

An Evaluation of an Online Program

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Abstract

This study is an evaluation of the online program under development at the University of Hawaii at Manoa's (UHM) English Language Institute (ELI). The ELI offers courses in English for academic purposes to non-native speakers of English who have been matriculated at UHM and have been deemed as being likely to benefit from additional academic English instruction. In 2002 the ELI began developing and implementing six out of seven of its courses for online delivery. In the Fall 2002 semester, questionnaires and interviews were administered to both students and developers/teachers of the online courses in order to collect relevant data in order to determine the current state of the ELI's program, any areas which were problematic and needed to be addressed, and recommendations for future actions. The data were then coded and analyzed. The results of this study show that the ELI's online program is doing well considering its relatively early stage, yet has several key areas in which it can work to improve.

Introduction

Distance learning has been in existence for hundreds of years. The first known advertised course appeared in 1728—a correspondence course to teach shorthand skills (Wang and Sun, 2001). Until the mid-20th century, the technology of distance learning developed comparatively slowly; the exchange of information and materials occurred chiefly through the mail. With rather rapid advances in the 20th century in electronic media technology, such as radio, television, and audio/video recordings, distance learning

entered a period of unprecedented growth (Belanger and Jordan, 2000). A significant amount of the exchange of the course materials and student work, however, still had to take place through the mail. Unfortunately, many people still connect the term “distance learning” with “correspondence learning” and they possess negative attitudes towards both concepts as inferior, cheap alternatives to traditional on-site educational methods (Richards, 1993). With the development of personal computers and the Internet, however, distance education is in the process of moving to a much higher level of sophistication, viability, and acceptability. Indeed, evidence is accumulating that online courses are not only educationally equivalent to traditional courses (Jones, 1999) but, given the right people, materials and circumstances, they can surpass traditional courses (Omoregie, 1997) in overall effectiveness.

When online¹ courses are offered by institutions which also offer the same courses on-site, the question of equivalence obviously arises. Many institutions (including the one considered here) expect or require both versions to be educationally equivalent. Fortunately, equivalence does not necessarily mean the online and traditional classes have to be identical in materials, activities, and procedures, although significant overlap is acceptable if it is educationally sound for both courses. (This is true of traditional classes as well, in that students in two sections of the same course, whether or not it is offered by the same instructor, will have two different, but “equivalent” experiences.) At a fundamental level, however, online course developers must guard against simply transposing the syllabus of a traditional course without both exploiting the advantages offered by the Internet and the technology and by guarding against the potential pitfalls of the same (Kohn, 2001, p. 255). Thus, online course developers,

teachers, and administrators must strive to maintain a balance between pedagogical and technological concerns.

As online courses become more prevalent, institutions of higher learning have to address the multifarious issues surrounding those courses, and the administrators are doing so with varying degrees of complexity and success. In probably one of the most extensive studies to date conducted on evaluating online (i.e., Internet-based) programs at a variety of institutions of higher learning, Phipps and Merisotis (2000) state that due to the incredibly brisk growth of both computer technology and student demand for distance learning many schools “have made a conscious decision to serve students immediately and plan later” (p. 10). This “putting the cart before the horse” method of online program development definitely leaves much to be desired from many perspectives including, but not limited to, pedagogy, materials development, student and faculty support, communication, and of course, evaluation and assessment of the students, the courses, and the faculty. Despite the need for urgency, in order to facilitate achieving a viable program based in sound pedagogical theory and practice, administrators and faculties must “establish ...evaluation as an ongoing integral part of the programmes’s development” (Lynch, 2000, p. 438).

The motivation for the current study was to help establish such an evaluation program in an English for academic purposes (EAP) program at the University of Hawaii at Manoa (UHM). Specifically, the evaluation took place at the English Language Institute (ELI), which is under the supervision of the Department of Second Language Studies, and concerned the ELI’s burgeoning online program. As a teacher in the ELI, I conducted this study with the administration’s approval and supervision. Also, as a

¹ In the remainder of the report, I focus exclusively on distance courses offered online.

teacher of two of the online courses in the Fall 2002 semester and a developer of one of those courses, I had a clear interest in the overall quality and development of the ELI's online program. Finally, this study was undertaken to partially fulfill the requirements for a master's degree in ESL at UHM.

The ELI program provides academic English instruction in reading, writing, and oral/aural communication skills for international students and others (e.g., generation 1.5 students) who have matriculated at the university, but through various measures, notably a placement test, have been designated as being likely to benefit from further academic English instruction. Both undergraduate and graduate students are enrolled in the ELI, and they have to take from one to six courses, usually finishing the requirements in one to two semesters. While the students are required to take and pay for the classes, they do not receive any credit toward their graduation requirements and most courses are evaluated on a credit/no-credit basis, which is fairly typical for this type of university program. The exception to this is ELI 100, Expository Writing: A Guided Approach, which is for undergraduates and may be taken for credit in place of English 101.

Because students in the ELI can come from any academic department in the university, the ELI must be able to accommodate students in any degree program, including online degrees. Prior to Fall 2001 the ELI offered only traditional in-class courses during the regular fall and spring semesters. It had occasionally offered distance classes which were offline and delivered at remote locations by teachers who traveled to those sites. In Fall 2001, as an initiative of a new director, and in response to rapid growth in UH online degrees, the ELI began to develop online courses in order to assist international students who were either pursuing online degrees or who were unclassified

distance learners. Students who were physically present on campus but had conflicting schedules were also allowed to take the online courses. This last case is still a matter concerning official ELI policy which is not settled and will be discussed more fully later.

Thus in the Spring 2002 semester the first two online courses, Advanced Reading (ELI 82), and Academic Writing for International Graduate Students (ELI 83), were developed and implemented by two ELI teachers under the supervision of the ELI administration. In the following semester, four more courses, Intermediate and Advanced Listening (ELI 70 and ELI 80), Intermediate Reading (ELI 72), and Expository Writing (ELI 100), were developed and implemented. The individual teachers who were primarily responsible for the initial development and trial versions of these courses were three experienced ELI teachers, who were also MA candidates in ESL, along with the program's curriculum director. At this time only one more course, Intermediate Reading (ELI 72), remains to be initially developed and implemented. It should be noted here that the administration of the ELI still considers the six courses currently in place still in a developmental stage. A large amount of time and effort, not to mention repeated iterations of course offerings, is needed to finalize the courses.

