Foreword

This book on Web-Based Education (WBE) invites you to learn from the experiences of a number of faculty members who have been designing, teaching, and managing online courses and degree programs. Although the data or evidence presented are primarily anecdotal, this can be very useful and can prevent “re-inventing the wheel.”

The particular strength of this book is its international scope. Among its highlights are chapters that enable the reader to learn about:

- The diffusion of “web-based” education in Australia and Singapore
- Integration of online learning into a “web-enhanced” (hybrid or mixed mode delivery) at an Italian private business university.
- A “Web-enhanced mentoring system” for a diploma in credit union studies at the National U. of Ireland
- Training of specialists in Motor Disability Assessment, also in Ireland
- Experiences of an instructor in health policy and management in Finland
- A “Global Campus” offering a master’s degree in Business Information Technology through a partnership between a British and an Egyptian institutions
- A consortium of universities that have created a German “Virtual University of Applied Sciences”
- “Blended” traditional and e-learning for computer science education at the U. of Karlsruhe in Germany
- Use of Web-Based technology to support the learning experience of MIS undergraduates in community learning projects at the U. of Alaska, that follows the “relate- create- donate” model for active learning proposed by Ben Shneiderman.

There are three things of special note in the book. One is the proliferation of different terminologies that are currently being used to label forms of learning online. Besides the terms “Web-Based Education” and “e-learning” and the various other terms used above, other terms that occur in the literature include “Asynchronous Learning Networks” (ALN), “computer-mediated” learning, “online learning” and “virtual university,” to mention just a few of the plethora of names being used. The second is the treatment of infrastructure support for web-based education. This information can be useful for administrators in the process of institutionalizing web-based education or instructors planning to revamp or to offer web-based courses for the first time.

The third is that the range of course subjects covered is quite broad. Though the most frequent use of “web-based education” is in subjects related to information technology (including information systems, computer science, and business), online courses now span the full range of university and professional education curricula. No matter what subject an instructor teaches, he or she can undoubtedly find useful information in this volume.

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