

Learning Media that Bridge Distance and Time

Enrollment: 40

Respondents: 37

## STUDENT LEARNING

1. What are the most valuable things you have gained from this course? (Possibilities may range from acquisition of very concrete skills or knowledge to changes in perspective or ways of thinking.)

I gained a lot from this class: valuable overview of learning styles and theories, and insight into how I learned, through the application of technology. In other words, theories about learning were practically applied through our experiments & exposure to these new technologies. I also learned a great deal about the potential of distance learning, which hasn't been really harnessed quite yet. It's a great class – definitely worth taking.

I hated e-learning & I took the T-502 to understand the intricacies of the field better. The course provided me with the following benefits: 1. Skills: merging learning media focusing on the learning objectives of the learner. 2. Knowledge: awareness & understanding of various learning media. 3. Perspective: the course made me aware about the importance of distributed learning social benefit of creating a knowledge society.

Good exposure to various media for communication in terms of education. Realization of the rhetoric and complexities in designing educational solutions using these media (but a lack of instruction in this rhetoric)

Knowledge about different teaching & styles. Ways different technologies can be applied to different educational settings. Most importantly: what questions to ask when evaluating these technologies and their potential applications.

I gained a familiarity with a variety of distance education media. I have a much better idea of what their strengths and weaknesses are – as well as the adjustments in rhetorical style & lesson design you need to make the work.

Gained a diverse perspective on the potential of new technologies to facilitate learning across distance; the course provided what was advertised. Hands-on experience using these media and opportunity for discussion with classmates & faculty about these experiences.

I learned about a wide variety of interactive media tools & how they worked/did not work. Also was able to ascertain how the tools could be used in a variety of distance ed situations. Was able to note strengths/weaknesses of tools and apply this to learning styles of students and abilities/or lack of resources they may have.

This course has given me the opportunity to “experience” different media for interacting across distance. Some of the media I had just read about, but with T502, I could have a “hands-on” and gain several skills and this to me was “A VERY GREAT EXPERIENCE AND OPPORTUNITY.”

Diversity of hands-on experience with a variety of learning media and interactive technologies. Diversity of exposure to info and perspectives. Meeting (and interacting with) a large cross-section of people outside of my program. Learned to be more sensitive/aware at many levels.

This course has been a great introduction & overview of TIE. Not only does it expose you to a variety of learning media, but the hands-on experience really allows you to evaluate them in practice, not only in theory.

I have learned the affordances of each of the various types of media used to differentiate and accommodate different learning styles. At first, it takes a while to get used to the format. It challenges your thinking about what you are used to seeing in classrooms and how you use technology.

I had the opportunity to not only read about distributed learning, but directly experience it. I had the chance to see how it may work and now I actually feel more in favor of it than before the course. My ideas about the effectiveness of distance-distributed learning have shifted throughout the course.

Understanding and appreciation for alternatives to F2F teaching environments. The tools we learned about permit learning to reach learners in different areas & time.

It changed the way I see myself as a learner. It got me to see that there were other more effective ways for me to learn that face-to-face and that I really enjoyed distance learning. It was also eye-opening to be exposed to the variety of different media that can be used to learn across distance.

The course provided an opportunity to become familiar with the various kinds of technology. I've learned about what is available in terms of equipment and seen strategies for using it in a variety of situations.

The hands-on experience of learning through the tools which we learned and read about was incredible and not like any other class I have taken. The readings were very interesting and engaging – the pace was also very self-driven and this made it easy to be able to manage your time throughout the semester. This class never made me feel anxious or stressed out like others – it was a lot of work, but evenly distributed and totally manageable due to how much fun it was!

The range of tools and applications we were “forced” to use was very helpful, especially to those who are not familiar with things like chat, discussion boards, and MUVES. I found myself referring classmates in other courses to Tapped Im for group work.

Knowledge of the different media available to enhance teaching. Freedom to explore the benefits & drawbacks of each. A new vision of where teaching and computers are going in the future.

A broad way of critiquing the many media forms presented; perspectives to evaluate a media’s affordances & detractors – also, the course has led me to new & interesting questions to explore with regards to online engagement.

Understanding and appreciation for alternatives to F2F teaching environments. The tools we learned about permit learning to reach learners in different areas & time.

An experience of new and exciting media that can be used in classrooms of all ages.

Hands on experience with all the technologies discussed was the most valuable thing. It allowed me to see first hand all of the pros and cons of each & that was very valuable.