I move now to the study itself. First I will review the relevant literature, as well as identifying key themes and concepts pertinent to an evaluation of an online language program. Then, I will present the methodology of the data collection and evaluation, followed by a presentation of the results. Finally, I will make recommendations for the ELI specifically and online programs in general.

Literature Review

As online university-level programs grow in both size and number, standards of evaluation must be identified, implemented, and continually refined to ensure that any given program is maintaining and improving its educational integrity. Evaluation can allow a program to gauge the appropriateness of its materials, teaching, development, and so on, while also avoiding simply transposing its traditional syllabi to an Internet format (Wagner, 2001, p. 7). Also, any evaluation should be uniquely planned, constructed, and implemented based on the unique constructs and needs of the program which it is evaluating. While themes and patterns can and should be identified across programs, there is no “cookie-cutter” evaluation plan that will instantly work for a program. Thus, for each individual program and its needs and goals, “evaluation is the systematic collection and analysis of all relevant information necessary to promote the improvement of a curriculum, and assess its effectiveness and efficiency, as well as the participants’ attitudes within the context of the particular institutions involved” (Brown, p. 223, 1989).

As previously stated, Phipps and Merisotis (2000) have published what is probably the most extensive evaluation of online programs to date. The study was commissioned by the National Education Association and Blackboard, Inc., a company which provides online course management systems for Internet-based distance learning. The researchers administered questionnaires or conducted interviews ($n=147$: 27 faculty; 62 administrators; 16 faculty or administrators; and 42 students) at six different institutions of higher learning based on 45 “benchmarks”² they had identified in the literature. Also important to the study is that the following four types of institutions were

² A “benchmark” is a principle and or guideline online programs can use to structure and implement an evaluation.

represented: 1) a community college; 2) a comprehensive institution; 3) a research institution; and 4) a virtual institution (p. 10). The institutions were chosen based on their proven success in and commitment to online distance learning. After analyzing their results, Phipps and Merisotis narrowed the benchmarks down to 24 “that are essential to ensure quality in Internet-based education” (p. 2). The benchmarks were narrowed by considering which areas were considered most universally important by the study’s participants through both the survey and interview data. Using these data the researchers either kept a particular benchmark, combined it with another similar one, or eliminated it completely. Three new benchmarks which were not originally considered were created because of data from the interviews.

Phipps and Merisotis (2000) divide their 24 benchmarks into the following seven categories (for a full listing of the benchmarks see Appendix A): a) institutional support; b) course development; c) teaching/learning; d) course structure; e) student support; f) faculty support; and g) evaluation and assessment. The themes of the benchmarks were analyzed and used in development of the questionnaires and interview questions. Of course, due to differences in the needs and directions of different programs the various categories and their individual benchmarks are not going to be applied equally across programs. The benchmarks have to be used judiciously or supplemented depending upon individual program concerns and needs. The benchmarks for the present study were chosen based on their applicability to the ELI’s online program. The ELI, for example, as a second language teaching and learning program, has issues not addressed by Phipps and Merisotis. The themes of the benchmarks were analyzed and used in development of the questionnaires and interview questions. I also drew upon my own experience as an

online teacher and professional discussions with ELI administrators and previous online teachers in formulating areas of inquiry and evaluation. The data collected for this study focus mainly on the areas of teaching and learning, course structure, and faculty support.

Methodology

The participants for the study were 15 online students studying in the ELI during the Fall 2002 semester, six current and former teachers of the ELI online courses (all of whom had developed one course), and the three ELI administrators, one of whom was also one of the teacher participants. Of these 15 student participants, all were international students six were undergraduates, eight were graduate students, and one was an unclassified “true” distance-learning student³ who was in the process of applying to, and was eventually accepted to, a Ph.D. program at UHM. Also, four of the respondents were taking two ELI online courses during the Fall 2002 semester and four had previous experience with online distance education (two of whom were taking two ELI online courses). Participation was voluntary for students, teachers, and administrators, and compensation was offered to all but the administrators.

With respect to the distribution of the respondents across the individual courses, every course was represented by at least one student. Table 1 shows the overall distribution of participants in this study courses vs. the total number of students enrolled in ELI online courses in Fall 2002.

Table 1

Students Participant Distribution

ELI Course Number and Name	Number of	Total Number of
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³ By “true” distance-learning student, I mean a student who is physically unable to attend classes on campus.

	Participants	Students Enrolled
70 Intermediate Listening	3	3
72 Intermediate Reading	1	2
73 Intermediate Writing	N/A	N/A
80 Advanced Listening	1	3
82 Advanced Reading	5	9
83 Writing for Graduate Students	6	9
100 Expository Writing	3	4

ELI 70, 72, 80, and 100 were being developed and administered for the first time during Spring 2002 and were being allowed to run with special permission from the dean with a deliberately low enrollment cap. In order for the teachers of these courses to be paid for “one” course, they also had to teach a traditional section of the same course with a lower than normal enrollment cap (i.e., 12 students vs. 20). It should also be noted that the courses I taught were ELI 70 and ELI 83, which may in part account for the slightly higher level of participation in those courses.

Data for the study were first collected via questionnaires (Appendix B) given during the Fall 2002 semester to current online students. The student questionnaire was developed and administered online. This was done to make the questionnaire easily accessible to the students and to increase the response rate. Before asking students to complete the questionnaire, it was reviewed by the three administrators of the ELI as well as several teachers. It was then pilot tested on three international students not enrolled in the online courses. Revisions based on the administrators’, teachers’, and students’ suggestions were made and the questionnaire was administered to the students in the

second half of the semester. If students were enrolled in two online courses, they were asked to report an average if possible or report any information they felt was significant in the qualitative sections. For example, if students were enrolled in two courses, they were asked to report the average amount of time they spent in the two courses and if there were any significant information about one or the other course to report that in the qualitative section. Additionally, the other Fall 2002 online teachers and the two teachers of the Spring 2002 semester were asked to complete a questionnaire (Appendix C). Finally, interviews were conducted with seven students (one via email) and three teachers of the online courses in question to further investigate themes discovered in the questionnaire data. The recorded interviews for both the students and the teachers lasted between approximately 25 to 40 minutes. These semi-structured interviews were recorded and partially transcribed for relevant information.

The quantitative data were organized using an Excel worksheet. Data from each of the separate areas of concern (e.g., time issues) were arranged so as to be able to discern any patterns or for ease of analysis. If appropriate to the data (e.g., amount of time spent on the course by students), descriptive statistics were calculated. The qualitative data from the transcripts were organized by grouping all of the responses to a particular question together. These data as well as the data from the interview transcripts and teacher questionnaires were analyzed using the major categories and subordinate categories, or benchmarks identified by Phipps and Merrisotis (2000). I also coded the data for emergent themes specific to the ELI or a similar program.

