Teaching, Learning, & Technology

A SURVIVAL GUIDE FOR NEW FACULTY

Welcome to eLearning

- At WSU, elearning refers to any application of technology to teaching and learning, both in and out of the classroom.
- The WSU eLearning Center (Library 220) is a faculty resource and service center, providing learning opportunities, services, and project support to all WSU faculty members.
- Refer all technical problems to the Technical Support Center. For assistance using technology, call elearning.

Why Laptops?

Virtually every university offers students access to the Internet and other computer-based tools critical to academic success. Providing all students with similarly-configured laptops, supported centrally and replaced regularly, is the best way to ensure the pervasive and reliable access that facilitates teaching and learning.

Consider a math instructor whose students use SPSS™ statistical software to work in groups during class. Teams meet after class to develop reports and class presentations. Using their networked laptops with SPSS™ preinstalled, students learn techniques they are likely to encounter after they graduate using professional tools they could not afford to purchase themselves. Their mobile laptops facilitate teamwork, allowing them to better collaborate with teammates, communicate with instructors, and move between the classroom and other campus work spaces seamlessly.

Whether it’s a virus, insufficient memory, missing software, or a bad hard drive, if students lack access to the required tools, they are disadvantaged academically and the entire class may be affected negatively as the instructor pauses to address technical problems.

The WSU Laptop Program provides all students with powerful software, reliable hardware, and 24x7 support. Our students are never disadvantaged technologically and our instructors know exactly what to expect. The vast majority of our instructors have integrated laptop-based activities into their courses and continue to find innovative ways to transform and enhance the learning experience.

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You Are Here

The eLearning Center is your first stop when you need assistance using any of the technological tools on campus, when you are interested in trying a new tool or technique in your course, when you are contemplating a project that involves instructional technology, when you need help with a difficult or time consuming technical task, or when you need access to software and hardware that you don’t have on your laptop.

The eLearning Center belongs to you. It is your resource, your workspace. Use it.

Laptops support communication, collaboration, flexibility, and availability.

eLearning can help assemble teams to support your projects.
Online Course Materials

One of the most common instructional applications of technology is the posting of class materials online, including syllabi, slides, notes, handouts, homework, and readings. This is easy to do and requires little to no technical expertise or rework (e.g., reformatting existing documents).

There are several places to post online course materials:

- In your existing course “shell” on Desire2Learn, our Web-based course management system
- In your existing account on our faculty web server: course1.winona.edu.
- In a shared network drive or “course storage” space that can be established for your class.

All of these storage spaces are accessible to your students and posting files to these spaces is as easy as saving something on your own computer.

There are several differences among these storage methods that an eLearning team member can explain to you in about 10 minutes. We can also show you how to use any of these solutions in about the same amount of time.

Email Communication

Although most students enter WSU with existing email addresses (e.g., Hotmail, Yahoo, Google), all students are provided with a WSU mailbox and email address. The format of their WSU address is the same as yours: [student’s username] @winona.edu.

You can find your students in the Global Address List in Outlook/Entourage. You can create your own class distribution lists in Outlook/Entourage.

Email can also be sent to individual students, entire class lists, and customized groups of students through Desire2Learn, where email distribution lists for all of your classes are created automatically. This is a popular feature of Desire2Learn.

Please note that your students’ winona.edu email address is their official address and they use other email services at their own risk. Email sent to their winona.edu address is not forwarded to other addresses automatically.

Keep this in mind if students claim that they did not receive your email message.

Your Classroom

Most classrooms at WSU are outfitted with a network port and data projector for instructors. If you do not find what you need in your classroom, please contact eLearning. We would also be happy to visit your classroom and walk through any application of technology with you. If your classroom technology is not working properly, please contact the Technical Support Center.

Although some classrooms are close enough to wireless access points that you and your students may be able to connect to the network wirelessly, we do not recommend using wireless networking in the classroom at this time. Always use a wire and network port if one is available.

If you have an application that requires all of your students to be networked and you do not have enough network ports in your classroom, please contact eLearning. We will find a way to support you.
**Tablet Computing at WSU**

All students and faculty who opted for a PC now have Gateway M275 convertible laptops running the Microsoft Tablet PC Operating System. WSU has one of the largest installations of tablet computers in higher education.

Three of the most common instructional applications of tablet computing on campus are:

- Using your pen in Microsoft Word to mark up student papers. Files are then saved and returned to students.
- Using your pen in Microsoft PowerPoint to mark up slides during class. Annotated slides are often posted online after class.
- Using Microsoft OneNote in class as you would an acetate transparency. Notes are often made available to students online after class.

eLearning is also exploring other applications of tablet computing that can be used to support classroom collaboration, polling, and other interactive activities.

Contact eLearning for more ideas on how to leverage tablets in your courses.

**Developing Interactive Content and Applications**

As you prepare your courses this fall, you may be focused primarily on uploading existing content as well as new, but relatively static, text-based, materials to the Web. This is time well spent and is often the starting point for faculty as they being to explore how teaching and learning might be facilitated through the use of technological tools.

However, you may also have some ideas for more interactive learning activities, simulations, demonstrations, games, and other applications that require student input and active participation.

For example, eLearning developed an online warm up application for Jim Meyers (Geoscience) that presents short, low-stakes surveys to students and provides Jim with information on student understanding that he can use to tailor his classroom activities.

eLearning has the tools and expertise to help you develop such applications, providing as little or as much assistance as you require. Contact eLearning for more information.

**EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative (ELI)**

Are you interested in participating in the conversation, research, and development related to higher education and technology at an international level?

WSU is a member of the EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative, the subdivision of EDUCAUSE that focuses on the impact of technology on teaching and learning. The call for papers for their 2007 Annual Meeting in January closes on September 11th.

In addition to EDUCAUSE, there are many avenues for the exchange of ideas, the presentation and publication of scholarly work, and the development of relationships and dialog on an international stage.

WSU is a laboratory for the exploration of important concepts and issues related to educational technology. The eLearning team can assist with grant and manuscript preparation, research design and implementation, and data analysis and reporting.
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Your Fall 2006 eLearning Checklist

This checklist will help you prepare for your first day of class. Depending on the technologies you are using, some items may not apply to you.

- Activate your Desire2Learn courses.
- Send a welcome message to your students.
- Add the URL for Desire2Learn or your course URL to your syllabus, your welcome message, and your class notes for the first day.
- Ask your students to login to Desire2Learn prior to the first class meeting and direct any problems to Technical Support.
- If your students need an application installed or updated on their laptops (e.g., SPSS, Photoshop, Dreamweaver), tell them to contact Technical Support.
- Visit your classroom and familiarize yourself with the classroom technology. If there are technical problems, contact Technical Support. If you need guidance on using technology in the classroom, contact eLearning.
- If you are planning any classroom activities that involve student network access, particularly high-stakes testing or group projects, please contact eLearning. We can help prepare you, the room, and the students for the activity.
- Contact eLearning for assistance with any activity that involves students using tools other than their laptops (e.g., video cameras).
- An expanded checklist is on the Web at: elearning.winona.edu.