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Welcome to the first issue of WebCampus News—the newsletter of the online learning community at Stevens Institute of Technology. Our mission is to keep our eLearning audience informed of services, events, and new developments of special interest. This will be no ordinary newsletter. With each future, monthly edition, you will meet online students—many located way-off-campus—and learn how they are making the most of their time with Stevens. You will hear from award-winning online instructors about their teaching approaches that helped students to achieve their maximum potential. Our future Alumni Spotlight column will show you how WebCampus made a difference for busy professionals as they advanced in their careers. You will see the extent to which the staff at Stevens goes to make sure that online students know about the full range of services that are available. Most of all, you will notice a concerted effort by the WebCampus News staff to engage with the University's broad and diverse audience of eLearning participants (both students and faculty) to foster an active and valuable online community. Feedback about your online experiences will be continually sought; issues will be aggressively examined. And the successes of our online students and faculty will be celebrated.

Join us as we work to create the best possible online learning experience.

Robert Zotti

Assistant Dean, WebCampus

2016 Provost's Online Teaching Award

Elaine Lehecka Pratt, MBA, is an industry professor in the pharmaceutical manufacturing and engineering (PME) graduate program in the Mechanical Engineering Department of the Schaefer School of Engineering & Science. She is also advisor for the *Women in* Pharma Club at Stevens. Professor Pratt has taught PME graduate courses online via WebCampus since fall 2003. In addition to teaching PME courses on campus, Professor Pratt redeveloped a number of PME courses taught on campus into online versions and developed entirely new online courses for new PME online graduate degrees.

Professor Pratt's classes have consistently received high score from students on course surveys. Professor Pratt has averaged scores of 3.8/4.0 over her entire teaching history at Stevens. (See student comments below.) Professor Pratt investigates and utilizes the latest technologies to keep her courses innovative and current.

Her students look to her as a professional mentor and she supports her students in all ways possible, including arranging internship and employment opportunities. She spearheads student activities and seminars to help connect her students with various professional organizations, including the American Society for Quality, GMP Training and Education Association and Parenteral Drug Association. Congratulations, Professor Pratt!

Student comments

1 "I always enjoyed the Professors' classes. The main reason I enrolled in this class was because of the professor. She is a very strong professor and I know that she will make the course interesting and valuable."

2 "It was easy to navigate and I understood exactly when the due dates were. I really loved taking this class. Prof. Pratt is one of my favorite teachers; she was the reason I continued to take my master's in PME. I would recommend this course to anyone who really wants to understand sterile manufacturing."

Unlocking the Benefits of Synchronous Chat

Long-time WebCampus Professor William Tortoriello successfully utilizes online synchronous chat. Read about his proven methods!

William (Bill) Tortoriello, a seasoned online instructor, has been teaching for Stevens' WebCampus since 2005. Bill is a vastly experienced industry professional who brings his expertise into the classroom. He has more than 25 years of pharmaceutical manufacturing expertise and serves on Stevens' Advisory Board. In the past, he has served on several pharmaceutical manufacturing counsels. He teaches the course **Process Safety Management** and has successfully used synchronous chat in his online course for the past 10 years.

When asked what he enjoyed most about teaching online, Bill responded **"I enjoy most being able to share real-life experiences and hearing the students engage one another in the chat sessions."** Bill typically has more than half of the enrolled students attend each of his seven synchronous chats throughout the semester. Bill attributes the high attendance to moving the chats to different days of the week and different times of the day to accommodate as many students as possible.

I asked Bill if he encountered any pitfalls when using synchronous chat and he responded **"The pitfalls are that when many students comment simultaneously before I can respond to one comment, then there can be discontinuity in the responses. We need to teach 'chat etiquette.' Because of this, it can be difficult to acknowledge and/or respond to every student's comment."** The synchronous chats in his course are graded, but the total possible points for participation in a chat would not sway someone an entire grade but rather bump a B+ grade up to an A-. In order for a student to receive the full participation points for a chat, they must contribute three comments that add value to the conversation. The text chats are saved so that students unable to attend the live chat can read the saved chat postings and participate in the discussion area designated for that chat and pose questions and contributions to the overall topic.