Results and Discussion

Student Issues

The student questionnaire collected mainly quantitative data concerning the areas of background information, time, online and technical concerns, and general issues. Of course, students were given opportunities to provide qualitative data at this time as well. The response rate among all of the ELI online students was 15 out of 26 students (57.69%).

Distance vs. Non-distance Students

First, of particular interest to the ELI administrators is whether to allow students who are physically present on campus to take an ELI online course. In their interviews and questionnaire data, two teachers did express concerns that the courses should be restricted to only true distance learners. The two teachers thought the needs of the two different groups of students were different enough so as to present significant problems or unnecessary burdens for both teachers and students. While acknowledging that differences do exist between the two groups of students, such as access to library resources, I think they are manageable and that the benefits of having a “mixed” class can outweigh the difficulties. At this point, there simply are not enough true distance learners to run the courses as stand alone courses. As previously stated, the teachers of the online courses which were being developed in Spring 2002 had to teach a traditional course with a lower than normal enrollment cap in conjunction with the online course in order to receive “credit” for teaching one course. Allowing on-campus students to take the ELI online courses provides needed stability for both the graduate assistants who will be teaching them and the emerging online program as a whole. A “mixed” enrollment of

distance and non-distance students provides a sufficiently high teacher/student ratio to allow the courses to run. Of particular interest at this point is that traditional ELI courses typically have a cap of 20 students, i.e., a 20:1 teacher-to-student ratio. This is typical of such courses at most US universities. As Schweber, Kelley and Orr (1998) found, however, faculty of online courses with smaller enrollments than traditional classes still took 2 to 5 hours more per week in preparing, teaching and maintaining the course. Thus, a definite enrollment minimum and maximum, below that of traditional courses, must be established to ensure quality of education.

On the questionnaire students were asked why they were taking the online courses. This information could potentially help to justify permanently allowing on-campus students take the online courses. If a need can be discerned, such as a large number of students with schedule conflicts, then the ELI will be justified in opening the courses to on-campus students. The reasons the students gave for taking the ELI online courses were as follows: 10 for schedule conflicts; three for flexibility in their schedules; one for curiosity; and one because she was physically not able to take classes on campus because she was studying in Taiwan. At least in this semester, the majority of students who responded clearly benefited from the availability of the online courses and the flexibility they offer, which suggests that the ELI would be fulfilling student needs more completely by allowing on-campus and on-island students to enroll in its online courses.

Student Time Issues

With regard to time issues, the first concern was to determine if the amount of time the students spent on the online courses was roughly equivalent to that of traditional courses. The ELI's policy is that students should spend an average of six hours per week

working or studying for each course, including time spent in the classroom. The student online questionnaire asked students to report the amount of time they believed they were spending studying both online and offline for the course. Table 2 displays the reported times the students spent online for their courses, while Table 3 shows the reported times the students spent offline for their courses.

Table 2

Time spent online for students

Time spent (in hours)	Number of students
<.5	1
.5-1	3
1--2	3
2--3	0
3--4	3
4--5	2
5+	3

Table 3

Time spent offline for students

Time spent (in hours)	Number of students
<.5	3
.5-1	2
1--2	0
2--3	2
3--4	1

4--5	6
5+	1

The mean minimum amount of time (combining both online and offline times) the 15 students reported was 5.10 hours (SD=2.41) while the mean maximum amount of reported was 6.73 hours (SD=2.52). Obviously, the standard deviations are quite large. The main reason for this is that there are four outliers, two at the low end who reported they only spent one to two hours per week on the course and two at the high end who reported they spent 9 to 10 hours per week. When these outliers are removed the mean scores are relatively the same (minimum time=5.14; maximum time=7.00) while the standard deviations are quite smaller (1.32 and 1.48). These data suggest the developers and teachers of the ELI online courses in Fall 2002 were assigning an amount of work or study which was in line with the ELI's policy. Also, students mentioned both in their qualitative statements and in interviews that time varied from week to week depending on the assignments.

In addition to the amount of time the students reported they believed they were spending on the course, they were also asked to compare their experiences in the ELI online course with other traditional ESL and university courses. Unfortunately, not all 15 students responded to two of the questions. The first question asked "in relation to *comparable* [emphasis added] traditional ESL classes you have taken, how much *time* [emphasis in original] do you feel you spend on this course?" The second question asked "in relation to *comparable* [emphasis added] traditional ESL classes you have taken, how much *work* [emphasis in original] do you feel you spend on this course?" The third question, which is important in relation to the question of motivation [reference], asked

“in relation to other university classes you have taken, how difficult is it for you to turn in assignments on time?” Table 4 shows the student responses to these three questions.

Table 4

Student responses to comparison questions

	Time	Work	Assignments on time
Less than traditional	5	3	3
Same as traditional	4	5	8
More than traditional	3	5	4

Caution should be taken in interpreting the data for the first two questions, as the participants were asked to compare their ELI online classes with comparable ESL classes, not university classes. It is possible that the students had not had English for academic purposes courses before and thus a true comparison is not possible.

Concerning the third question about how difficult it was to turn in assignments on time, the majority did not perceive themselves as having problems turning in work without the added “incentive” of having to physically hand in work to the instructor as in a traditional course.

The final concern on the student questionnaire about time issues dealt with the time it took the teachers to respond to student questions and assignments. Phipps and Merisotis’s (2000) eighth benchmark states “Feedback to student assignments and questions is constructive and provided in a timely manner” (p. 9). Table 5 shows the data the respondents provided to the question concerning the length of time teachers took to give answers to questions and concerns, while Table 6 shows the data the respondents

provided to the question concerning the timeliness of the teachers' feedback to assignments.

Table 5

Time for instructors' answers to questions and concerns

Time	# of respondents
<1 day	5
1-2 days	9
3-4 days	1
5-6 days	0
7+ days	0

Table 6

Time for instructors' feedback to assignments

Time	# of respondents
<1 day	0
1-2 days	4
3-4 days	5
5-6 days	4

As could be expected, teachers' answers, questions, and concerns were supplied quicker than their responses to assignments, which require much more time investment on the teachers' parts. The interview data also showed that teacher-student communication was most frequently conducted through email (though one teacher did make extensive use of an online discussion board), so some time delay is unavoidable. In traditional classes, office hours are provided on a regular basis, (e.g., once a week for three hours). Classes may meet as often as everyday, though twice a week is common. Thus a wait of one to two days to get an answer to a question that did not arise in class would be common. However, I did not probe what level of questions and concerns were being dealt with here. While no policy has been established in the ELI, evidence in the literature (e.g., Harrell, 1998) points toward such a policy as being beneficial.