I was forced to participate in a very constructivist learning environment that I thought I would not enjoy. By the end of the course, however, I became much more comfortable w/ the pedagogy and learned to appreciate it. I also enjoyed the myriad tools we experienced.

It was helpful to learn to use all of the different kinds of technologies & talk about their uses and possibilities. I also enjoyed the asynchronous discussions, hearing what everyone thought, which probably wouldn’t have been said in class just because of restrictions on time.

Variety & diversity. New perspectives. Very engaging discussion.

Wide range of experiences using many different types of electronic media. A better understanding of how distance media can help teaching & learning. Thinking about how to structure classrooms to effectively use distance media.

Experience with a wide variety of teaching mediums and instruction on each type to give me the technological knowledge to use them.

Perspectives on various learning media. Assignments over distance/collaborative learning.

A broad experience of the range of technologies which can contribute to successful learning over distance and time, deeply rooted in pedagogical implications. The course informed me and challenged me to think about how these technologies were applicable in the K-12 arena.

Practical experience with various distance-learning media. I learned about truly studying a grad level course around the principles we (were?) being taught about education. The work was a lot of fun and always made sense. Best course I have taken this semester.

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An understanding of the different media available for learning across distance. A deeper understanding of my own learning styles and what I need in order to access information to the fullest extent.

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The experience gained in terms of exposure to diverse modes of communication and learning has been extremely valuable for me. I also appreciated the introduction to various technologies that I had not previously utilized (particularly in the manner in which used in this course).

Experience in multiple types of learning through technology. Learned my strengths and weaknesses in my learning styles. Able to get perspectives from others on how distance learning works for them. Learned how distance learning can apply to everyone.

This class opened my mind to the world of technology. I gained fluency in a number of different learning media and the course changed the way I plan to integrate technology in the English classroom.

I learned humility. I came into the course thinking I would have an easy time working & learning in all of these media because I come from a professional background in which I taught technology skills to other people. I quickly learned that the context scope & depth were far greater than anything I was imagining before I came into the class. One of the most valuable things that I learned is that I have very strong preferences in terms of how I communicate w/ others & that I have strong beliefs regarding how I best learn. I discovered that I am not a "jack-of-all-trades" so to speak, when it comes to using technology that was very humbling.

True to the promise in its description, I was able to learn a lot about face-to-face learning, and learning in general from the "distance" (geography & time) vantage point. As someone with little experience as a professional educator this meant a great deal as I was worried about gaining fundamental understanding about learning theory, pedagogy, course design, etc., in my short year @HGSE.

**COURSE ACTIVITIES**

2. What specific course activities and materials did you find most valuable? (Consider lectures, section discussions, case studies, guest speakers, readings, field activities, written assignments, feedback from the instructor(s), etc.) How did these activities or materials help you to learn?

The face-to-face discussions w/ Prof. Dede were the most valuable as it gave me personally a chance to synthesize everything we were learning outside the classroom. Although at times fascinating, the asynch discussions were valuable b/c they allowed me to hear from everyone in the class and provided space to reflect on and expand on new ideas.

This was the best-moderator who evolved & managed the course activities & materials admirably & with a balanced perspective. I found the following helpful: 1. asynch discussions 2. Written assignments 3. Media evaluation activities

I liked actually experiencing these communication tools. Complete hands on constructivist learning.

The asynchronous discussions: I learned an enormous amount from the teaching staff and the other students in the course. Professor Dede's lectures were introspective and entertaining. I also very much appreciated the detailed comments Professor Dede provided in my first assignment.

I found the work in tapped in, async, and handhelds very valuable. I was not a huge fan of the asynchronous discussion topics... except for the debate. It forced me to appreciate async in a way I had not before. Also the video conference.

Feedback from Dede on the issues raised in class and online were the most helpful. Most knowledge was gained in the interaction and the experience rather than in readings.

1. Hands on work w/ different media. We got to try them all! 2. The two papers – these allowed me to tailor course material to my specific interests with the course & learn a lot.

Opportunity to learn across distance. Exposure to different tools, groups, media etc for distance learning. Several reading materials on distance learning (e-resources) etc, etc.

Hands-on experiences with various technologies, discussions, guest speakers/demos made theory/learning real with practice.

I can't say that I found anything in the course that did not have significant value, so it's hard to designate a "best"; however, the face-to-face and asynch discussions allowed the greatest opportunity for learning. The small group projects were also good to collaborate & produce an actual product.

