

Minutes of the CAS Online Discussion Group
March 28, 2007, 3:00 pm

Attendees: Sandra Dickinson, Luanne Serieux, Victoria Hoge, Karen Cozart, and Ian Lubin

1. Introductions

2. The group discussed some of the new features of version 8.1 of Desire2Learn slated to be implemented in the fall of 2007. Some of the new features include Competencies, Rubrics, and Blogs. The group also talked about the advances made by both D2L and Apple to improve the compatibility of their representative products. These improvements have many positive implications for Mac users involved in online teaching and learning.

Later, the group member discussed time management issues from the perspective of the students as well as the online faculty. One significant contribution by a group member related to the “establishment and use of boundaries.” The group member expressed how “boundaries” represent taking control of the online teaching experience versus being controlled or inundated by the excessive demands on instructors’ time. The members suggested some strategies to help with time management:

- Try to develop course content early. This leaves more time during the semester to interact with students and to provide relevant feedback.
- Audio record feedback to students and post recordings as mp3’s. This saves time typing and students respond well to audio feedback.
- Set definite online office hours. Office hours represent time that has been carved out specifically to interact with students. Try to vary the hours across multiple days and time periods to allow flexibility.
- Create a discussion forum called “Students Helping Students,” to allow students to assist one another. This will free-up instructors’ time and also provide opportunities for students to exercise their civic responsibilities. Be sure to monitor the forum regularly to ensure the accuracy of information.

3. The members discussed possible items to be including in next meeting’s agenda.

4. The meeting adjourned at 4:25 pm.