Interaction

Another time concern which also overlaps with another major issue, interaction, surfaced during the interviews. Students and teachers expressed concern about the students' posing of questions and the teachers' responses to those questions. Many expressed concern not only about the time lag between when a question or concern is raised and the time it is answered, but also about if a question or concern exists, but is not expressed for a variety of reasons. One student expressed her frustration this way: "You cannot get the answer immediately. And sometimes you just know you have to do something, but you don't know why you have to do this. And the time is limited, so you can't spend more time to get the answer... You just finish the homework and turn it in

...”⁴ Another student said, “It means you take a whole week to get feedback, so maybe you have forgotten what you do last week.” Finally, a teacher said, “I don’t see my students and I don’t get any sense of whether they’re understanding the material unless they ask me questions by email to clarify a reading or an assignment...” From the students’ point of view, they sometimes might not think it is even worthwhile to ask the question, which is most undesirable.

From the teachers’ point of view, the process can be equally frustrating because part of the teaching process has effectively been removed, namely being able to sense when students are having difficulties or misunderstandings through various signs such as facial gestures. One teacher commented, “One thing I found in online courses—lack of communication—I didn’t know who [the students] were really.” Another said, “Things are a lot simpler if we can meet in the classroom.” Indeed all of the teachers expressed concern about the lack of interaction, including issues such as rapport building, effectiveness of delivery, and the ability of lower level students to grow educationally from the course without direct student-teacher contact, especially students with lower reading ability due to most of the instruction being delivered through writing. It should also be noted that while all of the teachers were experienced teachers, they were novices at *online* teaching.

While problems with interaction will probably never be completely eradicated from online courses, there are some possibilities to narrow the gap. One teacher, who was one of the more technologically able and knowledgeable of the ELI online teachers, made extensive use of the discussion board on Blackboard.com. He required students to post any questions they had to the board, after which he would reply to the board within

⁴ I have transcribed the NNSs speech verbatim and it is represented here as such.

one to two days. This enabled the entire class to benefit from both a student's question and the teacher's response in a timely manner. It also lessened the burden of having to answer the same question multiple times. These questions and answers can then be cut and pasted relatively easily into a "frequently asked questions" section of the course website to even further lessen the amount of time students have to wait between formulating a question and receiving an answer.

Online and Technical Issues

The next area of concern on the student questionnaire addressed online and technical issues. The first question asked the students to rate their ability to use computers according to the following categories: 1) beginner; 2) somewhat experienced; 3) fairly experienced; and 4) experienced. Phipps and Merisotis's (2000) tenth benchmark requires that students are informed of the minimum technology required for the course, and I suggest that the minimum amount of skills must also be explained as well. Most teachers did express having some difficulties, especially in the beginning of the courses, with instructing students on the technical aspects of the course, such as logging on and using Blackboard.com, the course management system software. Table 7 shows the self-reported computer ability levels of the respondents.

Table 7

Computer ability levels of students

Ability Level	No. of respondents
Beginner	0
Somewhat	
Experienced	10

Fairly Experienced	3
Experienced	2

Not surprisingly, no students rated themselves as beginners. Most people who would think of themselves as being a beginner-level computer user would not be likely candidates to take an online course. Overall, because the teachers who designed the courses wanted them to be as technologically user-friendly as possible, the ability levels of the students were adequate for the ELI online program. Of course, developing a short proficiency test on computer skills as well as advising before the course for potential students might help eliminate some students who are in need of developing more computer skills.

The next question asked about the time needed to learn new computer skills for the course. Six students responded that they spent no time learning new skills, while the remaining nine said they only spent one to three hours, which seems to indicate a general level of competence among the ELI students.

On the surface, the responses to these two questions seem encouraging. The next question asked if this time to learn the new skills was included in the coursework, which it should be if the needed skills are above the minimum requirements. Table 8 shows the responses to this question.

Table 8

Time to learn new technology included in coursework

Answer	# of Respondents
Yes	4
No	11

If one considers that all of the students had more than a minimal computer skill level and that 13 of the students said the minimum requirements were explained before the course began and 14 said they were also explained after the course began, and one could reasonably assume that the additional skills were in addition to the minimum requirements. The problem then becomes not one of advising, but rather of time allotment by the teacher for the students acquiring of new computer skills in the course.

Several explanations can reasonably be posited. First, some of the students actually did not have the minimum required skills or misunderstood what they were, which is reasonable if the explanations were done in a manner above their English abilities. Second, the time to learn the new skills actually was included in the course, but not clearly explained as being so and thus making the students perceive that the time was *not* included. Third, and most simply, the time was not included in the course. In the future, ELI online instructors must make sure that any skills that must be learned which are above the minimum must be included in class time and instructors must be explicit about the fact that the time is included in the course. Also, if the ELI is to accept on-campus students (i.e., *not* true distance learners), then, as several students suggested in their interviews, the teachers should strongly consider holding optional workshops, preferably in a computer lab, where they can explain the course, software and hardware, and any other issues, as well as ask questions face to face. One student expressed it this way: "... it doesn't have to be stuck...to...everything happen online." Phipps and Merisotis's (2000) 16th benchmark, in the section of student services, stresses that throughout the course or program, students must have access to technical assistance, including "instructions regarding the electronic media used and practice sessions prior to

the beginning of the course...” (p. 10). So, basically, while workshops should definitely be considered for non-distance learning students, steps must also be taken so the same services are offered for distance learners.

The next question asked, “How effective has your instructor been in clarifying or helping with technical problems?” Two of Phipps and Merrisotis’s student support benchmarks deal directly with technical support. First, students should be “provided with hands-on training and information to aid them in securing material through electronic databases, interlibrary loans, government archives, news services, and other sources” (p. 10). Second, students must have access to technical help throughout the course and “practice sessions before the course” (p. 10). Obviously, the ELI cannot reasonably provide “hands-on” training with true distance learners. However, as previously stated, it can provide workshops for non-distance learners. Table 9 shows the responses to this question.

