

Ten Activities to Consider Before Developing Your First Online Course

Many educators have asked me what they can do to prepare before they formally begin to develop an online course. Becoming familiar with the online learning environment and knowing how to create web pages can give you a head start in developing your course. Here are 10 activities to consider:

1. Create a web site on your college's server (outside of the LMS)
2. Learn how to create web pages using an application such as Dreamweaver or Nvu
3. Learn how to crop and resize images and save them as a .gif or .jpeg
4. Read a book about teaching online
5. Take an online course on how to develop and teach online or a course in your discipline
6. Familiarize yourself with the LMS environment your college uses
7. Convert parts of your in-person course to using some technology components
8. Review online courses offered at your college
9. Locate online courses that have been taught in your field. If none have been offered at your college, ask your colleagues that teach at other colleges and/or research courses that have been taught online.

In California, we have a site that lists online courses: <http://www.cvc.edu/catalog>. Under the All Subjects drop down menu, locate your discipline and click "Go." A listing of courses will appear. Find appropriate course(s) and click on the name of the course. More information will follow on a new page including the instructor's contact information. You could send an email to the instructor and ask if s/he is willing to give you access to his/her course.

10. If possible, complete your college's Curriculum Committee paperwork the semester before you start development.

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