



## Solution Overview

# Cisco Virtual Classroom Solutions for Colleges and Universities

**Colleges and universities need new tools to enrich coursework, enhance flexibility, and attract the best students and faculty. The Cisco® Virtual Classroom distance learning solution from Cisco Systems® lets institutions of higher education reach students anywhere, any time, by blending fully interactive and recordable audio, video, and Web conferencing capabilities. With these proven, powerful tools, colleges and universities can extend the walls of their classrooms in both space and time, and bring the rest of the world to their campuses.**

## Challenge

Today's colleges and universities face growing pressures to:

- Maintain the highest academic standards in an increasingly competitive environment, both locally and globally
- Differentiate themselves from other institutions through state-of-the-art technologies and communication tools, as well as exceptional curricula
- Compete for top faculty by improving instructional and scheduling flexibility
- Continue giving students access to outstanding faculty in the face of global instructor shortages
- Extend classroom learning and collaboration to students and faculty off campus
- Offer new and unique learning opportunities beyond what has traditionally been available on campus

## Solution

The Cisco Virtual Classroom solution allows institutions to address all of these issues in a flexible, cost-effective, and ultimately successful manner. Based on the Cisco MeetingPlace® conferencing platform used by enterprises around the world for the last decade, Cisco Virtual Classroom blends audio, video, Web collaboration, white-boarding, and instant messaging (IM) capabilities into a single, comprehensive distance learning solution.

The Cisco Virtual Classroom solution incorporates:

### Voice Conferencing

- In-session features such as roll call, break-out sessions, out-dial capabilities, and tools to monitor and restrict entry
- Ability to set up an impromptu session without making a reservation
- High Fidelity quality audio for better comprehension and comfort
- Automatic recording and playback of classes
- Ability to set up "listen-only" classes with Q&A sessions
- Comprehensive features to control classroom discussion
- Multilanguage voice prompts

## **Web Conferencing**

- Sharing and viewing of Microsoft PowerPoint presentations or any other non-video application with only a Web browser
- Annotation of shared applications, presentations, and whiteboards
- Ability to automatically record and play back synchronized Web and voice content without the need for additional hardware or software on student/faculty desktop PCs
- Instant messaging and polling capabilities
- Ability to grant control of the class session to students or presenters
- Multilanguage support

## **Videoconferencing**

- Enhanced display options, including voice-activated features and continuous presence of up to four speakers
- Automatic rate-matching to allow each speaker to participate according to individual video bandwidth capabilities, without affecting other participants
- Audio transcoding to match audio capabilities of each speaker before mixing audio from all participants

## **Security**

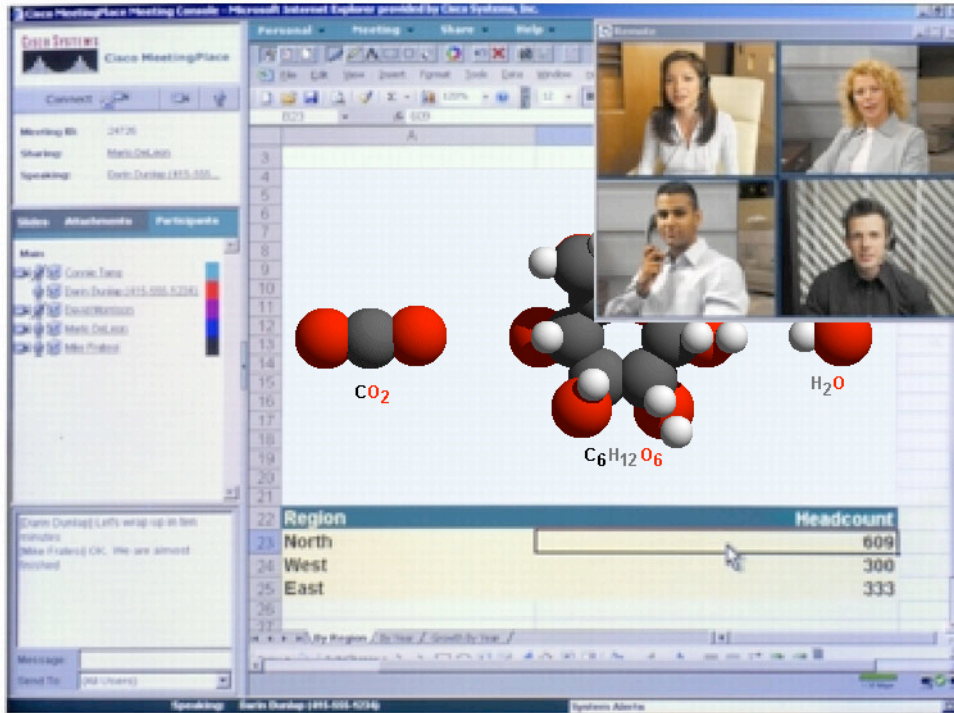
- Complete control to set up classes as internal only (behind the college or university firewall) or accessible to outside parties through the Internet
- Access authentication options that require all participants to authenticate themselves before gaining access to classes or materials
- Integration with college or university directories to ensure only legitimate students can access classes
- Encryption options, to protect sensitive information such as students' or instructors' personal data
- In-session classroom controls that allow class leaders to change participant permissions, require passwords, lock a class, and eject unwanted attendees