Table 9

Technical effectiveness of the teachers

Answer	# of Respondents
Not at all	0
Minimally	1
Adequately	9
Very effective	5

Again, these answers seem to show a good trend for the ELI. Some of the qualitative comments from the questionnaire, however, show that faculty support and

training is of extreme importance. The question of how a student's instructor could improve technical assistance brought this answer from one student:

...instructor need a someone who can take care of those things. Otherwise it goes nowhere because instructor is goin' to be stuck in the technical problem before he/she teach something for students. Instructor need to have assistances for technical problem in order to increase the quality of online class.

Understandably, the students will feel less satisfied if they experience technical problems which should be addressed by the teachers, but are unable, for whatever reason. I used web-chat software in my intermediate listening class (ELI 70), and I had thought that I had used it enough and understood it well enough to assist my students competently. In our first session, however, it became apparent that the software was not working up to our expectations, as nobody could understand the others' speech. By the second session, I had resolved the problem, but there was still the first impression of difficulties with the software and my lack of ability to handle the problem "on the spot".

Faculty Issues

The technological aspect of online courses is one of the key intersections between students and teachers. Obviously, the ideal situation is for the teacher to be more advanced in both hardware and skills than the students so as to be able to handle most, if not all, situations that arise. Alternatively, and more realistically, the teacher should be able to anticipate and handle any situation that may arise within a given course. As was seen from my experience, this will not always happen, especially when programs are creating courses at the same time they are delivering them, such as the ELI. Because the teachers are in the front lines of the development and delivery of the online courses,

faculty support, not only in technological areas, but all other areas as well, is a critical factor in the ELI's or any other institution's efforts to build the best program possible.

Faculty Time Issues

First, of interest to any developing online program is the amount of time teachers must devote to developing new courses. On average, the six teachers reported that they had spent 78.33 hours to develop their courses. This time includes both the initial set-up and continuing development throughout the semester. It should also be noted that all of the teachers also mentioned that their answers were approximations. In their statements on their questionnaires, five of the six teachers (including myself) directly commented on the fact that developing and teaching an online course was too time consuming given the standard of 10 hours per week a graduate assistant is to devote to teaching one course. It is pertinent here to recall the information in Table 1, where it shows the distribution of the participants. All courses under development were limited to three (one student dropped ELI 72) or four students, while the two courses which were developed in Spring 2002 had nine students each. Also, teachers developing an online course had to teach a traditional section of the same course, with a smaller than usual enrollment (approximately 10-12 vs. 15-20), in conjunction with the online course so that they could receive a .25 GAship. Thus the teachers all had a direct comparison between their online courses and their traditional courses.

In relation to development of the online courses is the amount of time teachers need to spend learning new software in order to develop the courses. Table 10 shows the results of the teachers' answers.

Table 10

Amount of time for teachers to learn new software

Course Teacher	Hours to learn software
ELI 70	20
ELI 72	12-13
ELI 80	40-50
ELI 82	*5
ELI 83	1
ELI 100	0

Data gained through the interviews and personal knowledge of the teachers showed that the ability levels of the teachers before they began developing their courses varied greatly, and thus helps to explain the wide variation. Also, all of the teachers on their questionnaires reported that they had no formal computer training. It should be noted that the teacher of ELI 80 was quite self-critical in both her interview and her questionnaire, so her estimates might be inflated due to her lack of self-confidence.

With such a wide variation in the amount of time the teachers reported they needed to learn new software, one might ask what support was given to the teachers by the ELI administration. Phipps and Merrisotis's (2000) 18th and 19th benchmarks claim that a program must provide technological assistance, transitional assistance from the traditional setting to the online setting. In the three teacher interviews I conducted, all three stated they were supported administratively. Also, I personally consulted frequently with two of the administrators during the development of ELI 70 and I felt that I could approach any of the administrators freely and openly. One teacher, however, did

comment that she did not seek the administrators' assistance as often as she could have and stated,

I don't think the correct system is in place. There's not an ELI teacher training course, or a real formal systematic process you go through. I needed that, so I spent a lot of time going around in circles. So they were supportive psychologically, emotionally, and financially, but there wasn't a systematic support system set up.

In the Spring 2003 semester, the director of the ELI began a one-credit course aimed at addressing these problems. In the future, however, care must be taken to make certain issues are addressed that cannot be covered in this class, as it is more than possible that any or all of the ELI online teachers will not be able to take the course for one reason or another. This could be as simple as listing all of the support services available on campus in the teachers' resource room on the ELI website.

Faculty Curriculum Issues

As previously stated, the ELI instructed the teachers developing the online courses that these courses must be educationally equivalent to their traditional counterparts. Even given this directive, both the teachers and the administrators knew the online courses could not be exactly the same in format and content, if for no other reason than the method of delivery, which, as one teacher commented, "changes everything". Also, it should be noted that all ELI teachers, traditional and online, have a certain amount of freedom to choose which materials, activities, assignments, and so on, which they will include in their courses, based on approval of the administration. Therefore,

⁵ The teacher did not provide a definite number, but rather wrote, "The only thing I needed to learn was Blackboard. I played with it for a while before the semester began. For everything else, I already had

also as previously stated, any two sections of any given course are likely to be different experiences for both the students and teachers, while still remaining educationally equivalent. Based on this background the teachers were asked how they felt the online versions of their courses were similar and different to their traditional courses.

With regard to how the online and traditional courses were similar, all six teachers responded that the content, activities, or feedback were similar to a traditional course. Their responses, however, were tempered with qualifying statements. For example, one teacher stated, "Only some of the contents are comparable. For example, in ELI 82 online, the major project (Needs Analysis) was similar to that for regular 82." Another teacher responded, "I try to make the assignments and content of the two sections the same or very similar." While there are obvious differences between the curricular content of online courses vs. traditional courses, nothing in the data suggested that these differences were any larger or smaller than differences across two sections of a traditional class. Also, because most of the instruction happens through written materials, care must be taken to make certain that everything written is as clearly and concisely as possible.

Many of the issues uncovered in asking how the online vs. traditional courses were different have already been discussed previously. Again, interaction was universally cited as a point of contention among the teachers. For one the fact that feedback was given exclusively in a written form, as opposed to written and oral in a traditional class, altered not only what was given, but how it was received. Another common theme with interaction was contact between the students themselves and the teacher and students. One teacher noted in his interview, "One thing I found in online courses, lack of communication, I didn't know who they were really." Another teacher

noted in his interview, "...the medium itself doesn't allow for...interaction and the type of teaching that we traditionally know as teaching. I think that raises an interesting question, 'Are we going to change the way we view teaching because of this new medium?'" Quite obviously, the ELI is going to have to address this issue of interaction on many levels (e.g., feedback, rapport building) so as to help teachers and students maximize the use of any available medium to increase interaction in the online classroom.

