



Best Educational E-Practices (BEEP)

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New Year, New Ideas: A Sampler for E-Structors

“Teachers realize that computer-mediated education requires developing a new contemporary vision of learning.”

(Brent Muirhead, [Educational Technology & Society](#), January 2001)

With the start of a new academic year, there seems no better time to look at ideas and resources for instructors and others involved in the planning and delivery of e-learning.

E-Teaching Tools and Strategies

- ["Avoid PDF for On-Screen Reading"](#) Guidelines on the when and how of effectively using PDF files, as supplied by [Jakob Nielsen's](#) Alertbox, 6/10/01.
- [Developing and Teaching an Online Course: A Faculty Handbook, May 2000.](#) An eighty-page manual in PDF format that covers aspects of online course instruction like getting started, content, learning activities, evaluation, a student guide, and more. Created by Grant MacEwan College, Alberta, Canada.
- [Elements of Effective E-Teaching and E-Learning.](#) St. Petersburg College (FL). *Best Educational E-Practices*, Issue 4, January 2001. An issue devoted entirely to online sources that can help assure success for both instructors and students.
- [How People Learn: Brain, Mind, Experience, and School.](#) A free, 346-page, online book in HTML format by John D. Bransford, Ann L. Brown and Rodney R. Cocking. Originally published by the National Research Council in 1999, the authors examine their findings and the implications for what is taught, how it is taught and how results are assessed.
- [Ideas for Distance Learning.](#) Very extensive list of tips for e-structors by Robert Bramucci of California State University, Fullerton.
- ["Increasing Productivity in Course Delivery."](#) Article by Leonard Presby, William Paterson University (NJ) in *T.H.E. Journal* 28(7), February 2001. List of requirements for designing a successful online course that include flexibility, interaction within and between groups, and some actual hands-on training in person.
- ["Keeping Online Asynchronous Discussions on Topic."](#) Article by Bart P. Beaudin, Colorado State University, in *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks* 3(2), November 1999. Examination of various techniques used by online instructors for keep learners on topic, including carefully designed questions, guidelines to help learners prepare on-topic responses, rewording the original question when responses are going in the wrong direction, and providing discussion summary on a regular basis.
- ["Models for Student Web-based Research."](#) Article by Jeffrey Branzburg in *Technology & Learning* 22(1), August 2001. The most recent of the magazine's "In-Service" tips, an ongoing column designed specifically for the new-to-technology educator. This one deals with structuring students' Internet research experience at any educational level to maximize success.
- ["Practical Strategies for Teaching Computer-Mediated Classes."](#) Article in *Educational Technology & Society* 4(2), January 200, by Brian Muirhead, University of Phoenix Online. A brief overview of some strategies and principles for effecting e-teaching, including creating a syllabus, moderating online discussions, assessment, and cultivating critical thinking skills.
- ["The Reality of Designing and Implementing an Internet-based Course."](#) Article in *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration* 3(4), Winter 2000, by Kay M. Perrin, University of South Florida. One e-structor's experience, with points found important when designing, implementing and facilitating an Internet education course.
- ["Web Portal Adds Free Course-Management Tools to Its Offerings."](#) Article by Brock Read in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 8/10/01, that reviews the opening of the [Yahoo Education](#) Web site with its free course-management tools and reference materials for college and grade-school classes.
- [What Do You Want to Use Technology for?](#) A comprehensive collection of links to teaching/learning activities using technology created by the University of Maryland University College.

E-Structor Communities

- [Education with New Technologies: Networked Learning Community](#). A Harvard University (MA) Web site designed to help educators develop, enact, and assess effective ways of using new technologies.
- [Merlot](#). A continually growing collection of peer-reviewed online learning materials and support resources that help faculty enhance their instruction. The organization has recently added [The Community of Technology Staff \(CATS\)](#) for instructional technologists and [Teaching Well Online \(Merlot TWO\)](#), designed to help faculty enhance instruction by addressing issues like assessment, design, learner support, technology selection and teaching strategies.
- [Site Trainer](#). A series of Web-based forums for discussion among online instructors at all levels. Subject areas include online teaching tips, classroom management resources, and platform and product resources/reviews, as well as a mentoring center, book club, news, and links to outside resources.
- [The TLT Group](#). (The Teaching, Learning, and Technology affiliate of the American Association for Higher Education.) Offers a number of online opportunities for exchange, including an [AAHESGIT](#) listserv that highlights new ideas for improving teaching with technology.
- [Thriving in Academe](#). A joint project of the National Education Association and the Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education to promote more effective teaching and learning through dialogue among colleagues.
- [Web Warrior Curriculum Corner](#). An online opportunity to share curricula and view those of other Web educators. All documents are in PDF format.

Assessing E-Courses and Programs

- [Field-Tested Learning Assessment Guide](#). A University of Wisconsin-Madison effort, filled with proven, innovative assessment techniques specifically designed for courses in science, mathematics, engineering and technology (SMET).
- [“How Interactive Are YOUR Distance Courses? A Rubric for Assessing Interaction in Distance Learning.”](#) Article by M. D. Roblyer and Leticia Ekhaml, both of the State University of West Georgia in *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration* 3(2), Summer 2000, that examines the relationship between student interaction and achievement.
- [Institutional Readiness Inventory](#). A new [Educause](#)-produced tool that allows a free, customized assessment of an institution's readiness to provide e-learning.
- [Teaching Goals Inventory](#). A Web tool by the University of Iowa that allows instructors to evaluate their own instructional goals. Originally developed by Patricia Cross and Thomas Angelo.

Academic E-Sources

- [Academic Info](#). An independent Internet subject directory compiled and maintained by Mike Madin, formerly with the University of Washington, with a group of subject specialists.
- [AlphaSearch](#). Created by the Hekman Digital Library, Calvin College (MI), with links to academic sites. Includes evaluative descriptions.
- [Bigchalk.com-Teachers](#). Wide variety of e-sources for teachers at all levels.
- [ERIC](#). (Educational Resources Information Center) The granddaddy of all academic resources, with the full-text of all ERIC documents since 1993 ([E*Subscribe](#)) now available by subscription.
- [InfoMine](#). More than 20,000 academically valuable resources assembled into scholarly collections by the University of California, Riverside.
- [Online Teaching and Learning Resources](#). A Web site developed by the National Education Association with links to the major resources online for e-structors.
- [SMETE.org](#). An online library and set of services for those involved in science, mathematics, engineering and technology at all levels.
- [Web-Based Learning Resources Library](#). An educator's resource for delivery and management of education via the Internet by Robert W. Jackson of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.
- [World Lecture Hall](#). A University of Texas Web site with links to pages created by faculty worldwide who are using the Web to deliver course materials in any language.

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