

TEACHx

Bryan Libbin

Course: Communication Studies 525

Students: 3 classes at 3 universities with 12-14 students each (38 total)

bit.ly/tx16lib

Three Classes, Three Universities

An Experiment in Virtual Learning Spaces

Context

The challenge being addressed was how to link three universities and multiple speakers together within live and virtual spaces, facilitating interaction and collaboration for all aspects of the course.

Project

Provide three schools taking one course with live and virtual environments using one of our active learning spaces, Blue Jeans, Canvas, Google Groups, and Mediasite.

Objectives & Outcomes

- Combine three live classrooms into one virtual class that leverages the combined influence of Northwestern University, Penn, and U of W to attract top scholars in the field of computational social sciences to lecture.
- Utilize technology to bring multiple speakers, instructors, and classes together to deliver and enhance course content, create dialogue, and share information in real time.
- Create collaborative spaces where students are able to interact and work with other students in multiple disciplines from three universities.

Results

The synchronous learning solutions, coupled with Canvas, Google Groups, and Mediasite, have enabled both real-time collaboration and a virtual environment for further collaboration and assessment. The hardware in the room eliminated many of the issues seen in past experiences.

Lessons Learned

Early collaboration with both the IT team and the professors gave us the time to properly scope the project; designate the best learning spaces for live, group, and individual collaboration; and apply the necessary resources for proper QA testing. Testing with the individual speakers and the environments they chose to collaborate in was a continuous challenge.