The development of the two listening courses, ELI 70 and 80, brought up some interesting curricular issues that did not have to be addressed in the reading and writing courses. In this area more than the others, curricular issues are more constrained by current technology. Customarily in traditional ELI courses, ELI 70 focuses more on listening (e.g., note taking skills) while ELI 80 focuses more on speaking (e.g., giving academic presentations). In one way, which I will describe below, ELI 70 online had more opportunities for students to talk, while the ELI 80 teacher felt the online course focused more on listening than a traditional version. For ELI 70, which I taught and developed, I wanted to attempt to incorporate a speaking component into the course through the use of free chat software on the World Wide Web which allowed voice and video chat. While it was not a complete success due to many reasons, such as slow dial-up connections used by two of the students, it did give the students some opportunities to speak and to "get to know" their classmates more than in other courses. It was my impression that because there were only three students in the chat room, that they had significantly more time to talk than students in a traditional course—when the technology

was working properly. Thus in future sections, small groups of students working together using voice or video chat might greatly facilitate interaction.

Also, listening assignments in ELI 70 online varied from the traditional course I taught. Students in both courses used the same textbook, but the online students had many more chances to listen to the exercises. In the traditional course, the students would listen to the tape in class while completing their exercises, while in the online version the students would download the appropriate files from the course website (which was in accordance with copyright laws) and listen to them at a time and place of their choosing. Thus they could listen as many times as they wanted, while the students in the traditional version could only listen to the tape two or three times.⁶ I think ELI 70 online and traditional ELI 70 were equivalent, but different in content and methodology. Again, in future sections of these courses, care must be taken to ensure the most appropriate form of interaction is known and utilized.

Faculty Computer and Technical Issues

A number of points have already been covered in previous sections. Additionally, however, I found that the hardware and software needs of the teachers vary, especially between which platform they prefer to use (i.e., Macintosh vs. PC). Three of the teachers responded that they preferred PCs, while two of the teachers preferred Macs (one of which qualified that she could easily use either), and one responded it did not matter to her. While both platforms claim to be “user-friendly”, having to learn a new platform after already being used to another one can be time consuming and frustrating. Thus, in the future when the ELI purchases new computers for its faculty, it should consider

⁶ These students did have access to the text tapes in a language lab, but I am doubtful any of them used them.

making certain there is a balance of the availability of Macs and PCs. With regard to software, all of the teachers felt the software available to them was adequate, but that training and awareness-raising of what is available should be provided.

Teaching Issues

In addition to teaching issues discussed earlier, two issues emerged which I will discuss here. The first issue concerns the number of students in a class, both minimum and maximum, that the teachers felt should be allowed *for their particular courses*. The range was from zero to 12. At the lower end the teacher who said that zero should be the minimum clarified that he had a “strong belief” that the online courses should be limited to true distance learners and if there were not any distance learners the course should be cancelled. Several teachers expressed concerns such as the amount of course development already achieved, with less development corresponding to fewer students. One teacher said three should be the minimum as that could help develop a “sense of community”. At the higher end the teachers all said that any more than that particular limit would become too time consuming and burdensome for the teachers and that the educational value of the course would suffer. Indeed, I taught the writing course for graduate students (ELI 83) with nine students, and I think I might have been able to handle one, or at the most, two more students before becoming totally overburdened.

The second issue which emerged in this section is perhaps one of the most important issues in online education: Does a new online pedagogy have to be developed to meet the needs of online education? The obvious answer is “yes”. Many of the teachers expressed frustration in that they were not as effective in their online teaching as in traditional classes. One reason may be that for all the teachers developing the courses,

it was their first time doing so. Personally, I know there would be many things I would change or improve if I were to teach either ELI 70 or 83 online again. A second reason might go back to that ubiquitous concern of interaction. The teachers do not receive as much feedback from the students in online courses as they do in traditional courses, be it through such things as verbal interaction or facial gestures. So, new teaching methodologies and expectations must be developed to lessen teacher frustration and burnout and to enhance the educational experience of both the teachers and the students.

Recommendations

Overall, the ELI online program at this stage appears to be doing well and progressing appropriately. While obviously in need of further development and ongoing evaluation, given the limited amount of resources (e.g., time, finances) available to both the program as a whole and to its individual teachers, the ELI online program has begun solidly and should not be allowed to atrophy. Rather, the courses should be as fully developed and implemented on a permanent basis as soon as possible. To this end, I give nine interrelated recommendations with brief explanations that the ELI should consider at this point:

1. Allow any student, non-distance or distance, with a justifiable need to enroll in its online courses. Priority, of course, should be given to true distance learners. This policy would provide a needed stability for both the program as a whole and the teachers of individual courses, while also fulfilling student needs which have not been met to this point.
2. Establish with the Dean's Office clear guidelines on the minimum and maximum number of students for each course so that the courses may run as individual

courses and not in conjunction with another traditional section of the same course.

This would prevent the teachers of the courses from developing a kind of “schizophrenia” in having to divide the 10 hours per week allotted for a .25 GAship between the two courses. Also, it would validate the fact that the ELI online courses are indeed equivalent courses (which do require more work than a traditional one given the same number of students).

3. Ensure that teachers maintain the same relative workload and time commitment already established by the developers, of course while monitoring and adjusting them to individual concerns and circumstances. This will help keep the ELI online courses stay in accordance with its time commitment policy for students.
4. Make teachers aware of and strongly encourage them to establish and use as many modes of interaction as possible, both synchronous and asynchronous, for all courses. This recommendation cannot be overstressed as it impacts practically every area of online education. If efforts are made in the beginning of the course to teach students how to interact online and even to put faces (and voices) together with names, a sense of community that almost comes naturally in most traditional classes will be easier to build throughout the semester as long as such community and rapport building activities are re-visited throughout the semester. Interaction in online courses *must* be fostered and strengthened in order to have any online program grow.
5. Strongly encourage teachers to establish clear policies for a) students submitting questions and assignments; and b) teachers responding to questions and assignments. If recommendation 4 is followed, it may help reduce if not

eliminate the phenomenon of students who have questions but do not voice them for one reason or another. Also, if a communal discussion board is used, it could help all of the students in a course who may have not thought of a particular question.

