

**A DAY IN THE LIFE  
OF AN INTERACTIVE, REAL TIME, INTERNET DELIVERED COURSE:  
A DEMONSTRATION**

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**ABSTRACT**

The authors will provide a live simulation of a class conducted over the Internet. Authors will participate in the simulated class meeting via Internet connections from locations in three to four different states.

**INTRODUCTION**

The presentation will involve at least four individuals engaged in a live Internet-based interactive session of an upper division quantitative business class. Two of the individuals will be connected to the Internet from the conference site while the remaining individuals will be connected at sites in one or more other states.

Experiences with designing, offering, and teaching courses over the Internet will be shared. Particular attention will be given to demonstrating a typical day in the life of an interactive, real time, Internet delivered course. Many lessons were learned and will be shared.

**DESIGNING THE COURSE**

- Course content, text, and assignments should be the same as for the non-Internet-based sections.
- Students must be online simultaneously during class times to facilitate group lectures, demonstrations, and discussions.

**OFFERING THE COURSE**

**Registering for the Course**

- Contact with instructor should be restricted to electronic channels until after registration.
- Students should be required to register for the course by contacting the instructor through email. In this way the instructor can obtain the student's email address and make some determination of the student's ability to function in the on-line environment.
- The course syllabus should be placed on a web page and not be available in any other form.

**Required Tools**

- Personal Computer with Windows 95/98 and a minimum of 32MB RAM
- Internet Access (not via campus lab)
- Software:
  - Spreadsheet
  - Word Processor,
  - Email
  - Web Browser

**Required Knowledge/Experience**

- Familiarity with a computer
- The ability to download and install software from the internet.

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- A working understanding of spreadsheet, word processing, and email software.
- Ability to send and receive attachments to email messages.

### TEACHING THE COURSE

#### Getting Started

Before getting to the subject matter of the course some housekeeping chores will need to be performed.

- Student email addresses along with instructions for the first class meeting must be emailed to each student.
- Prior to the first meeting students have to download, install, and configure ICQ to allow communication with the other class members.
- In addition to being prepared for the first day's accounting assignment, students are expected to be logged into the Internet and have ICQ, email and a spreadsheet package running prior to the start of the scheduled class time.
- After a brief exploration of the capabilities of ICQ, the instructor would be ready to discuss the topic of the day.

#### Typical Class Meeting

- A typically class meeting requires the instructor to use:
  - A chat program for text based communication
  - A conference program which allows sharing of software packages and a white board, as well as audio and video communication.
- A typically class meeting involves starting with ICQ or another chat program, taking attendance, developing spreadsheet solutions, lecturing, and group discussions.

#### Testing

- Procedures and techniques must be established to provide some assurance that the student getting credit is the student doing the work.
- Distributing, receiving, and grading examinations and assignments
- Open book tests

### LESSONS LEARNED

- Murphy is alive and well.
- Schedule more class time than you think you'll need.
- Isolate yourself prior to and during the class.
- Be sure you can contact other members by phone during class—remember that students may be connected by modem.
- Hold all telephone calls.
- Always reboot the computer at least 15 minutes before class, run scan disk, and eliminate all “.tmp” files.
- Have ready access to another computer during class time.
- When scheduling the course be aware of times during the day that the Internet may be slow.
- Always anticipate that the class meeting may need to be cancelled and have a plan developed for how material can be made up.
- Students need to be prepared and have read and attempted problems assigned for class discussion prior to class time.
- Not having to deal with handwritten assignments makes reading papers less arduous.
- Grading spreadsheet files allows the instructor to see how answers were obtained rather than just grading the final results from a printout.
- Feedback on assignments and tests, of what would have been handwritten notes in the margin of a paper or printout, is more awkward when done over the internet.