

## MODELS OF DISTANCE LEARNING

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- 1) How much content is delivered online?
- 2) How much separation is there between the learner and the facilitator?
- 3) In what ways is technology used with each model?
- 4) Pros for each model.
- 5) Cons for each model.
- 6) What factors need to be considered when implementing each model?

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	<b>Online Courses</b>	<b>Blended/Hybrid Courses</b>	<b>Web-facilitated Courses</b>
<b>How much content is delivered online?</b>	More than 80% of instruction (Simonson, Smaldino, Albright, & Zvacek, 2012) is delivered online. Online courses are often completely at a distance, without any requirement for physical presence (Abel, 2005).	Hybrid and blended courses combines face-to-face delivery and online delivery with a percentage of 30% to 79% of the content delivered online (Simonson et al., 2012).	Less than 29% of the course contents are delivered online through web-based technology (Simonson et al., 2012).

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	Online Courses	Blended/Hybrid Courses	Web-facilitated Courses
<b>How much separation is there between the learner and the facilitator?</b>	<p>In online courses, students and instructors are separated by time and geography (Simonson et al., 2012). Online courses are offered different-time/different-place (DT-DP); it could also be same-time/different-place (ST-DP) (Simonson et al., 2012). Learners have the choice of when and where to access the course content (Simonson et al., 2012).</p> <p>Transactional distance varies in online courses based on the manner the course is designed (Moore, 2006). The amount of dialogue and structure varies; more dialogue through discussion boards and high structure through pre-defined objectives are examples of an online course (Moore, 2006) which leads to less autonomy. High dialogue and low structure, leading to high autonomy is also an example of online courses (Moore, 2006).</p>	<p>Blended courses, by their nature, have some same-time/same-place (ST-SP) delivery. This provides for less separation between learner and facilitator, especially in the F2F stages of the course. The remainder of the class follows the online course model.</p> <p>Transactional distance varies with the quality and quantity of activities to promote communication and interaction between the learner and facilitator through dialog and structure (Simonson et al., 2012).</p>	<p>Part of the instruction delivered through web-facilitated courses could be same-time/different places (ST-DP). For example, instruction could be delivered onsite, while resources could be posted online with opportunities for online chat and quizzes (Dawson, 2012).</p> <p>Web-facilitated courses with low structure and more dialogue produce autonomous programs (Moore, 2006; Simonson et al., 2012)</p>

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<b>In what ways is technology used with each model?</b>	<p>Technology plays a major role in delivering instruction. Communications among students and with the instructors are online by using asynchronous technology tools (Simonson et al., 2012). Content management systems host online courses. It enables access to resources and high interactions through the discussion boards (Dawson, 2012).</p> <p>Synchronous communication tools like, social media and web 2.0 tools, used to facilitate discussions and interactions among students when working in groups and there is a need to communicate same time (Watson, n.d.)</p>	<p>Technology is used to deliver the online part of the blended course. Instructors can store course content which is posted and changed easily (Osguthorpe &amp; Graham, 2003). Students can prepare projects in small groups and interact with each other using online social media tools and work collaboratively on projects (Watson, n.d.), they could post the project through the LMS and then present the findings in class (University of Wisconsin Milwaukee, 2012). Instructors use technology to interact with students; for example, by email, and provide feedback to students as they answer quizzes online (Dawson, 2012). Technology supports the project-based approach in hybrid courses as it facilitates research, collaboration, reflection, presentation and inquiry (Watson, n.d.).</p>	<p>Technology is used to supplement face-to-face instruction (Simonson, 2012). Technology can be used for content delivery, asynchronous peer-to-peer discussions, interactive simulations, and other types of activities (Eduviews, 2009, Graham, Allen &amp; Ure, 2005). Students can access technology in the classroom, other in-school locations, or at home.</p>

