

- Making D2L work for you and your students
- The DCS IL Team grows again!
- D2L Gem: Study Notes: Reflection Questions
- Good Practice Reminder: "incomplete" in LRMS
- Introducing: Sage Goellner

Save the Date Announcements:

Coffee with Sarah: December 21, 2 pm at Cargo Coffee, 1309 South Park Street, Madison, WI

Quarterly IL Instructor Appreciation and Professional Development Meeting: February 19, 1-3 pm at 21 N. Park Street, Rm 7045
Topic: Authoring an engaging course description for the catalog. This will be a hands-on workshop with one of the DCS writing specialists!

Distance Teaching & Learning Conference 2016 : August 9-11
dtlconference.wisc.edu



Making D2L work for you and Your Students

Whether your IL course currently uses D2L or soon will use D2L, there are many ways to make D2L an effective tool for you and your students. One of the most important ways you can make D2L work for you and your students is by correcting typos and clarifying information as you go. Despite our best efforts, typos happen and instructions and explanations that seem clear to us can lead students into confusion. Should you encounter anything in your course that is not working for your students, you can send a request to Sarah and have that issue corrected, even between course revisions.

Another tool is submission notification. D2L can be set to notify you via email whenever students submit assignments and quizzes. This means that, while you need to check your email each business day for student questions, you need only log in to D2L when you receive a notification that something has been submitted when notifications are turned on.

The Discussion Board is a great place to communicate with students regarding frequently asked questions. Encouraging students to post general questions in the discussion area and encouraging new students to look to the discussion area first for frequently asked questions is a great way to reduce the number of emailed questions about general course information. Using the news feed regularly for general course communication and availability announcements also encourages students to look to the news feed for updates from you instead of their personal emails.

Please let Sarah know if you would like to use any features that are not currently activated in your course.

The DCS IL Team Grows Again!



We are happy to welcome Maria to the DCS Independent Learning team. Maria is responsible for the fantastic food at the last DCS IL Instructor meeting and will be working with Sarah and David to support Independent Learning instruction.

Maria is from Burlington, Vermont, though she grew up in the Washington, DC area until her teen years. From there, she moved to Madison to attend college. At the UW she studied Russian and Political Science, particularly enjoying courses on Russia's democratic institutions. She was also a student in the Russian Flagship Program, which involved an intensified language experience and higher language acquisition expectations. Through this program she studied in Moscow, Russia in the summer of 2012 and in Almaty, Kazakhstan for 2014-15 academic year. As a result, she is a certified speaker of Russian at the "professional" level (L3 – Interagency Language Roundtable). She loves to travel, explore Madison's restaurant scene, and play summer league with the Madison Ultimate Frisbee Association. Right now she's waiting for the perfect time to adopt a cat and to start brewing her own beer at home.

D2L Gem: Study Notes & Reflection Questions

Desire2Learn is constantly being improved upon, and now has many capabilities that it did not have when Independent Learning courses began using D2L as a Course Study Note delivery method. One of these improvements is in the inclusion of reflection questions in study notes.

D2L now allows instructors to include reflection questions throughout study notes. While instructors could always pose rhetorical questions in Study Notes, D2L now allows students to interact with these questions in a variety of ways.

One method of interaction is asking a comprehension question with a hidden answer. Students can then click on the answer to check their response.

This method is useful to help students check their understanding and retention of basic facts related to the course content discussed.

Another method of interaction makes use of game-show style quizzes.

Students can answer a series of "game show" questions and "earn money" with each right answer. This is another way to help students check their comprehension of the basic facts of a particular unit.

Padlet is a useful way to build community with learners who are not completing their coursework at the same time. Research has shown that a connection to a learning community leads to increased student success in Online courses. The challenge with creating community in asynchronous Independent Learning courses is that students begin and complete their courses on their own schedule, and so students are often not working on the same unit at the same time. Padlet can still be a useful bulletin board tool that allows students to post their responses for future course participants and review the responses of past participants, thus creating an asynchronous learning

community.

If you think one or more of these reflection question types would be useful in your course, please let Sarah know. Reflection questions will be included in courses as they undergo course revisions in the next three years.

Good Practice Reminder: "Incomplete" assignments

One of the advantages of Independent Learning courses is that students are able to progress through the courses at their own pace. At times, this means that students may need to submit an assignment more than once in order to achieve the learning goals of a particular assignment.

You are encouraged to give the students a grade for their work as is, and allow a resubmission for credit to allow students to achieve the learning objectives of a particular unit. However, sometimes an incomplete seems like a more suitable grade. If you do assign a grade of "incomplete," it is important to record this in the official student record (LRMS/LPV) with the letters "INC". This indicates to student services why a submitted assignment does not yet have a grade and helps student services and your DCS IL team address student questions about exams and final grades, if applicable.

It is important to note that, with the new payroll system, assignments will be counted in the payroll system only the first time you enter a grade. You will need to submit additional paperwork for compensation related to assignments that are redone. Please watch your email at the beginning of January for more information about this paperwork.

Introducing: Sage Goellner

I was struck with an incurable case of francophilia at the tender age of 15. The only remedy was to take up

French, which I did through none other than the UW Extension Independent Learning program. After school, I would walk to the Spooner Public Library to



listen to my cassette tapes and conjugate verbs. With a head start in French, I was able to major in it and spent my junior semester in Paris, where, in an Independent Learning course with Emily Auerbach on nineteenth-century women novelists, I continued to work toward a second major in English literature.

Fast forward: many years later, after earning a PhD in French at UW-Madison, working in Paris and Chicago, getting married and having children (two bright, beautiful boys), I have come full circle to return to Wisconsin. Since 2007, I have worked in Continuing Studies, where I teach adult evening classes in French, lead study tours to France and other Francophone countries, and last but certainly not least, direct the Independent Learning French program. Because of the opportunities our program offered me as a youth, I am a strong advocate of it, our instructors, and our students, who, like me so many years ago, are just embarking on a path that just might shape an entire lifetime.

Finally, when I'm not teaching or revising courses, I'm practicing yoga, dancing, tending the family potager (kitchen garden), or pretending to understand Minecraft.