

Distance Education UpClose

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Digital Pathways

Two days of collaboration for DE in American Indian communities

Distinguished leaders and scholars from American Indian communities across New Mexico, the Southwest, and the United States met on March 18–19, 2004 in Las Cruces to attend *Digital Pathways: Best Practices in Distance Education for American Indians*. Stakeholders in distance education collaborated to discuss best practices and to develop higher education opportunities at a distance for American Indian communities.

The *Digital Pathways* conference highlighted distance education as one solution to post-secondary educational needs in American Indian communities. These communities are often rural and underdeveloped economically, making them excellent candidates for distance education programs. Another benefit that emerged at the conference was the ability of distance education programs to keep the best and brightest students at home during critical years of cultural and leadership development.

Hosted by NMSU's Office of Distance Education and NMSU's American Indian Program in collaboration with the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation's *Anytime, Anyplace Learning* Program, this event brought together over 100 participants from nearly 70 American Indian, government, and higher education organizations. Participants represented institutions of higher education, non-profit associations that support distance education, tribal education and government organizations, New Mexico State Public Education Department, elected state officials, and current American Indians distance education students.

Digital Pathways was planned to address post-secondary distance education programs targeted to tribal employment needs — programs with great potential for solving economic and social challenges hindering development in pueblos and on reservations. New Mexico's tribal leaders support distance education as a resource to improve American Indian participation in higher education. Based on this support, *Digital Pathways* was conceived with two primary goals:

1. To create a solid understanding of best practices in distance education for American Indian students, and
2. To use these best practices to develop a plan to support successful delivery of distance education courses and programs to American Indian communities.

The conference also presented an invaluable opportunity for stakeholders to build relationships that will help create a positive, proactive environment for educational innovation and implementation. The first day of *Digital Pathways* featured sessions on best practices in distance education for American Indians; the second day was dedicated to developing an action plan to create effective programs and support best practices in American Indian distance education.

Developing Best Practices

Digital Pathways began with opening remarks from Lloyd Tortalita, Pueblo of Acoma; NMSU Interim President William V. Flores, Mescalero Apache President Mark Chino; Donald Pepion, Director of NMSU's American Indian Program; and Carmen Gonzales, NMSU's Vice Provost for Distance Education.

In a keynote address, Dr. Burks Oakley, Sloan Foundation representative and Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs at University of Illinois, described the Sloan Foundation's involvement in supporting distance education through funding and research. Additionally,

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April 2004

NMSU Events

ICT Training Services

April 5 & 7 - **WebCT in the Afternoon**

April 6 - **WebCT 4.1 Upgrade**

April 12 - **WebCT 4.1 Upgrade**

April 13 - **FrontPage/Image Editing**
April 15 - **Converting Materials for the Web**

April 16 - **WebCT Calendar Workshop**

April 19 - **Creating Departmental Surveys**

April 21 - **WebCT 4.1 Upgrade**

April 23 - **WebCT Content Module**

Visit the Faculty area of the DE site [<http://www.nmsu.edu/distance>] and click the *Professional Development* link for these and other events.

National & International Events

April 14–16 **UCEA Annual Conference** San Antonio, Texas

April 17–22 **NAB 2004** Las Vegas, Nevada

April 18–21 **ACUTA 2004 Spring Seminar** Miami Beach, Florida

April 18–20 **Wisconsin Educational Media Association (WEMA) 2004** Madison, Wisconsin

April 19–20 **Broadband Summit 2004** Washington, D.C.

April 20–22 **Teaching in the Community Colleges, 9th Annual Online Conference, 2004** Online/via Distance

For more events, information, and links, visit the *DE Clearinghouse Conference Database* [www1.uwex.edu/disted/conf/].



Cinda Holsombach-Ebner
Project
Coordinator
Office of Distance
Education

After three exciting and fulfilling years in New Mexico, my family is returning back to my husband's home country of Germany by way of military transfer. During my time here, I have come to know and love NMSU for the supportive and caring community it truly is. I came to NMSU in 2001 as part of the College of Education's Learning Technologies Program. From my relationship with the CoE community came the opportunity to work with the NMSU Office of Distance Education. My responsibilities with the ODE have been wide and varied, from writing online curriculum to organizing conferences. The creative freedom and rich productivity I have experienced are due in great part to the empowering leadership and guidance of Vice Provost Gonzales. I truly believe that NMSU will do great things in distance education for the benefit of the state's communities and beyond under her highly capable guidance.

Learning Technologies Usergroup Meeting

The next LT-Usergroup meeting is scheduled for Friday April 2 from 1:30-3:00PM in Milton Hall Room 80. The next meeting will feature Dr. Pookie Sautter presenting two new technologies. The NMSU Portal Committee will give a brief demonstration of the portal and ask for feedback. Plan now to attend and RSVP Timothy Barnett-Queen at trbqueen@nmsu.edu.

Note: To access the LT-Usersgroup WebCT site, e-mail a request (include your WebCT ID) to Pookie Sautter (esautter@nmsu.edu).