6. Make certain the students are able to handle the minimum amount of hardware and software needed for any given course. The first and most convenient method would be careful advising before the semester. With additional time a resources a computer administered test could be developed to more accurately assess their abilities. In either case, this would help eliminate frustrations on the parts of the students, teachers and administrators.
7. Any new technical skills above the minimum requirements which are required for any given course must not only be given course time by the teacher (and explicitly explained as such), but also, to the fullest extent possible, provide hands-on training for the greatest number of students. Workshops at the earliest possible point of the semester would serve several purposes. First, the teacher could demonstrate the hardware and software needed for the course. Second, the students could directly ask questions about the syllabus, materials, and so on. Third, the teacher and students could meet each other, thus beginning a sense of community for the class. With a digital camera, the teacher could even take the students' pictures and start a "class biographies" page, or something similar.
8. Provide ongoing training in as many areas as possible for the greatest number of faculty and equally important, disseminate information on campus classes, workshops and services that are available. Almost everyone in a university

environment is extremely busy and may not be able to take advantage of a particular class or workshop, but will most likely be able to use campus services if made aware of them. While many people today are becoming more and more computer savvy, such personal development is best fostered through an organized and established system.

9. As time and budget constraints allow, provide both Macintosh and PC platforms to teachers of online courses, as well as any new software that may be deemed necessary. This will simply save time and frustration on the part of the teachers in that they do not have to learn a new operating system.

It is worthy to note that the ELI is already moving ahead in several of these areas, such as faculty training, and knows there is much work to be done. Obviously, these nine recommendations are not an exclusive list, but among the most important and immediately rectifiable areas of concern.

Conclusion

The ELI's online program is now in its third semester and is still in need of much development and refinement. Given the somewhat restricted resources of the program and teachers, however, the program is progressing well and has the potential to be an example for other similar programs. Throughout the course of this study, I found the teachers and administrators to be extremely dedicated and hardworking who were interested in innovation and progress while maintaining educational integrity and validity. This fact more than any other, I believe, is what has given the ELI online program its firm foundation. If such dedication continues, the ELI online program should become a powerful force in online second language education.

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Appendix A

The following are the 24 benchmarks of success for an Internet-based program as identified by Phipps and Merisotis (2000):

Institutional Support

1. A documented technology plan that includes electronic security measures (i.e., password protection, encryption, back-up systems) is in place and operational to ensure both quality standards and the integrity and validity of information.
2. The reliability of the technology delivery system is as failsafe as possible
3. A centralized system provides support for building and maintaining the distance education infrastructure.

Course Development

4. Guidelines regarding minimum standards are used for course development, design and delivery, while learning outcomes—not the availability of existing technology—determine the technology being used to deliver course content.
5. Instructional materials are reviewed periodically to ensure they meet program standards.
6. Courses are designed to require students to engage themselves in analysis, synthesis, and evaluation as part of their course and program requirements.

Teaching/Learning

7. Student interaction with faculty and other students is an essential characteristic and is facilitated through a variety of ways, including voice-mail or email.
8. Feedback to student assignments and questions is constructive and provided in a timely manner.

9. Students are instructed in the proper methods of research, including assessment of the validity of resources.

Course Structure

10. Before starting an online program, students are advised about the program to determine (1) if they possess the self-motivation and commitment to learn at a distance and (2) if they have access to the minimal technology required by the course design.
11. Students are provided with supplemental course information that outlines course objectives, concepts, and ideas, and learning outcomes for each course are summarized in a clearly written, straightforward statement.
12. Students have access to sufficient library resources that may include a “virtual library” accessible through the World Wide Web.
13. Faculty and students agree upon expectations regarding times for student assignment completion and faculty response.

Student Support

14. Students receive information about programs, including admission requirements, tuition and fees, books and supplies, technical and proctoring requirements, and student support services.
15. Students are provided with hands-on training and information to aid them in securing material through electronic databases, interlibrary loans, government archives, news services, and other sources.
16. Throughout the duration of the course/program, students have access to technical assistance, including detailed instructions regarding the electronic media used,

practice sessions prior to the beginning of the course and convenient access to technical support staff.\

17. Questions directed to student service personnel are answered accurately and quickly, with a structured system in place to address student complaints.

Faculty Support

18. Technical assistance in course development is available to faculty, who are encouraged to use it.
19. Faculty members are assisted in the transition from classroom teaching to online instruction and are assessed during the process.
20. Instructor training and assistance, including peer mentoring, continues through the progression of the online course.
21. Faculty members are provided with written resources to deal with issues arising from student use of electronically-accessed data.

Evaluation and Assessment

22. The program's educational effectiveness and teaching/learning process is assessed through an evaluation process that uses several methods and applies specific standards.
23. Data on enrollment, costs, and successful/innovative uses of technology are used to evaluate program effectiveness.
24. Intended learning outcomes are reviewed regularly to ensure clarity, utility, and appropriateness.

Appendix B

ELI Online Student Survey

Thank you for taking this survey. The information you give will be used to improve the ELI's online courses. The information you give will be kept confidential. It will be shared with your instructors, but all information will be kept anonymous. The information you give will in no way affect your grade in your course(s). If you are taking more than one ELI course online please answer the questions based on a average of the classes. Use the "Other comments" sections to add explanations/clarifications. If you have any questions/concerns please feel free to send them to Michael Beamer.

Background Information

1. Your e-mail address (this will be used to clarify information if needed, and is

optional):

2. Have you ever taken an online course before? Yes No

If yes, what type of course was it?

3. What was the main reason you decided to take ELI online course(es)?

My schedule would not permit me to take a traditional course.

I wanted the flexibility of an online course, even though I could have taken a traditional course.

I am currently taking courses away from the UH Manoa campus.

I was curious about taking an online course.