1. Lab 2. F2F lectures and 3. My classmates asynchronous discussions. They helped me to learn how to effectively use technology to support all learners.

Hands-on experimentation with technology. For example, we read about handhelds, but then played with them. An entire class was dedicated to the use of handhelds and its role in an education setting.

I thought the asynchronous discussions were most valuable. They gave me the time and space I needed to reflect and digest the rich readings. They also allowed me to engage in deep dialogue with other students to really explore some of the issues.

I really enjoyed the class meetings and asynchronous discussions. The topics in class were varied and relevant.

Readings were great – quickly engaging and also good references for later. Assignments were also very well structured to allow for tangible deliverables that were fully tailored to personal interest.

The discussions on Gossamer Forum were especially useful in gaining perspective and feedback I wouldn't have gotten from just F2F classes alone.

Lectures and face-to-face discussion were ultimately the most helpful, but the asynchronous discussion helped greatly in processing ideas and reflecting on content.

Course readings were excellent & exposed me to a wide range of ideas. Field activities (such as the handheld and the River City) contributed to my learning and evaluating of various interactive media forms.

I thought the asynchronous discussions were very valuable because we were able to discuss important issues from the readings or weekly assignment and everyone got a chance to participate in these discussions.

All of the hands on experiences w/ various technologies.

I enjoyed trying the various technologies and then discussing them.

Most preferred the guest speakers who could talk about how they had financed and built working, sustainable programs. Also liked the diversity of learning media – flipped a couple of switches in the ol' noggin.

Lectures and asynch discussions were very useful. The readings were very interesting. I liked the fact that most of the readings were available online.

I found most of course activities to be engaging.

Lectures, readings, demonstrations and activities where we used the tools described in class.

Face-to-face meetings. Handheld Virus labs.

Face to face meetings, async discussions and online collaboration.

Asynch discussions, Tapped-In, were all powerful tools for sharing our experience with the distance media.

The readings and the assignments were very interesting, especially being able to design our own assignment.

Labs were usually valuable (learning new tools). Asynchronous discussions & group activities were helpful and interesting.

Dede packs a surprising punch by including an outstanding spectrum of learning technologies in a constantly hands-on approach.

I found the asynchronous discussions to be an excellent learning (& sharing) resource, which permitted me to learn a great deal from my peers who all came from such diverse backgrounds & areas of expertise (and hopefully through my participation I was able to contribute to their learning experience. The hands-on activities & modes of participation were useful in learning from first-hand experience the definition of a learning community.

Tapped In was a method of meeting a class virtually – enforced communication skills and intellectual points of view to be expressed. Chris Dede is an excellent professor in regards to his lecture style and creating challenging conversations that are easy to talk about. In other words, the environment was comfortable enough to talk about what you didn't like.

Lectures, asynchronous discussions, synchronous discussions, class discussions, and labs were all powerful learning tools. I was learning about technology while using the technology we were focusing on.

I found working in a multi-user virtual environment (Tapped In) very stimulating and valuable. I was excited to learn that I could be so productive (in a group setting) academically over distance. I also came face-to-face w/ my fears (there were many) when being challenged to post ideas in an asynchronous medium. While I did not enjoy this medium, being forced to work in it for a short period of time was actually an extremely valuable experience for me.

The practical hands on activities in which we experienced the given technologies and the discussions (esp. asynchronous postings) afterwards were the hallmark of the course. None of my other classes used discussions and student input as effectively. I hope that other professors will use this course as a model for making offline participation and feedback of their course.

**2b. In what ways does this course introduce and encourage consideration of diversity and/or diverse perspectives? (Consider content and process.)**

It addresses different learning styles as well as how technology can address some of the barriers to education.

The course was about understanding diverse perspectives of various media & Chris managed it in an excellent way.

The chance to communicate via all forms encouraged diverse opinion and exposed many different perspectives.

Professor Dede greatly welcomed and encouraged student participation in all mediums.

It forces you to broaden your thinking about different learning styles. It shows you that what you communicate and who is involved depend very much on the medium.

The entire course is designed to appeal to different learning styles, and Dede makes a very concentrated effort to spur debate and individual thinking.

The multiple forums for class discussion help facilitate easy sharing & collaboration. All diverse perspectives can feel at ease to share and we (the learners) gain from this.

As an international student, I did not feel left out in any way – exposure to different media helped to bridge all gaps of diversity.