In 2005, when Bill began teaching online for Stevens, web conferencing was new and very unstable. Asynchronous chat, on the other hand, was available and easy to use!

One student recently commented, "The chat sessions were especially helpful for instilling the principles of the class through real-world scenarios." Another student commented, "The weekly chats on the forum board were extremely insightful and interactive."
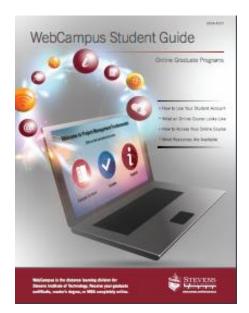
I asked Bill how, in the past ten years, the course evolved. He responded, **"I have brought many new incidents into the course that are reviewed during the chat sessions that the students really enjoy. Enrollment has steadily increased from 10 students a year to 40 students per year. In the past two years, the course was offered for the fall semester for the first time in addition to the spring semester."**

WebCampus wishes you continued success with your course!

WebCampus Student Guide

WebCampus recently released the latest version of the WebCampus Student Guide. This guide was developed for students new to Stevens' online courses or those who have not recently taken an online course. The guide will walk you through how to use your Student Account, access your course(s) and the resources available to you.

This 12-page guide is available electronically at stevens.edu/sites/stevens_edu/files/WebCampus/FINAL_STUDENTGUIDE.pdf. A printed, hard copy can be obtained from WebCampus personnel. Contact Allison Ruppino at 201.216.5602, aruppino@stevens.edu. Copies are also available in the magazine rack outside the door to the WebCampus offices at the Altorfer Complex, 5th floor.

Instructor Tip of the Month

Add Atomic Learning Modules to Your Online Course

Stevens has partnered with Atomic Learning to provide "just in time" training for our students on topics ranging from MSOffice products to APA and MLA citation training. Atomic Learning has training for 215 applications. You can add modules for activities specific to your course (ex. MSProject Gantt charts) or a general search option for students to peruse topics.

For information, contact Andres Garcia at 201.216.3507 or andres.garcia@stevens.edu.

Student Tip of the Month

Create a Portfolio of Work

You worked hard during your course. Why not create a portfolio of projects that you can use at your next job interview or annual review? A portfolio is proof of your skills and abilities. Use your portfolio when preparing for a promotion or new job.

As the semester progresses, make sure you don't lose all the work you are generating. Download to your computer or memory stick, any projects, assignments or discussions you want to keep.

How to Have a Successful Semester — Steps to follow

Both instructors and students are accountable for a successful learning experience. Below are some general suggestions.

INSTRUCTORS

1.) Provide your contact information, preferred method of contact and office hours to your students.

2.) Publish new items you add to your course. Students do not have access until they are published.

3.) Attempt to answer your students' questions as quickly as possible. Nothing frustrates a student more than having to wait for an answer before they can proceed on an assignment.

4.) If you are unable to access the course for 24 hours or longer due to a work or personal circumstance, notify your students by email or through the announcements tool in Canvas.

5.) Enjoy the semester!

STUDENTS

1.) Access your course and locate the syllabus and course schedule.

2.) Make note of exam and live web conference dates.

3.) Add your instructor contact information into your mobile devices and email to avoid communications going into a junk folder.

4.) Verify how your instructor accepts homework submissions (email or through Canvas).

5.) Clear your personal schedule to make time for your course activities.

6.) Enjoy the semester!

Important Dates

End of add/drop	Jan. 30
Last day for 90% refund	Feb. 6
Last day for 50% refund	Feb. 21
Spring break	Mar. 12-19

Tell us what you think!

What stories would you like us to publish?

Would you like to write a story for us?

Let us know!

Contact: Wendy Pate

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