



Best Educational E-Practices (BEEP)

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Broadening the Base of E-Learners

“These are good days to be involved in the nexus where education meets technology.”
(Richard T. Hezel and Paula Szulc Dominguez, [Education at a Distance](#), April 2001)

This issue examines the idea of leveraging technology to increase access to programs and courses for an expanded pool of learners. Planning the effort, offering innovative programs, collaborating with other groups and institutions, and retaining students after their initial enrollment are all part of the total picture.

Planning an E-Learning Expansion

- [“e-Learning for Adults: Who Has the Goods?”](#) Article by Robert M. Burnside in *Commentary*, July/August 2001, that analyzes the existing alternatives, corporate and educational, for online learning, and recommends collaboration among these present-day competitors.
- [“Facing the Challenges, Getting the Right Way with Distance Learning.”](#) Article by S. T. Marina in *Education at a Distance* 15 (30), March 2001, discussing the experience of Indonesia, one of the first to embrace online learning technologies to serve the people of its many islands.
- [“Lessons for Higher Education from the Dot Coms.”](#) Article by Chris Brezil in *Educause Quarterly* 23 (4), 2000, suggesting using a good business plan, incorporating long-term goals into online strategy, investing the capital necessary to do the job right, offering a quality experience, and training current personnel to perform in an online environment.
- [“Liberal Arts Education and Information Technology: Time for Another Renewal.”](#) Article by Todd D. Kelley in *Educause Quarterly* 23 (4), 2000, that addresses the impact of instructional technology, its rapid changes, and the growing need for workers with technological skills.
- [“Prepare Your Campus for E-Business.”](#) Article by Jill Kidwell, John Mattie and Michael Sousa in *Educause Quarterly* 23 (2) 2000, offering tips for crafting a successful strategy for those institutions considering a major e-business initiative.
- [Spiral Marketing Online: Increase Enrollment with Web Database Marketing.](#) Portland Community College (OR). One of several Powerpoint presentations the college has done, this one focusing on building enrollment through online marketing.
- [“Strategic Planning in E-Learning Collaborations.”](#) Article by Richard T. Hezel and Paula Szulc Dominguez in *Education at a Distance* 15 (40), April 2001, that underscores the need for strategic planning before beginning any collaborative venture.

Examples of Individual Initiatives

- [“The Building of a Virtual Lecture Hall: Netcasting at the University of South Florida.”](#) Article in *Cause/Effect* 22 (2), 1999, and cautionary tale, that examines the technological and political pains of starting a new initiative to enhance the experience of placebound students.
- [“John A. Logan Attracts D-E Students with Offbeat Courses.”](#) Article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* 46 (23), 2/11/2000, detailing one college’s offerings of noncredit courses in unusual subjects and their work with thirteen other Illinois colleges to attract students.
- [Rio Salado College Distance Learning Program](#) (AZ). A brief but complete summary of the current e-learning alternatives offered by one of the pioneers in the field.
- [Sam Houston University](#) (TX). An introductory look at a master’s degree program in either Military History or Education in Reading offered at a traditional university.
- [“Serving the Underserved...An Alternative for the Military.”](#) Article by Godfrey Garner and Curtis Kynerd in *Community College Journal*, April/May 2000, examining the example of Hinds Community College’s (MS) criminal justice program for Marines. (See also the [eArmyU](#) initiative.)
- [“Technology-Enhanced Learning and Community with Market Appeal.”](#) Article by Brian Alexander Young in *Educause Quarterly* 23(4) 2000 that highlights the University of Dayton’s personalized virtual room for incoming students that lets them connect with the university community months before they begin their studies. Could easily be adapted to online learners.