Both content & process encouraged diversity at many levels. Excellent consideration for a breadth of perspectives/learning styles.

Both class participation & the variety of readings allowed us to consider diverse viewpoints.

The asynchronous discussions open up multiple perspectives. The professor also pushes divergent perspectives and encourages diverse viewpoints to be heard.

The asynchronous discussions allow for expressing diverse ideas.

In an informed setting we can encourage our bias. In this course, we were forced to learn about and experiment with new technology. We did not always like it, but at least we had exposure to new mediums. Sometimes, we learned we appreciated something we were hesitant to learn initially.

The discussion forums were very open. No idea was ever too far out or put down in anyway. Also, the many media employed throughout the course support a wide variety of learning styles meeting the learning needs of many.

There was an assumption that we would have diverse perspectives. It was so much a part of the course that it was unspoken. The many ideas and views in terms of perspectives that people brought to the class made for effective class meetings.

Discussion groups are often mixed up, giving everyone access to a wide array of ideas and backgrounds. Readings often provided multiple perspectives on an issue.

The use of various media for communication allows you to speak in whatever is most comfortable for you, whether that is in a chat, asynchronous discussion thread, or F2F.

The various discussion tools allow for diverse viewpoints to be brought out. I found that I was rather myopic in my own thinking prior to the course (in some areas).

The threaded discussions were most powerful in encouraging diversity of opinion; however, more could have been done to ensure engagement w/ different groups of people. For example, discussion by interest, age, or a randomized grouping might have helped to diversify opinions.

In all the discussions we were encouraged to give our own ideas and perspectives on certain issues. And this allows for us to really see the diversity in backgrounds in people in the class.

The entire course is designed to appeal to different learning styles, and Dede makes a very concentrated effort to spur debate and individual thinking.

Professor Dede encourages students to share their personal experiences. Part of the class is realizing that people have very different reactions to various technologies & that no-one is right.

A basic concept of distance learning is affordances for different learning styles, but we didn't necessarily focus on this from a pedagogical perspective. I thought that the class on the digital divide could have been much more informative. The discussion got off topic b/c some people didn't understand the issue.

The technologies let shy, ESL, and otherwise reticent class members participate meaningfully in the class.

It allows us to actually use newer educational technologies in the course as part of the learning process.

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There was never any mention of anything that would discourage diversity.

Asynch forced everyone to voice an opinion so that we were able to hear everyone's perspectives.

The course content requires consideration of diversity – in peoples learning styles and social context. This is supported by the process.

The course addresses these media while considering how to improve the quality of country's worst schools.

This course covers a wide range of media, and looks @ those media in a number of different ways.

Because most of the asynchronous discussions centered around our thoughts and opinions, diversity was inherent – peoples' different backgrounds and diverse nature were valued and added richness to the discussions.

Learning needs of all socio-economic levels are considered. Special attention is given to addressing these needs through usage of technology from academic, economic, and political perspectives.

Given that I was able to "hear" from so many of my classmates, I feel multiple, diverse perspectives and opinions were both shared and quite frequently discussed and used as a learning resource.

Within our class, the classmates came from extremely diverse backgrounds. Everyone had the opportunity to share their perspective, write about what interested them, and the professor incorporated discussion to include diversity.

The asynchronous discussions got everyone in the class involved. I am someone who rarely speaks in a traditional class setting but who felt very comfortable sharing my ideas on-line. Since there were a wide range of opportunities for participation, I got to hear everyone's ideas.

In face to face class, Chris & the teaching fellows were always open & encouraging students to express their diverse opinions, etc... The use of the various media (outside of face to face discussion) encouraged all students (actually forced) all students to express themselves. No voice went unheard in this class.

Professor Dede, Jody and Ed acted as very humble moderators, offering their opinions and understanding while pushing us to share our own and cultivate deep conversations about the material.

## INSTRUCTOR(S)

## 3a. In what ways was the instructor most effective and why?

Professor Dede is quite accessible; he answers emails quickly and makes time for one-on-one meetings. I also enjoyed his quirky sense of humor. He is also the only professor to be aware of and address the crazy workload at HGSE by structuring the course the way he does.

Chris is effective because he never imposes himself on students. He is quite cool about making a mockery of his ideas & teaching style. But when it comes to teaching skills, he is like a silent-behind-the-bush performer. He was constantly trying to promote a hands-on experience of all technologies to us.

