

Cisco WebEx: Extend Instruction to Students Anywhere

Liz attends her 8 a.m. Physics lecture but knows she absorbs abstract concepts better late at night. Ethan broke his leg and can't get to the Botany building on the other side of campus. Nishtha wants to take the Global Wealth and Poverty course offered at another university.

Now higher education institutions around the country are meeting all of these students' needs by letting them participate in virtual classroom sessions with voice, video, and web sharing as if they were physically present. "Cisco WebEx Training Center lets faculty replicate the classroom learning experience for students in any location," says Bob Lee, education solutions manager, Cisco.

The Virtual Classroom Comes of Age

Students need only a computer, broadband connection, phone, and optional webcam. A few minutes before class begins, they click a link to connect to the live class session with voice, video, and content sharing. Online students can hear and see everything that's going on in the classroom, including the lecture and questions from other students. The professor can choose what appears in students' browsers:

- Live streaming video of the teacher or the entire classroom
- Content being shared on the teacher's PC or an interactive whiteboard
- Prerecorded video
- Text chat and Q&A
- Quizzes and tests

Students who want to ask a question or make a comment can click a button to raise their hand, adding their name to a list. When called on, the student can speak it into the phone or type it into a chat window. And when an online student needs to present a project, the teacher can pass over control of the online session. Students can share documents, PowerPoint presentations, videos, and website content. The class session can also be recorded for playback and review at any time.

Students in Any Location

Emory University's Goizueta Business School saves time and commute costs for students in the executive MBA program by letting them participate using Cisco WebEx Meeting Center. Faculty members use the whiteboard to cover case study issues and strategies, application sharing for PowerPoint presentations, and annotation to highlight aspects of the presentation. Some students attend in person and others connect over the Internet.

For Those Who Learn Best at Odd Hours

Colleges and universities cite different motivations for using Cisco WebEx learning solutions:

- **Helping students who miss class:** They can catch up later by watching and listening to the recorded Cisco WebEx session.
- **Accommodating different learning styles:** Some students learn better if they can listen to a lecture more than once. Others are more alert at different times of day.
- **Increasing enrollment without building new classrooms:** Colleges and universities can enroll students anywhere in the world. Working students can attend class from their homes or offices and not have to travel to the campus. Students in other time zones can watch and listen to the classroom session at any time. "Cisco WebEx bridges time and distance barriers," Lee says.
- **Enabling continuous learning:** Students working on group projects can use Cisco WebEx Connect to communicate and collaborate. A student who is working at 8 p.m. can check to see which other students are currently online, send an instant message, and simply click to escalate the instant message conversation to a phone call, a video call, or a full-blown Cisco WebEx session that also includes web sharing. The other students can catch up on the conversation by reviewing the recorded session, then add their input in a discussion forum.

Learning Continuum

"Education is escaping narrow definitions of place and time to become a continuum," says Lee. "Students can learn in the traditional classroom, in virtual classrooms using Cisco WebEx Training Center, in small online study groups at a specified time using Cisco WebEx Meeting Center, and in impromptu groups any time they're inspired, using Cisco WebEx Connect."

To learn how other educators are using WebEx, visit: www.webex.com/who-uses-webex-and-why/by-industry.html

For more information about Cisco WebEx learning solutions, visit: www.webex.com/how-it-works/for-training.html

For more information about Cisco WebEx Connect, visit: www.webex.com/enterprise/cisco-webex-connect.html




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