Examples of Collaborative Efforts

- **[“Administering Distance Courses Taught in Partnership with Other Institutions.”](#)** Extensive article by Saul Carliner of Bentley College (MA) in *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration* 4 (2), Summer 2001, that looks at a partnership between two distinct University of Minnesota campuses. It recommends identifying an administrative model; considering the different academic cultures and resources at each institution; coordinating calendars, registration, book orders, and grading procedures; planning for delivery of materials, technology disasters, and student evaluations; and developing personal relationships with students, faculty and staff.
- **[“Canada’s Education Ministers Seek to Foster Online Learning.”](#)** Article by Janice Paskey in *The Chronicle of Higher Education Daily News*, 7/18/01, regarding an initiative by the Canadian government to foster online learning by removing barriers between the nation’s provinces and territories, rural and urban areas, and native/non-native Canadians via university collaboration.
- **[“Pennsylvania Community Colleges Form Online Consortium.”](#)** Article by Erik Lords in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* 46 (30), 3/31/00, about a “virtual community college consortium” of the state’s 15 community colleges. Similar is the new **[Florida Academic Counseling and Tracking for Students](#)** (FACTS), which serves community college and public university students.
- **[“Oakland U. Begins Online MBA Program for Students in Lebanon,”](#)** Article by David Cohen in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* 47 (18), 1/12/01 about the Michigan university’s new international program. A similar initiative has begun at **[Carnegie Mellon University](#)** (PA), which in October 2000 announced a partnership between itself and an Indian technology company to offer online programming classes in India.
- **[“Seeking Online Students, Franklin U. Builds Ties to 2-Year Colleges.”](#)** Article by Jeffrey R. Young in *The Chronicle of Higher Education Daily News*, 12/13/00, that describes the Ohio school’s partnerships with more than 90 community colleges in the U.S. and Canada.
- **[“Two Models for Collaboration in Distance Education.”](#)** Article by Dan Carnevale in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* 46 (37), 5/19/00, comparing the slow growth of Western Governors University to the success of the Southern Regional Education Board’s Electronic Campus.
- **[“U. of Oxford Joins Princeton, Stanford and Yale in a Distance-Education Venture.”](#)** Article by Sarah Carr in *The Chronicle of Higher Education Daily News*, 9/25/00, discussing a multi-million dollar collaborative effort to offer online courses to their alumni.
- **[Virtual Campus Collaboration.](#)** An About.com site with links to state and regional partnerships.

Retention – Keeping Those Already Enrolled

- **[“As Distance Education Comes of Age, the Challenge Is Keeping the Students.”](#)** Article by Sarah Carr in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* 46 (23), 2/11/00, that presents a variety of opinions from colleges nationwide regarding the causes of and solutions to online attrition.
- **[“Elements of Effective E-Teaching and E-Learning.”](#)** *Best Educational E-Practices*, Issue 4, 1/1/01. Strategies for retention and success of e-students.
- **[Florida State University Mentor Support.](#)** All distance courses include a course team that supports students by providing tutorial guidance and help in remaining involved in a collaborative, learning environment, an approach that has greatly improved online student retention.
- **[“Good Connections: Strategies to Maximize Student Engagement.”](#)** Article by Mary I. Dereshiwsky and Eugene R. Moan in *Education at a Distance* 14 (11), November 2000, identifying ways to counter the attrition from online courses that result from factors like student isolation, the accelerated pace, competing responsibilities, technical problems and more. For the authors, constant communication and student involvement are the keys to retention.
- **[How to Keep E-Learners from E-Scaping.](#)** An eLITE Thank Tank white paper by James Moshinskie of Baylor University (TX), 2001, extensively detailing successful strategies for retention before and during a course. An example of transferable tips from the corporate world.
- **[Student Support Online Through Thoughtful Course Design.](#)** Paper by Cheryl White of Grant MacEwan College, Alberta, Canada, 2000, maintaining that providing guidance to students enrolled in e-courses can positively influence student completion rates. Included are specific online resources like FAQ pages, examples of completed assignments, automatic confirmation of assignments submitted online, print-friendly course content options and more.
- **[“Why Online Learners Drop Out.”](#)** Article by Karen Frankola of NYU in *Workforce*, 7/29/00, that appears with a companion article, **[“Tips for Increasing E-Learning Completion Rates”](#)** by the same author. Enumerates reasons for withdrawal, with strategies to ensure a high course completion rate. Another example of corporate tips easily transferable to an academic situation.