

DEFINITIONS

30 points

I downloaded this research article from the inter-library loan at BU and put it on the web site.

[e-Learning, online learning, and distance learning environments: Are they the same?](#)

Please read the article and answer the following questions

- 1. What is the overall purpose of this study? (2 points)
- The overall purpose of the study is to properly define what constitutes effective distance learning.

2. What are the literature definitions of (3 points)

distance learning- providing education to students who are geographically distance from the source

Elearning- learning that is based on online material as well as other material that can be accessed on the computer like videos and CDs

online learning- learning that is based wholly on online material

3. What are the problems discussed in section 3? (5 points)

- Terms such as online, web- based, and Elearning are used interchangeably when they are all separate terms
- Some definitions and evaluation instruments discuss and use “courses” or “programs” while others are based on “learning objects”
 - Presents a problem with the scope of the learning environment

4. Describe the methodology, the instrument, the data collection, and data analysis (5 points)

- **Methodology**
 - 43 conference participants from at least 4 continents completed a 9 question survey
- **Instrument**
 - 9 question paper survey
 - Comprised of one open- ended question and 8 questions with a number of choices to select from checkboxes

- Questions focused on how they defined distance learning, elearning, and online learning and what differs from each type of learning environment
- **Data Collection**
 - 43 conference participants took the survey
 - A “small incentive” was used
 - Average time to complete the survey was about 10 minutes
 - Once all surveys were completed, data collated, coded, and analyzed using mixing methods
- **Data Analysis**
 - Data from surveys were collated in a Microsoft Excel Sheet
 - Six major themes emerged:
 - No difference
 - Hierarchical relationship
 - Access
 - Interaction
 - Media type
 - Correspondence

5. Describe each of the sections in findings from 5.1 to 5.5. (5 points)

- **5.1**
 - In terms of the open- ended question of the difference between distance learning, elearning, and online learning, six specific relationship types were found:
 - No difference
 - Hierarchical relationship
 - Access
 - Interaction
 - Media type
 - Correspondence
 - It was also noted that distance learning was seen as an antiquated term compared to elearning and online learning
- **5.2**
 - Background of survey participants

- There were participants from at least 12 different countries of origin
 - 3 from Australia
 - 11 from Asian
 - 10 from Europe
 - 11 from North America
 - 10 unclassified
 - 56% of participants took part in all of the different learning environments
 - The choices of the learning environments varied between the regions of origin of the participants
- 5.3
 - Participation in learning environment was mostly from a student perspective
 - 31 selected the student role
 - 30 selected the instructor role
 - 9 selected all possible roles
 - 2 did not select a role
- 5.4
 - The most common characteristics found by the learning environments were assignments, other students, instructors, and interactions between students and instructors
 - Discussion boards and emails were the two most common tools utilized by the learning environment noted by the participants
- 5.5
 - Participants were presented with different scenarios with which they would match to a specific learning environment
 - The most frequent matches were online learning, elearning, and blended learning

6. What were the author's findings? (5 points)

- Overall, the participants did recognize a difference between the three different learning environments in question

7. What are the author's conclusions? (5 points)

- The differing definitions of the learning environments were reflected in the responses of the participants
- Effort should be placed in developing clear definitions for these learning environments

MORE DIIGO LINKS

45 points

1. Visit

<https://sites.google.com/site/bestonlineteacher/home/chapter-1-an-overview-of-k-12-online-education>

This is a web site that accompanies

[Making the Move to K-12 Online Teaching: Research-Based Strategies and Practices](#)

Each chapter has suggested web sites. There are 9 chapters listed at the top of the page. For each chapter, choose 5 web sites that you would like to keep for future use and bookmark them in DIIGO. Tag each bookmark DE. You can add other tags if you would like. You will have a total of 45 bookmarks when you are done.

MAKE A LINK TO YOUR DIIGO ON THE COURSE ASSIGNMENTS PAGE AND ALSO EMAIL ME THE ADDRESS OF YOUR DIIGO LINK!!!
TITLE YOUR EMAIL "DIIGOLINK" NOTICE THIS LINK SHOULD END IN"de"

BLENDED LEARNING AND DISRUPTING EDUCATION

10 points

Many persons believe that online education, K–12 [blended learning](#), and technology are going to change the entire school system. Michael Horn is a coauthor of "[Disrupting Class](#)" and many other blogs and activities relating to this topic. Visit his [blog post](#) and write a 5 to 10 sentence summary of the blog including your opinion of this concept.

