

# Three Things!

Thematic News and Views about Distance Learning  
Welch Center for Graduate and Professional Studies



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## Instructional Content In Your Online Course

Are you new to teaching online? Perhaps a veteran faculty member needing to update your course? How do you decide which materials to include, and which will have the greatest impact on your students?

This issue of **THREE THINGS!** focuses on how to assemble and deliver quality instructional content to your students so that your course is wholly informative and engaging. Successful online courses generally combine instructional content in these three categories: 1) lecture capture, 2) web conferencing, and 3) podcasts, images, movies and more.

*A rule of thumb to help with your planning: For a 3-credit online course, you should assemble 2.5 hours per week of instructional content for your students. This includes activities like viewing lectures, participating in live meetings, engaging with instructional multimedia and directly interacting with faculty.*

### LECTURE CAPTURE

*Lecture capture* is way for instructors to record lectures for students to replay at a later time. To “capture” a lecture, you record your voice along with anything on your computer screen—a PowerPoint presentation, for example, or a Word document, a website, video, photo or other piece of media, or a combination of these.



**BENEFITS:** *Lecture capture*—or more broadly, *screencasting*—is an essential component of many online courses because it allows you to easily and dynamically impart instructional content to your learners. Your screencasts are delivered *asynchronously* (in delayed time), and students can access the material according to their own schedules. This increases their control over the pace of learning and expands possibilities for reviewing topics.

#### SUGGESTED USES:

- **Mini-lectures:** In Goucher graduate courses, *lecture*

#### RESOURCES:

[Screencast-o-matic](#)

[How to Use the  
Panopto Lecture  
Capture Tool](#)

[Welch Center Faculty  
Tutorials and  
Resources](#)

*capture* is most commonly used to record “mini lectures”—lecture sections 10-15 minutes in length. Short sections like this make information easier to absorb.

- **Feedback:** *Lecture capture* is also useful in narrating assignment feedback to students, especially if you prefer speaking to writing. For example, instead of writing a paragraph of feedback on a student paper, you can make a recording of your comments with the student’s paper on your screen. You send the recording to the student, who receives personal, rich and informative feedback.

- **Assignment explanations and welcome videos:** *Lecture capture* is also perfect for explaining assignments, and for recording welcome-to-the-course videos.

**LECTURE CAPTURE PROGRAMS:** *Screencast-o-matic* and *Panopto* are two *lecture capture* programs supported by the Welch Center. Work with the Distance Learning team to determine which program is right for you and your teaching goals.

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## WEB CONFERENCING

*Web conferencing* is a method for you and your distance learners to meet online *synchronously* (in real time) to conduct instructional events and student-directed activities like—

- discussions
- student presentations with visual aids
- Q&A sessions about readings
- check-ins on research projects
- office hours

You can also use *web conferencing* for meeting with guest speakers and conducting interviews with experts. Some faculty use *web conferencing* to give lectures to students, but you may find that *lecture capture* is a better medium for this task. In residency-format courses, *synchronous meetings* are a great way to extend group cohesiveness into the three online weeks.

**HOW OFTEN:** In fully-online graduate courses at Goucher, *synchronous meetings* generally occur



### RESOURCES:

[Welch Center Faculty Tutorials and Resources](#)

[Guide to Online Faculty Services for Faculty](#)

weekly, or every other week. These meetings are counted toward the 2.5 hours-per-week of instructional content recommended for a 3-credit online course.

**TOOLS:** WebEx is Goucher College’s *web conferencing* system of choice. You may be familiar with similar services like *Skype*, *FaceTime* and *Google Hangouts*. Each system provides users with an empowering array of tools to communicate online with anyone, anywhere.

**PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT:** Successful *synchronous meetings* take practice for faculty and students alike. Feel free to experiment, and make sure to have a practice session without the pressure of a “room” full of students.

## PODCASTS, IMAGES, MOVIES AND MORE

*Multimedia* is an important way to share instructional content in your online course. It includes audio podcasts, photographs, illustrations, movies, videos, animations, websites and more.

**PODCASTS** are readily available on the Internet or through software like iTunes. These can be easily linked in your course modules.

**IMAGES** can be added directly on the course main page and to internal content pages, to create visual engagement for students.

**VIDEOS** are also plentiful online. The Goucher College library has extensive lists of free-on-the-web streaming video sites with nearly 50,000 videos.

**OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES (OERS)** are media materials—including videos and movies—readily available online and offered freely for teaching, learning and research. OERs allow instructors to mix and match content for a more personalized, engaging learning experience.

Ask the Distance Learning team for help with researching and displaying media.



### RESOURCES:

[Video at Goucher College Library](#)

[Top Documentary Films](#)

[YouTube](#)

[Open Educational Resources in Higher Education](#)

[Ultimate List of Free Music for ELearning](#)

[How to Choose Multimedia for Your eLearning Course](#)

**THREE THINGS!**

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