. To discuss and design the elements to create a personal dynamic syllabus according to each instructor content area, teaching style and learning goals.

Before You Begin

Have a copy of your syllabus that is already posted online or that you are ready to put into an online format.

Vocabulary

Synchronous Describes online communication that provides real time interaction
Asynchronous..... Describes online communication that has some element of time lapse so that interaction is not immediate.
Discussion Forum An online area where individuals can go to read and respond to messages.
Threaded Discussion An online discussion where individuals have read and responded to messages that fall into a specific category or topic.
PDF File Abbreviation for Portable Document Format. Indicates a file that can be opened and read by any platform of machine as long as the PDF Viewer is installed on that machine.

Process

Step 1: Explore

Investigate (with a partner!) at least three of the following on-line syllabi. What dynamic elements do you see in these examples? Which are effective, which aren't and why? Go to the following web site and tell us what you found. <http://www.quicktopic.com/9/H/DU3XWCqrWrLjb> Make sure you include the URL in your statement so that we can review the site as well!

Integrating Technology into the Curriculum	http://www.lesley.edu/faculty/slcohen/spring99/ECOMP5106syllabus.html
ENGLISH 020 & 021	http://www.stlcc.cc.mo.us/fv/webcourses/eng020/testlocation/mensepage/020_syl_on.html
Jazz Improvisation	http://hum.lss.wisc.edu/jazz/index.html
Narrative matters	http://www.georgetown.edu/irvinemj/english016/016.html
Multicultural Pasts	http://warthog.cc.wm.edu/CAS/ASP/faculty/syllabi/661a.html
Cognitive Psychology	http://www.gse.buffalo.edu/fas/shuell/cep564/
More syllabus....	http://www.georgetown.edu/crossroads/webcourses.html
Instructional web pages	http://ublib.buffalo.edu/libraries/projects/tlr/pages.html
Discovering information	http://bu.eb.com/student1/osyllabus.htm

Step 2: Dynamic Elements

The difference between a flat online syllabus and a dynamic syllabus can be dramatic. A flat online syllabus (see a sample at <http://www.unm.edu/~tetrain/DynamicSyllabus/SampleSyllabus/flat.html>) is merely a paper version that has been put online. Although it provides your students with information about your course it doesn't provide any means for you to interact with your students or allow them to extend their learning beyond the walls of your classroom. A dynamic syllabus, however, should provide opportunities for both instructor and learner to interact with course material in an entirely new way.

Take a moment to visit a sample dynamic syllabus that we have put together. Please note, however, that in order to be successful you do not need to incorporate every element that you see into your syllabus. Pick and choose, making selections that are appropriate for you, your students, and your subject matter!

A Sample Dynamic Syllabus

<http://www.unm.edu/~tetrain/DynamicSyllabus/SampleSyllabus/dynamic.html>

Step 3: Make it your own

Choose one element of your online syllabus that you want to enhance with a dynamic element. Use the "How To" (<http://www.unm.edu/~tetrain/schedule.html>) list to help you learn how to incorporate that element into your syllabus.

Additional Resources & References

Technology and Learning. Dynamic syllabus

<http://www.georgetown.edu/crossroads/webcourses.html>

Crossroad Research Project: Portfolio of case studies.

<http://www.georgetown.edu/crossroads/conversations/cases/index.html>

Ideas for developing a web based syllabus

<http://www.udel.edu/present/presentations/itue-summer2001/syllabus-ideas.html>