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	Online Courses	Blended/Hybrid Courses	Web-facilitated Courses
<b>Pros for each model.</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Online courses largely eliminate physical location as a determiner of academic success. Students can work from anywhere with a reliable internet connection.</li> <li>2) Online courses offer all students an equal chance to participate: shy learners, disabled students, and people with lower language competency all get their “turn” to participate.</li> <li>3) Online courses offer enhanced earning potential (and economic relevance) for institutions since they can draw from large pools of potential learners (Simonson et al., 2012).</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Blended courses support the shift from lecture-centered to student-centered instruction. Experienced instructors could create individualized learning experience for learners thus enhancing their learning experience (Dizuban, Hartman, Moskal, 2004).</li> <li>2) Hybrid courses present integration of more social and progressive instructional models; an example of the use of simulations (Dashew &amp; Lee, 2011).</li> <li>3) As online and F2F activities and interactions can vary widely in hybrid courses, it could represent a starting point for instructors who are used to face-to-face instruction and looking into shifting to virtual and online instruction thus creating a new teaching opportunity for faculty which can help them solving a problem in a course (University of Wisconsin Milwaukee, 2012).</li> <li>4) Hybrid courses provide an opportunity for faculty to utilize the best of the web and the best of the f2f environments (Osguthorpe &amp; Graham, 2003).</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Due to the real-time nature of web-facilitated courses, there could be live interactions with the instructor. Students can ask a question and get immediate response from the instructor or other students.</li> <li>2) Students can access the recorded live content and related chats as it could be archived for later review.</li> <li>3) Students can access the web-course from any computer with Internet connection, which reduces the need for travel. Only parts of the course are online. The student must be present for the full number of seat hours. (Holden &amp; Westfall, 2010).</li> </ol>

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<b>Cons for each model.</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) In online courses there are no routine structures similar to the F2F classes; learners with bad study habits and low motivation may fall behind in online courses.</li> <li>2) Slow Internet connections can make students frustrated when they access the course content.</li> <li>3) Managing online files and accessing the content online could be challenges to students with basic computer skills.</li> <li>4) Instructors may not always be immediately available to help students. (Iowa State University, n.d.)</li> <li>5) Bandwidth constrains may affect the design of the online interactive and virtual modules. The alternative would be text-based content which if read in large amount from a screen. Reading text on screen reduces comprehension and speed when compared to printed versions (Holden &amp; Westfall, 2010).</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Blended courses require learners and instructors to adapt to two different delivery models of education which may cause difficulty and confusion.</li> <li>2) If institutions schedule classrooms tightly, facility problems affect a proportionally larger number of students.</li> <li>3) There is still a digital divide such that not all students have access to high speed internet, computer hardware, and software to avail themselves of online delivery in any format.</li> <li>4) The design of blended courses vary from course to course as each instructor use a different set of technology tools and face-to-face activities which presents a challenge on research and policy (Watson, n.d.).</li> <li>5) Space limitations and scheduling problems could affect in class activities.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Web-facilitated courses depend on the Internet and there could be some restrictions in the bandwidth which could prevent technology tools like web-conferencing, audio and video tools from working properly.</li> <li>2) Some networks limit the number of access to live events; students may not be able to connect to class due to these restrictions.</li> <li>3) Firewalls in some locations could avert students from accessing the course and connecting to live videoconference. (Holden &amp; Westfall, 2010).</li> </ol>

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	Online Courses	Blended/Hybrid Courses	Web-facilitated Courses
<b>What factors need to be considered when implementing each model?</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) What is the cost associated when developing online courses and what is the ROI for institutions?</li> <li>2) How to ground instructional design and activities on distance education theories, concepts and principles?</li> <li>3) How online learning practices differ from face-to-face education but delivers same outcomes? (Laureate Education Inc., n.d.)</li> <li>4) How to motivate students online and enhance their interactions with other students, the instructor and course content? (LarylandOnline, 2011)</li> <li>5) What accessibility tools and considerations to make the online course inclusive and accessible for all students?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) How to meet the students' needs that cannot be achieved through face-to-face and online instruction only (Watson, n.d.)?</li> <li>2) What skills and experience instructors have to facilitate both formats?</li> <li>3) How to divide the course content and determine which modules to be used online and in class?</li> <li>4) What kind of Internet connections students will use to access the online component?</li> <li>5) What physical space and scheduling constraints for in class instruction?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) What physical plant issues (availability of classrooms, parking, access, restrooms, etc.) need to be addressed?</li> <li>2) How, where, when will students have access to computers, internet, and software?</li> <li>3) What aspects of the course should be facilitated through the use of the web?</li> <li>4) What web tools should be used to facilitate the course?</li> </ol>

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