In Michael Horn's blog entry "Is K-12 Blended Learning Disruptive?", he discusses the entire disruption process as a "hybrid" event. When technology or

methods enter the market, generally they first appeal to the consumers who cannot normally afford the mainline product. As this new competitor grows, larger groups tend to adopt some tenants of the new strategy, eventually bringing about an overall change to the market. This innovative disruption, Horn believes, is directly related to K-12 blended learning. Horn writes that K-12 blended learning is causing innovative disruption within the traditional school system which is likely to shift the roles of schools as time moves forward. While I generally agree with his sentiments, I do believe that it will be a long time before significant change is seen nationally, let alone worldwide, in the educational system.

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COLLABORATIVE AND COOPERATIVE LEARNING IN ONLINE COURSES

32 points

Although we do not do group work or teamwork in this class, many online providers require students to do teamwork for the following reasons:

- **Encourages higher-order thinking.**
- **Brings together many ideas from multiple persons rather than from one person.**
- **Motivates persons to contribute to the group.**
- **Brings out the type of skills that 21st century workers need as they collaborate and work together.**

Cooperative and collaborative learning can be misused in the classroom as these techniques may distract from learning. The main question to ask in using cooperative and collaborative learning is "Does it increase or contribute to the learning situation over "individual" work?"

Please note that most people use these terms interchangeably, however sometimes they are distinguished apart.

Visit [Difference Between Coopertive and Collaborative Learning](#) and answer the following questions:

1. What are the differences between cooperative and collaborative learning?

- Both methods assign group roles, though collaborative learning typically has less roles assigned
- Cooperative learning is more structurally defined than collaborative learning
- Cooperative learning generally has an instructional goal of students developing group skills
- Cooperative learning is usually associated with “the methodology of choice for foundational knowledge” and collaborative learning is usually associated with “the social constructionist view that knowledge is a social construct”
- The instructor is generally the main authority in cooperative learning whereas in collaborative learning the instructor gives more authority to the small groups

2. What are some other terms associated with them?

- Team learning
- Problem- based learning including guided design
- Case studies
- Simulations
- Peer- assisted instruction including supplemental instruction
- Writing fellows
- Mathematics workshops
- Discussion groups and seminars
- Learning communities
- Lab work

Next visit [Student Collaboration in the Online Classroom -](#)

You may see the term "teamwork" here to represent cooperative and/or collaborative learning.

3. This document is a collection of very short articles. Read 10 articles of your choice and for each, write the name of the article and a 3+ sentence summary of what you learned from each article.

- **Keeping Teamwork Alive, Motivated, and Enthused!**
 - Teamwork is very important when it comes to running a successful online classroom. This article provides a large amount of techniques

to improve the teamwork in the online classroom. Some of the techniques that are the most important are the following: giving an example of good teamwork, becoming an active part of teamwork, and providing useful resources for teams.

- **Improving Results and Reducing Frustrations from Team Activities**

- There are many common problems that threaten effective online teams. These common problems, like scheduling conflicts, can be combatted with a number of different techniques. These techniques include understanding how good teams function, establishing expectations, and assessing the efficacy of the team and its members.

- **How to Promote Collaborative Active Online Learning**

- Promoting collaborative active online learning begins with promoting a positive collaborative experience for all students. While many students have had negative experiences with group projects in the past, there are methods that can be used to ensure new positive collaborative experiences. These methods include promoting individual effort in group work and providing structure and assistance for struggling groups.

- **Considering Collaboration**

- This article focuses on the positive effects that are often associated with collaborative learning. These positive consequences usually include influences on learning, motivation, and problem solving. It also argues that collaborative learning is an effective learning environment based upon a few key tenants of learning. These tenants include that learning is social and active, realistic learning activities are effective, and sharing other people's ideas is beneficial to the learning process.