Distance Education Reports from the Colleges

College of Arts and Sciences

Several faculty and instructors in the College of Arts and Sciences plan to offer new distance courses in their programs in the coming months. Jennifer Sheppard (English) plans to offer English 318G, *Advanced Technical and Professional Communication*, via WebCT for students in the College of Health and Social Services distance programs in Summer I, 2004. Jamie Bronstein (History) will offer History 404/504, *Civil War Era, 1840-1877*, via WebCT in Summer II, 2004. Martin Krupa (Mathematical Sciences) will offer Math 392, *Differential Equations*, and Math 380, *Vector Spaces and Matrix Algebra*, via WebCT in Fall 2004. —Associate Dean Jeffrey Brown

College of Business Administration and Economics

The College of Business Administration and Economics has been working with New Mexico Military Institute to develop a distance education degree completion program for NMMI students who wish to continue their military training in Roswell while completing a Management major with an option in Managerial Leadership. Some courses would be taught by NMSU faculty on-site in Roswell and others would be offered as Internet courses. —Associate Dean Kathleen Brook

College of Engineering

The Department of Engineering Technology will be offering a degree completion program in Information and Communication Technology. It will be delivered to students in distance format using a blend of computer and Internet technologies. The program is designed for students who have a strong career interest and ability in computer systems but are unable to come to the Las Cruces campus to continue their education. The ICT program places an emphasis on practical applications of engineering and technology rather than on theory and derivation. The curriculum includes the study of computer hardware, application and operating systems software, system integration, database design and management, networking, and network security. For more information contact Dr. George Alexander in The Department of Engineering Technology at 505 646.2236 or nmsuet@nmsu.edu. —Distance Education Advisement Services Coordinator Christina Brumm

College of Health and Social Services

Our Bachelor of Human and Community Services is growing, with approximately 65 students currently enrolled. We continue to appreciate the university distance education community's collaboration on this successful new program! The CHSS offers two other 2+2 degree completion programs: (1) the RN to BSN completion effort being delivered to NMSU Alamo, NMSU Carlsbad, and to Deming, via a combination of two-way video and live instruction, and (2) the Bachelor of Community health which articulates with the AAS in Public Health from DABCC. —Associate Dean Larry Olsen

NMSU Staff Attends ICDE in Hong Kong

International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE) and the Open University of Hong Kong (OUHK) held the 21st ICDE *World Conference on Open Learning and Distance Education: Lifelong Learning in a Network World* in Hong Kong February 18–21.

This conference aimed to document achievements and investigate the challenges facing those seeking to provide open and distance education for all learners in a world that is becoming increasingly networked. NMSU staff members Carmen Gonzales (Vice Provost-DE), Cinda Holsombach-Ebner (Project Coordinator-DE), and Teresa Brandon (Faculty-DABCC) presented at this year's conference. Their presentation, titled "Internationalizing Web-Based Distance Education at the Post-Secondary Level", reviewed the challenges and strategies to successfully internationalize DE programs.

The research presentation will be available on the ODE website at: <http://distance.nmsu.edu/faculty/facmain.html>. Learn more about the conference at <http://www.ouhk.edu.hk/hk2003/>

Enhance Your Course with Online Elements

Locating and Creating Digital Content

by Bethany Bovard & Julia Parra

Types of digital content

- eBooks / eJournals
- web sites
- databases
- digital course packs
- learning objects

Considerations for digital content selection

- connection speed
- bandwidth
- accessibility
- learning style (auditory, visual, etc)

This is part two of our series *Enhance your course with online elements*. Last issue, we showed you how to create a digital syllabus and schedule. This issue, we will focus on adding digital content to your course. And next issue, we will look at assessment options.

Digital content adds appeal to your course; it can be more up-to-date, more accessible, and include a variety of visual and auditory experiences. However, other issues like connectivity and bandwidth, should be considered when making choices about the type of digital content you want to use. When you do decide to add digital content to your course, you have two options: **locate** it on the Internet or **create** your own. Each option has its advantages.

Locate digital content

Why re-create the wheel? There are many resources on the Internet that you can use to supplement your course. Books, journals, content-related web sites, and multimedia learning objects are just some of the many available resources (see side bar at right for examples) you and your students can use.

Of course, some digital resources will be free for your students, while others will cost. For example, the National Academies Press has many science, engineering, medical, and education books and research monographs that students can read online for free or download for a fee. Then there is Xanedu, a company that specializes in creating digital course packs (and they take care of all the copyright issues!) that students can purchase and view online or download at their convenience.

Create digital content

Chances are, you already have some course content in digital format. Your lectures, presentations, and class notes are perfect candidates for easily created digital content; simply use the Save As feature in your word processing program and choose to save them as web pages, then put them on the server and link them to your syllabus or schedule.

If you want to create fancier digital content (digital video, flash, etc.) you will need special software and skills. If you are interested in adding video, flash, or other digital elements to your course, the Office of Distance Education can help.

Once you have located or created the content you want to use, just put links to it in your online syllabus or schedule. It is as simple as that. If you need help, you can contact us at 646.3524 to schedule an appointment with the Office of Distance Education Faculty Assistance Program.

Tip for textbook users

Frequently, textbook publishers have companion web sites that instructors and students can use. These sites include video and audio material, case studies, discussion questions, and practice tests. Check your textbook for the URL or go directly to the publisher's web site to find these companion sites.

Digital Resources

General Resources

National Academies Press

[www.nap.edu] Buy or read books and reports from the National Academy of Science, the National Academy of Engineering, the Institute of Medicine and the National Research Council.

MIT Open Courseware

[ocw.mit.edu/] All of MIT's course content online, from anthropology and biology to physics and women's studies, free for anyone to use.

Xanedu [www.xanedu.com]

Create digital course packs for students to read online or download.

Content Specific Resources

Business

- Harvard Business School - Working Knowledge web site [<http://hbswk.hbs.edu>]. Research, editorials, and news from the business world.
- National Bureau of Economic Research [<http://www.nber.com>]. Research and news.

Education

- AERA list of scholarly, peer-reviewed journals [<http://aera-cr.asu.edu/links.html>]
- DesignShop web site [<http://www.edtech.vt.edu/edtech/id/>] Lessons in effective teaching.

Human Services

- APA list of scholarly, peer-reviewed journals [<http://www.apa.org/journals/>].
- American Public Human Services Association web site [<http://www.aphsa.org/>]. Policy, publications, and news from the field.

Visit the Faculty area of the DE site [<http://www.nmsu.edu/distance>] for more resources.

