LII
legal information institute

Consortium for Distance Education

How to Prepare Course Presentations for Online or Disk Delivery: A Step-by-Step Tutorial

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I. Background

It was 1996 when Cornell's Legal Information Institute (LII) first began exploring the use of digital technology to teach law unconstrained by clock and classroom. From the outset we have endeavored to share our experience. Our report to the ABA on the LII's first four years of on-line teaching is still offered by the Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar as a key resource on the subject. In 2001 the LII gathered law teachers from across the country and beyond for a week-long distance learning workshop. All its sessions were recorded and remain accessible via the Web.

With CALI's launch of the CODEC initiative, we undertook the preparation of LII "Playbooks" that lay out the key steps in our course preparation and administration process and provided CODEC with detailed information on the technical and administrative systems employed in the LII courses.

Also under the auspices of CODEC we offered a "hands on" workshop at the 2004 CALI Conference. It focused on preparation of presentations for remote delivery. This tutorial, subsequently commissioned by CALI, expands upon that workshop and opens it to law teachers who were not in Seattle.

Links

- An illustrative module from the LII's online Social Security course
- LII's 2001 Report to ABA
- LII's 2001 Workshop
- Playbook on: Marketing, Conducting, and Administering an Inter-School, Internet-Based Course
  - (Feb. presentation)
- Playbook on: Designing and Constructing a Distance Law Course (or Set of Course Components)
  - (June presentation)

II. The Aim of this Tutorial

A premise underlying the tutorial is that whether distance learning methods are employed throughtout an entire course or are, instead, used sparingly and experimentally in the context of a classroom-based course, one component is likely to be teacher presentation. Although the law school teaching paradigm is interactive, most courses include a number of topics that call for lecture. These days that is often augmented by PowerPoint or some other form of visual display. (It is that added element which leads this tutorial to use the term "presentation" rather than "lecture.")

Like the June workshop the tutorial is intended to be "hands on." Through a sequence of steps it endeavors to guide participants through the process of preparing a short presentation. As it proceeds participants will be encouraged to identify topics in courses they teach, plan, and ultimately produce short presentations on them for potential use with their students. The tutorial introduces the key hardware and software tools and provides basic instruction on their use.

III. Preparing a Presentation - 5 Steps

All links below provide access to streaming RealMedia audio files. To run them you will need the (free) RealOne player [available by clicking here].

If you encounter something that doesn't seem to be working as it should or have questions or comments on the content of this tutorial, please contact me by email (suggested subject line: Tutorial).

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Step 1: Introduction and Topic Selection	• Teaching law online - Diverse images • The potential value of distance methods in classroom-based courses • Identifying candidates for a multi-media presentation • Short is beautiful with distance learning modules • Audio versus video • Saving video for limited purposes (and a future day)	Duration: 14 minutes
Step 2: Before You Record	• Preparing your "script" • Selecting and locating illustrative material • Weighing alternative distribution methods and platforms	Duration: 14.5 minutes
Step 3: Getting Acquainted with the Audio Recording and Editing Tools	• Paths to avoid • Reviewing some attractive (and inexpensive) options • Becoming familiar with the processes of recording and editing yourself - a simple exercise	Duration: 17.5 minutes
Step 4: Producing Your First Presentation	• Recording the audio • Editing out your "umms", repetitions, and other imperfections • Mapping the presentation's visual elements against its audio	Duration: 11 minutes
Step 5: Preparing the Presentation for Dissemination	• The final steps	Duration: 14.5 minutes

	Factors influencing choice among options • The principal options • Samples with resource references and recipes	