

ON-LINE TEACHING: THE NEW FRONTIER

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Greetings! I'm Jeff Gutliph (Mr. G) and I'm Ms. Schlossenberg (Ms. S).

Well that's pretty much how we started the class we team taught in the fall of 1997. The class was an Intermediate Algebra class that was taught using the method of Computer Assisted Instruction. Course materials: class notes, in-class projects, and tests as-well-as the syllabus, assignment sheet and comprehensive course guide, were all delivered and/or presented to the students using the World Wide Web.

Mr. G had been developing interactive on-line course-based software for the past 2 years. Ms. S noticed what he was doing and asked to team-teach a course. Mr. G was happy to have a fellow professional use the software and provide input for improvements. In addition to providing numerous suggestions for enhancing the software, Ms. Schlossenberg was able to provide a learning styles survey which Mr. Gutliph converted to an interactive on-line document. Mr. G was also able to implement on-line offices and by using a chat program, both he and Ms. S were able to maintain on-line office hours.

Both of us learned something from our team-teaching experience.

Mr. G explains first:

Um, yes... well... first I was reminded that you don't develop software by yourself in a closet. I had learned this lesson well, I'd thought, when I first introduced the software to the students. Students were not shy about telling me what they did and did not like and I made changes as appropriate. Ms. S had very few suggestions in this area. When she saw the teacher interface, it was a different story. The suggestions started flowing. I am still working on implementing some of them some six months later.

I was also reminded of quite a few techniques that I used to use to teach different topics as well as several new methods. I would encourage all faculty members to team-teach a class every few years if possible. For me it was a real revelation.

And now for Ms. S:

The hardest thing I had to learn was KISS, *Keep It Short Schlossenberg*. I was used to going over homework at the beginning of class and then having the remainder of class to cover new material. In this type of class that method of teaching did not work. We had to leave time for the computer projects. As Mr. G kept reminding me the "A" in CAI stands for assisted, "Let the computer assist you." After I

was able to shorten my lectures, I was quite happy with what I saw and with what I was able to do. What I saw was that the students who understood the lecture were able to practice their "new found" knowledge immediately by doing the computer based projects. Student's who had problems were able to get one-on-one attention from either Mr. G or me before they went home to do their homework. We even had some of the more advanced students helping out, which of course was good for all involved. This had the added advantage that there were far fewer questions asked about homework problems the following class meeting.

Well, enough about our classroom experiences, as we were instructed this article "should be based on your conference presentation." We had planned to mention all of the above during the presentation, but due to circumstances beyond our control, our 60 minute time slot got chopped down to 45 minutes. That was fine with us, it allowed us to jump right into the software demonstration.

We had decided that we would just treat our presentation as if it were the first day of class. (Once we decided that, our case of the jitters slacked off a bit.) We were so locked into this that we had not even considered what would happen if the "Net" went down. We did not even have a handout. Lucky us, the Net was up. <Big sigh of relief.> This does present us with a slight problem now. Should we describe what we did during the presentation? That, we decided, would be too boring. Instead, Mr. G has set up a web site that has a special version of the software. It's "special" because it contains instructions and comments (in red) which are not normally present. It should be enough to get folks started. The web address is:

www.dc.peachnet.edu/~jgutliph/presentation

Enter exactly as typed above. You will be taken to a page that lists various presentations. Choose the Conference on College & University Teaching presentation. Follow the links...

Any questions? Mr. G can be reached at: jgutliph@dekalb.dc.peachnet.edu and Ms. S can be reached at dschloss@dekalb.dc.peachnet.edu

In closing, we'd both like to say that we enjoyed the conference. We hope to attend and possibly present again next year. For ya'll that ain't been to Kennesaw, go! (Just had to slip some of that southern speak in there, didn't you Mr. G?) <Mr. G grins through the half-opened closet door. A slight chuckle can be heard over the clacking keyboard.> *