## **Administration**

- Options to set parameters for system usage, scheduling, access, and preferences
- Customizable voice prompts and data fields
- Comprehensive reporting, including usage and billing information
- Capacity management tools
- Remote management and monitoring capabilities
- Disaster recovery tools

**Figure 1**

Manage Voice, Video, and Web Conferences from a Single Browser Window That Displays Shared Content for Viewing and Collaboration



Integrated into a single, comprehensive platform, these services can unlock a world of new opportunities for collaboration and communication among students, faculty, and staff. With the Cisco Virtual Classroom solution, colleges and universities can:

- Allow students and instructors around the globe to participate in live classes
- Record the entire classroom experience (including lectures, audiovisual and text materials, and both live and Web-based Q&A interactions) for review by any student or instructor anywhere in the world who has been granted access to the course
- Use two-way audio, video, and IM tools to provide a fully collaborative distance learning experience, instead of simply broadcasting lectures to passive listeners
- Bring in off-campus experts and non-local speakers to enrich curricula
- Allow instructors to hold virtual office hours and meet with students privately and conveniently, without having to be in the same location
- Apply the same expanded geographic and temporal reach to staff and administrative meetings, faculty conferences, or other institutional gatherings, as well as courses
- Create immersion environments to teach foreign languages by conducting live classes with students and teachers from the culture being studied

## Benefits

With the Cisco Virtual Classroom solution, institutions gain:

- *Enhanced curricula* – Colleges and universities can augment the learning experience with video, high fidelity audio, and rich media content that brings experts and knowledge from around the globe right into the classroom – and extends the classroom to participants around the globe.
- *Expanded reach* – According to research firm ThinkEquity Partners, more than 66 million adults and more than half of all employed persons in the United States participated in some form of continuing education through 2002. With the Cisco Virtual Classroom distance learning solution, institutions can capture a greater share of these and other opportunities by reaching out to new students and communities.
- *Reduced administrative burdens and costs* – Instead of acquiring an add-on distance learning solution that must be managed and operated separately, Cisco Virtual Classroom integrates with the Cisco network already in place.
- *Ease of use* – Many institutions have videoconferencing, but the service is underutilized because it is too difficult to set up and use. The Cisco Virtual Classroom solution’s straightforward interface and point-and-click tools make it easy for even non-technical users.
- *Ease of Integration* – The Cisco Virtual Classroom solution was designed to smoothly integrate with Microsoft Outlook and Lotus Notes, as well as with existing network administration and security services.
- *Strong security* – Cisco Virtual Classroom employs proven network security technologies from the worldwide leader in networking. Because Cisco Virtual Classroom is fully integrated with the Cisco network, it can employ the robust security services and tools already embedded within Cisco network devices.

## Why Cisco?

As the worldwide leader in network technologies, Cisco Systems is the only company to offer a comprehensive platform of end-to-end networking and distance learning capabilities, coupled with the highest-rated service and support in the industry. Founded by two Stanford University graduate students, Cisco Systems has also maintained strong relationships with the world’s leading educational institutions.

By working with Cisco Systems, institutions gain:

- Lower total cost of ownership (TCO) through a true end-to-end distance learning solution that integrates with the network universities already have in place
- A proven solution based on award-winning technology already used by more than two million people around the world, logging more than two billion minutes of conferencing annually
- Long-term investment protection through a commitment from Cisco Systems to the field of higher education, and to the Cisco Virtual Classroom solution and its underlying technologies

## Service and Support

Cisco offers a wide range of services programs to accelerate customer success. These innovative programs are delivered through a unique combination of people, processes, tools, and partners, resulting in high levels of customer satisfaction. Cisco services help to protect the network investment, optimize network operations, and prepare the network for new applications to extend network intelligence and the power of the business. For more information about Cisco Services, see:

Cisco Technical Support Services: [http://www.cisco.com/en/US/products/svcs/ps3034/serv\\_category\\_home.html](http://www.cisco.com/en/US/products/svcs/ps3034/serv_category_home.html).

Cisco Advanced Services: [http://www.cisco.com/en/US/products/svcs/ps11/services\\_segment\\_category\\_home.html](http://www.cisco.com/en/US/products/svcs/ps11/services_segment_category_home.html).

## For More Information

For more information about the Cisco Virtual Classroom, visit <http://www.cisco.com/go/meetingplace>, or contact your local account representative.

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