

Using Electronic Resources in Course Activities

Michael J. Albright
Dakota Wesleyan University
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Many faculty members are conditioned by their own college experiences and years of practice to allow the textbook to dictate the course content and to organize course activities around the textbook. This is fine if the instructor wrote the textbook, perhaps not so fine otherwise. The step of selection of course readings occurs about in the middle of a course development model, not at the beginning. Nowhere is it written that a course has to have a textbook, although I certainly would acknowledge that many courses probably need them, particularly general education courses.

In more advanced classes, the learning outcomes that you establish for your course may be better achieved through other kinds of readings and related learning experiences. The document *Using the Power of the Web in Course Activities*, found elsewhere in the Handouts portlet, describes the use of web resources. Many other options are available to you and your students. It is fairly easy to customize collections of readings for specific course needs, and provide them to your students either through links directly from TigerNet or through the use of electronic coursepacks (see below).

Use of Library Resources

You are likely already familiar with Layne Library's excellent collection of digital library resources, from databases to full-text articles from periodical publications (<http://www.dwu.edu/library/resources.htm>). As you can see in the Web Links portlet of our own workshop, you can link directly from your course in TigerNet to articles in these online databases. Please contact Jodie Barker in Layne Library (jobarker@dwu.edu or phone 995-2619 for personalized assistance in identifying and collecting online resources for your class.

Use of Articles from Online Publications

New Jour (<http://gort.ucsd.edu/newjour/>) is a wonderful source of information about more than 16,000 professional journals and newsletters that provide at least content online. Many provide full text of their articles online, although some do require a registration and perhaps a fee payment. If you identify articles from publications not available in full text via Layne Library, you can go to the New Jour site to see if the publication is otherwise available online. Find the article, copy the URL, and link directly to it from TigerNet.

Book Chapters and Other Materials Not Online

What about book chapters, journal articles that have not been digitized for online access (for example from older volumes), and other publications not online, such as older reports of historical value. Do you have, or can you get, printed copies, which could be photocopies of chapters of books on your bookshelf or obtained through Interlibrary Loan? If you can, then you can provide them to your students via electronic coursepacks.

Several companies offer services in this area. For example, the Copyright Clearance Center recently launched its Electronic Course Content Service (ECCS) (<http://www.copyright.com/>) to help educational organizations develop electronic

coursepacks for students. XanEdu (<http://www.xanedu.com/>) and University Readers (<http://www.universityreaders.com/>) are other companies that operate in this market space.

All you need to do is provide these companies with photocopies of the publications you wish to include. They will obtain the necessary copyright clearances, compile the coursepacks, and make them available (for a fee) to the students. They will work with the DWU Bookstore to sell them in paper format when students buy their books, or they will provide you with the URL and login information, so you can place a direct link to the coursepack within TigerNet. Students then go to the vendor's web site, create accounts, log in, pay for the coursepack with a credit card, and download the materials in PDF format.

For example, for the past three years, I have used in my Nova Southeastern University course an electronic coursepack containing five independent book chapters and one old (1992) journal article that is not available online in full text. The cost is about \$26. These are indispensable readings that I can now make easily accessible to my students. Feedback from the students has been overwhelmingly positive. I use XanEdu and have been very happy with their service.