- **7 Ways to Improve Student Satisfaction in Online Courses**

- This article describes a list of ways in which Peirce College can improve student satisfaction in their online courses. While this list was compiled based on what faculty at that school witnessed, it should be noted that this list can be applied to almost every online learning environment as a good template to follow. The 7 ways that were

noted were: posting the syllabus online, provide a learning styles inventory, explaining why group work is important, using team contracts, providing a wide range of assignments, ensuring flexibility, and providing frequent feedback.

- **Building Community in Online Classes through Group Work**

- This article discusses some useful assignments that can be utilized to promote to your online community. The article provides three specific examples, they are: online discussion, group justification, and paired groups. The article also discusses the varying methods of forming groups, from more randomized to more strategic.

- **Comparing Online Peer Interaction Methods**

- This article discusses a study in which students were given various modes to communicate online in order to determine which is the most effective. The students used email, a learning management system (Blackboard), and a synchronous communication software called DigiChat. At the end of the study, it was determined that there was no clear preferred mode of online communication.

- **Developing Community Online**

- This article describes the benefits of utilizing collaborative groups. It also provides tips for developing small groups. These tips include providing assignments that encourage small group work, utilizing discussion boards, and establishing due dates that maintain the structure of the class.

- **Let Students Choose How to Collaborate**

- This article details a study performed by Kathleen Ingram to determine how various groups of students functioned. Ingram found that the groups varied due to the differing schedules and obligations of the different students in the groups. She also proposed different ways to form collaborative groups, one of which was using charters. She determined that by giving the students the freedom to determine how the group was structured, they worked more effectively in the long term.

- **Online Process- Oriented Group Projects**

- In this article, Cynthia Calongne details how she guides and organizes group projects in her online classes. One of the main tenants of her structure is requiring that students define the project requirements as a group. Not only does this initiate healthy group discussion but it also provides the students with a chance to input their ideas to the class as a whole. In all, the ideas outlined by Calongne prove to be quite effective.

BUILDING COMMUNITY IN ONLINE COURSES

15 points

Although cooperative and collaborative learning are ways to build community in online classes, there are other techniques.

Visit [Building Community and Interaction Online](#)

1. Why build community?

- A strong online community generally benefits the students and the efficacy of the course, improving the following:
 - Keeping students engaged with the content
 - Encouraging critical thinking
 - Providing a supportive environment

2. What are some tools for building community?

- Discussions
- Collaborative projects
- Wikis
- Blogs
- Synchronous sessions

3. Watch the video on the left side of the page and briefly summarize what you learned from watching it. (5 to 10 sentences) (5 points)

To build a strong online community, it is best to develop good interactions between students and instructors. To develop good interactions for your course, it is important to first define the purpose for the interaction and then determine what tools will best carry out this process. For example, a group debate may be better fleshed out over a synchronous feed of the class rather than over a discussion board. Additionally it is important to have a good online presence in your online

classroom. While this does mean that you have to respond to everything, it should mean that helpful and guiding feedback is present to the learning community on a frequent basis.

Visit [Building Community in the Online Classroom](#) (8 points)

4. Briefly summarize each of the 8 strategies

- **Small Group Collaboration**
 - Forming small groups of 3 or 4 students each provides students with a necessary source of communication, discussion, and accountability that is vital to an effective online class.
- **Public- Journaling (Blogging)**
 - Blogging provides students with a chance to express their own ideas as well as constructively comment on the ideas of fellow students, thus strengthening individual thought and class communication.
- **Real- Time Online Meetings (Chatting)**
 - Real- time online meetings provide students with a sense of personal communication that is sometimes quite difficult to achieve in an online setting.
- **Discussion- Based Discussion Boards**
 - Discussion boards provide students with a an ability to share ideas in a more informal tone, which in turn can encourage students to share ideas in more formal settings.
- **Student- Led Collaborative Presentations and Coauthored Work**
 - Collaborative presentations promote overall group work between students and allow them to create their own content to share, making them instructors as well as learners.
- **Use of a “Who’s Who?” Page**
 - A “Who’s Who Page” allows students to learn more about their fellow students and instructors in order to form a more cohesive social backbone for the online course.
- **Interdependent Student Assignments**

- Interdependent student assignments force students to use each other's work to develop their own. From this, students begin to rely upon each other, strengthening the online course community.
- **Free Discussion Areas (Developing Communities of Interest)**
 - Free discussion provides students with an area where they can discuss whatever they want. By allowing this space, it helps further develop your online course community.

