General Course Information

Faculty Name: Jie Wang  
Department: Managerial Studies  
College: College of Business Administration  
Course Name: Managerial Communication

Executive Summary:  
Adapting this offering for a blended course initially took some effort. In the planning stages, more time than usual was alloted to design the course. UIC External Education’s Anne France and Karin Riggs were particularly helpful with designing the Blackboard content for BA 200 and dealing with logistical issues, including when to meet in the classroom versus online, how to collect assignments, and how to encourage online participation.

Once the blended structure was set up, things went fairly smoothly. As the course progressed, small improvements were made as needed.

Goals for offering course as blended:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose for Blending</th>
<th>Corresponding Sloan-C Pillar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| X  
Enhance the teaching and learning/leverage technology to achieve pedagogical goals | Learning Effectiveness |
| X  
Provide accessibility for more students  
(make the course available to more students) | Access |
| X  
Provide flexibility for students | Student Satisfaction |
| X  
Increase faculty satisfaction (i.e., addressing work load issues, increasing flexibility of work hours, teaching in a new way, etc.) | Faculty Satisfaction |
|  
Address institutional issue such as limited classroom space, or inability to offer technology such as internet connection in classrooms | Cost-Effectiveness |
|  
Other: Please specify | |

Learning Effectiveness: Students find this blended approach helpful because it provides more scheduling flexibility and increased interactions with the instructor and classmates outside the classroom. As an instructor, I find that students tend to pay closer attention to the lectures when we meet in the classroom.

Access: The first time this course was offered as blended, we did not offer it to more students because it was a pilot. However, my students appreciated the ability to do some of the coursework from home and reduce commuting time and cost.

Student Satisfaction: Due to the highly positive response we have received, we have increased the number of blended courses from three last year to eight this coming fall.
Faculty Satisfaction: I enjoyed working with students in the online environment, and I was happy to see the increased interest and participation in the lecture sections.

Cost-Effectiveness: Some students appreciated the fact that they were able to save on travel costs due to the online sessions. In addition, the commute time saved enabled the students to spend more time on the materials covered and on assignments. Moreover, as we increase the number of sections offered in the blended format, we will be able to accommodate more students with a need for more flexible scheduling.

Summary of course design/redesign process and product:
UIC’s External Education Office was instrumental in helping with the course’s initial design. I met with Anne France, Karin Riggs and others on numerous occasions discussing what to include, how best to present the materials, and other similar challenges. I initially spent around 15 hours a week working on the blended course. But, once the structure was set up, gradual improvements were less time-consuming.

Designing a blended course requires that the material is parsed, determining what would be best covered in the classroom and what would be best covered online. This hybrid approach is more effective than the traditional, classroom-only format, as my colleagues can attest.

Student perspective:
In the conversations that I have had both inside and outside of class, students in our blended sections overwhelmingly liked the class format. This isn’t just limited to my course. On the departmental level, it is because of this positive feedback that we have steadily increased the numbers of sections offered in the blended format.

Results:
An unintended effect is that when students came to the classroom, they paid closer attention to lectures. Additionally, there appeared to be more interactions outside the classroom among students in blended sections.