Other

For questions 4-7, check all that apply:

4. Current ELI **online** courses: 70 72 73 80 82 83 100

5. Current ELI **traditional** courses: 70 72 73 80 82 83 100

6. Past ELI **online** courses: 70 72 73 80 82 83 100

7. Past ELI **traditional** courses: 70 72 73 80 82 83 100

8. Status: Undergraduate Graduate Other

9. Major:

10. Semesters at UH:

11. Are you taking this course **away** from UH Manoa campus? Yes No

If yes, where are you taking this course from:

Time Issues

1. About how much time do you spend per week working on your computer **online** for this course?

Less than 30 minutes 30-60 minutes 1-2 hours 2-3 hours

3-4 hours 4-5 hours More than 5 hours

2. About how much time do you spend per week working on your computer **off-line** for this course?

Less than 30 minutes 30-60 minutes 1-2 hours 2-3 hours

3-4 hours 4-5 hours More than 5 hours

3. On average, how many times per week do you write email for this course?

0 1-2 3-4 5-6 7-8 9-10 More than 10

4. Please enter about how many times you have written emails for the following reasons until now:

To ask questions for clarification from my instructor on assignments and coursework

To ask questions about problems related to technical issues (e.g., trouble with email, blackboard)

To submit assignments

To ask for an extension of a deadline

To communicate with classmates

Other

5. How much time does it usually take for your instructor to respond to your questions and/or comments?

Less than 1 day 1-2 days 3-4 days 5-6 days 7 or more days

6. How much time does it usually take for your instructor to return your assignments?

Less than 1 day 1-2 days 3-4 days 5-6 days 7 or more days

7. In relation to comparable traditional ESL courses you have taken, how much **time** do you feel you spend on this course?

Less than a traditional course The same as a traditional course
 More than a traditional course

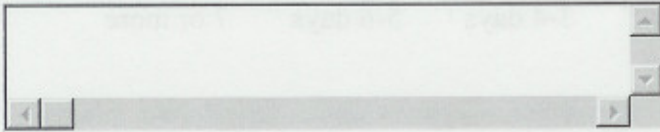
8. In relation to comparable traditional ESL courses you have taken, how much **work** do you feel you do in this course?

Less than a traditional course The same as a traditional course
 More than a traditional course

9. In relation to other university classes you have taken, how difficult is it for you to turn in assignments on time?

- Less difficult than a traditional course As difficult as a traditional course
 More difficult than a traditional course

10. Please give any other comments about time issues you would like:



Online Issues

1. How do you rate your computer ability?

- Beginner. I have difficulty completing many tasks on the computer.
- Somewhat experienced. I am able to do most basic functions (e.g., email) competently
- Fairly experienced. I can use a wide variety of programs and functions
- Experienced. I have extensive knowledge of computers and am highly competent in operating them.

2. How much time did you spend learning new computer skills for this course?

- None 1-3 hours 4-6 hours 7-9 hours 10 or more hours

3. Was this time included as part of the coursework? Yes No

4. Were the minimum computer literacy requirements made clear *before* you registered

for the course? Yes No

5. Were the minimum computer literacy requirements made clear *after* you registered for the course? Yes No

6. If you answered "No" to questions 4 and/ or 5, do you feel it was a problem for you?
 Yes No

7. If you answered "No" to questions 4 and/or 5, how do you think this could be made clearer?

8. How effective has your instructor been in clarifying and/or helping with technical problems?

Not at all Minimally Adequately Very effective

9. In what ways and/or areas could your instructor improve his/her technical assistance?

10. What do you feel are the positive aspects of having ELI courses offered online?

11. What do you feel are the negative aspects of having ELI courses offered online?

12. Please give any other comments about online issues you would like:

General Class Issues

1. Please review the class goals provided to you in your syllabus. Do you feel your ELI online course is meeting these goals?

Yes No

2. If no, how do you feel the course is not meeting the goals (be as specific as possible)?

3. Do you feel this course is meeting your needs in learning *academic* English (i.e., is it useful and relevant)?

Yes No

4. If no, how do you feel this course could meet your needs better (be as specific as possible)?

5. Do you feel this course is meeting the expectations you had before starting the course?

Yes No

6. If no, in what ways were your expectations not met?

7. Please give any other comments about general class issues, or anything else, you would like:

Finished. Thank you for your time!!

By clicking on the "Send comments" button, you agree that you have read and agreed to the consent form for this study.

Appendix C

ELI Online Teacher's Survey #1

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your answers will help the ELI's online courses improve. Please note, some of the questions will overlap areas. Please contact me if you have any concerns and/or questions.

1. Which ELI online course(s) are you teaching/have you taught?
2. Which ELI online course(s) have you developed or are you developing?

Time Issues

1. If you created (or are creating), an online course, how many hours do you estimate was (or will be) the total time?
2. How much time did you spend in the beginning of the course helping students with technical problems vs. later in the course?
3. Approximately how much time did you spend "training" yourself to be able to use new software (e.g., Blackboard, Dreamweaver) or hardware for this course (please list specifically the software or hardware)?
4. Approximately how much time per week do you spend in the following areas:
 - a. Writing emails to answer curriculum questions _____
 - b. Writing emails to answer technical questions _____
 - c. Writing emails to give feedback _____
 - d. Checking work _____
 - e. Uploading assignments to a website/Blackboard _____
 - f. Finding resources (for students or yourself) on the Internet _____
 - g. Other(s) (please specify) _____

5. What time issues do you think need to be addressed in future sections?
6. Please add any additional comments you have about time issues.

Curriculum Issues

Traditional vs. Online (note: if this is the first time teaching the course at all, estimate what you think would be an accurate answer)

1. Did you teach, or are you currently teaching, a traditional section of this course before/while teaching it online?
2. In what ways do you think the online course is similar to a traditional one (e.g., activities, feedback, content)?
3. In what ways do you think the online course is different from a traditional one (e.g., activities, feedback, content)?
4. What curricular issues do you think need to be addressed in future sections?
5. Please add any additional comments you have about curricular issues.

Computer/technical issues

1. Which do you prefer, Macs or PCs? Why?
2. What software do you feel the ELI should have available and for what purposes?
3. What hardware do you feel the ELI should have available and for what purposes?
4. What computer/technical problems did you have, or are you having, in this course?
5. How did you solve/overcome those problems?

6. What computer/technical problems did your *students* have, or are they having, in this course?
7. How did you help them solve/overcome those problems?
8. Describe any computer training you have had.
9. What computer training should be made available for ELI online instructors?
10. What computer/technical issues do you think need to be addressed in future sections?
11. Please add any additional comments you have about computer/technical issues.

Teaching Issues

1. What do you think are the positive aspects of teaching an online course?
2. What do you think are the negative aspects of teaching an online course?
3. What do you feel should be the minimum class size for *your* online course?
Why?
4. What do you feel should be the maximum class size for *your* online course?
Why?
5. How do you feel teaching an online course compares to a traditional course?
6. What teaching issues do you think need to be addressed in future sections?
7. Please add any additional comments you have about *any* issues.