Ten Top Tools
for Distance Learning
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Distance Education
- “Hot topic” -- an educational trend
- Definition
- Delivery plans
  - F2F with supplemental resources
  - Totally “at a distance”
- Anything done Face-to-face can be done at a distance

Ten Distance Education Technologies
- A hierarchy of interactivity
- Sequentially build skills
- “Good” DE incorporates multiple communication technologies
- Technologies complement each other: always have a “Plan B”
- Issues include platform, processor speed, connection & CPU memory

1. Text (?)
- The book – traditionally paper
  - Electronic:
    - NetLibrary via the NSU Electronic Library
    - The Online Books Page – free, public domain books
    - Web pages as supplementary (text) resources

2. Telephone
- Cornerstone technology
- “audio conference”
  - Conference calling
- Requires protocols
- Still a viable one-on-one tool
  - “Call your instructor???”

3. Email
- Basic!
- “Netiquette”
- Use of the “cc”
- Received when “checked”
- Anytime, anyplace
- Send files as attachments
  - Documents, photos, sounds, video – watch file size (download time)

4. Webboards/Discussion Areas & “Blogs”
- Threaded discussion “message boards” (WebCT feature)
  - Any time, any place
  - Requires browser
  - Received when read
- No notice of postings
  - Requires understanding of REPLY vs. COMPOSE
5. Tex-Based Chat
- Same time - same place: “Chat Room” (WebCT feature)
- Transcript is possible, depending on software: script-like
- Visual, multi-topic: protocols needed
- “Electronic office hours”
- Fun!
- Chat transcript example
  –http://www.nova.edu/~burmeist/chatexample.html

6. “Learning Environments”
- Electronic “One Shop Stop”
- WebCT
  ▪ V-Class – “E-live” within WebCT
  ▪ Other “courseware” software
    ▪ Blackboard
    ▪ Moodle – free, open source
    ▪ etc. – CMS, LMS, VLE

7. Instant Messaging
- ICQ, AOL Instant Messenger, MSN & Yahoo…
- Detect “friends” online
- Instant text chat
- A “Plan B” communication technology

8. Voice Chat
- Yahoo Instant Messenger
- Supports up to 10 simultaneous connections
- Improve transmission: headset with microphone
- Many ways to use this creatively
- Supports “Web cam”

9. Online Collaboration
- Shared applications
  ▪ Training delivered “to the desktop”
  ▪ eLive feature; also available via NetMeeting

10. Videoconferencing
- Band-width is an issue
- Is value added?
- Can be fun!
- Performance increases with bandwidth
- CUSeeMe, NetMeeting, V-Tel – NSU has a “bridge”

Summary
- Technologies are here and getting better
- Goal: facilitate interaction, content delivery: see you online!
- Website with additional resources:
  http://www.nova.edu/~burmeist/topten_resources.html

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