10 BEST PRACTICES FOR TEACHING ONLINE

20 points

Ten Best Practices for Teaching Online

Briefly summarize each of these practices and indicate whether you think they are useful or not.

- **Practice 1: Be Present at the Course Site**
 - **Summary**
 - The instructor makes their presence known in the online course by frequently utilizing tools such as email, class blogs, and learning management systems.
 - **Useful or no?**
 - I believe that this is incredibly useful for an online teacher, as it ensures the students that you are readily available as a source of feedback and assistance.
- **Practice 2: Create a supportive online course community**
 - **Summary**
 - The instructor uses strategies that promote a sense of unity in the online class. Some examples include creating a page where students can post some background information on themselves and learn something about each other as well making an open blog space where students can discuss various topics.
 - **Useful or no?**
 - I believe that this practice is useful as it presents a source of open socialization for students in their online classroom.

- **Practice 3: Share a set of very clear expectations for your students and for yourself as to (1) how you will communicate and (2) how much time students should be working on the course each week**
 - **Summary**
 - The instructor shares detailed guidelines and instructions for the course content whether it be through an online syllabus, a learning management system, or other means of online communication.
 - **Useful or no?**
 - I believe that this practice is very useful and essential not only for the efficacy of an online class but for any classroom environment. With clear expectations, students can ask questions at the beginning and focus on the course material as the class progresses.
- **Practice 4: Use a variety of large group, small group, and individual work experiences**
 - **Summary**
 - The instructor varies the type of assignments and activities so that students can practice working independently and in groups.
 - **Useful or no?**
 - I believe that this practice is useful as it presents students the opportunity to participate in a variety of learning environments that will be used throughout the rest of their educational career and beyond.
- **Practice 5: Use both synchronous and asynchronous activities**
 - **Summary**
 - An instructor provides students assignments that can be completed on their own time as well as assignments that are done at the same time, whether independently or in groups, as a class.
 - **Useful or no?**
 - I believe that this practice is useful because it provides students with more variety with which to learn the course material.

- **Practice 6: Early in the term - about week 3, ask for informal feedback on "How is the course going?" and "Do you have any suggestions?"**
 - **Summary**
 - The instructor asks for feedback early in the course in order to tailor the rest of the course to best meet the needs of the students.
 - **Useful or no?**
 - I believe that this practice is very useful. Although it may a little consuming, it can be very effective to the overall efficacy of the class if the instructor openly listens to and implements the feedback of students.
- **Practice 7: Prepare Discussion Posts that Invite Questions, Discussions, Reflections and Responses**
 - **Summary**
 - The instructor prepares discussion posts that encourage creative or critical thinking and engage the class in a thoughtful discussion.
 - **Useful or no?**
 - This practice is very useful as it not only engages the online class community but it also provides students with a constructive format to learn and form ideas and opinions.
- **Practice 8: Focus on content resources and applications and links to current events and examples that are easily accessed from learner's computers**
 - **Summary**
 - The instructor provides content to the students that is easily accessible online or some other form.
 - **Useful or no?**
 - While I do believe that it is useful to provide supplemental course materials, I also believe that is important for students to learn how to search for and compile their own supplemental material.

- **Practice 9: Combine core concept learning with customized and personalized learning**
 - **Summary**
 - The instructor provides a means to connect a student's personalized learning experience to the core material being covered in the course.
 - **Useful or no?**
 - I do believe that it is very useful to combine core concept learning with personalized learning because it provides a good framework for the student's learning.
- **Practice 10: Plan a good closing and wrap activity for the course**
 - **Summary**
 - The instructor develops an assignment that provides a good summary of the course material that was covered and allows the students to present what they have learned from the course.
 - **Useful or no?**
 - I believe that this practice is certainly useful as it can be used to assess the overall efficacy of the course in terms of the students retention and use of the information that they should have learned.