Dr. Chadwick's commitment to teaching and her work ethic were admirable and pushed me to strive for the best in my own practice. Her willingness to meet with us and work with us was also helpful.

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Professor Dede is extremely warm & friendly. He really invites group discussions and makes you feel welcome in-class and online! I really value the quick responses he provided in email as well. Fabulous instructor!

He modeled the rhetorical style he wanted us to learn. He was good at keeping the discussion going. He was very effective at giving fast feedback on projects, assignments and postings.

See question 2 & 2B

Gave very clear expectations w/ assignments & what was expected for earning your grade. Made participation easy; was very good at getting all involved.

Consistent and rapid feedback; always there for students. Very flexible, not hard on students, goes at students' pace & responds to our needs & capabilities appropriately.

Well-mediated discussions online. He was "present" in one way or another and was able to keep the course feeling intimate despite the large (40+) size. His real-life insights and anecdotes solidified my understanding, encouraged thinking & learning. Never "forced" you to do anything.

The instructor is extremely engaging in F2F interactions – bringing a wealth of experiences & knowledge to the class in a way that is still not a definitive "right" way or approach.

F2F great lectures. Online prompts good reminder of activities due. Very organized, so that you can plan your schedule.

Chris is great face to face. His lectures were fun and rich in content.

His wealth of knowledge. Being able to discuss the course material and occasionally reference non-course material, yet Professor Dede knew both, was really comforting.

I thought Chris was a very effective speaker. He facilitated class discussion well and presented information clearly.

He was highly organized and clear. He's truly passionate about his work to and committed to offering learning opportunities to others.

Chris was so well organized and every aspect of the class reflected this. I always knew exactly what was expected of me, and his flexibility was also appreciated. Much careful consideration was given to our schedules and commitments.

He was a great facilitator regardless of the medium and was the primary way of interconnecting all the readings and learning experiences.

Constructing a large framework for learning about the media and how to use the medium.

Chris is a very powerful speaker & lecturer –fantastic skill in organizing a class & weaving reading into discussion.

He was always asking for feedback from the students and he made changes during the semester according to some of that feedback or suggestions. Also he was available for help and really encouraged open discussions.

Although we did not always meet F2F, Dede was very accessible & answers emails incredibly quickly.

Chris is very approachable and knowledgeable. He is a fantastic lecturer who is entertaining while being provocative.

To teach this class, you have to be a sensible risk-taker. Dede is – and he's self-aware and honest enough to speak candidly about the advantages and disadvantages of each medium – and on being the leading edge of research in an emerging field.

Chris was very creative and led very engaging discussions both online & in F2F.

Good balance of “learning about” technologies and “learning with” technologies. Constructivist pedagogy fit my learning style.

Lectures and course design. Lectures, reading and activities were interrelated & followed up with productive feedback.

Very responsive to student feedback. Knowledgeable in the content areas.

Very supportive, available and encouraging.

Professor Dede was an excellent instructor & facilitator. Everything we did in this class had a purpose that was made clear to him.

Class lectures and feedback were great. Individual feedback, in terms of email response, feedback on papers, etc, was very helpful and interesting.

Chris is excellent at keeping on top of what we each need to do to meet his expectations.

He is a brilliant communicator, able to captivate and express profound ideas succinctly, and offer with a humorous delivery that makes all face-to-face classes an absolute pleasure!

The instructor did an excellent job of structuring the course in terms of how activities were delivered & explaining/helping us to learn the rhetoric of various media.

Adapted to the needs of the students. Available whenever students had questions. Responded to emails/phone calls very quickly. Gave lectures that included all students – very interactive. Created assignments that met the needs of the individual learner.

Chris Dede is an outstanding teacher. First and foremost, he cares – he cares tremendously about his students and their learning. His lectures were informative, he was generous with his time, and he was very approachable.

Chris is a masterful lecturer and a masterful facilitator of online/virtual communication. The course was structured in a logical fashion – the syllabus was exemplary (other HGSE professors should explore how he used iCommons – it was very powerful). Finally, Chris is simply a nice man – generous with his time & positive to students' personal issues.

See 2 & 2B.

## INSTRUCTOR(S) continued

3b. What recommendations would you make to the instructor to strengthen his or her teaching and/or make the course more valuable? (Consider content, materials, activities, assignments that should be dropped or added, grading procedures, amount and kind of feedback, utilization of TFs, as well as changes in instructor behavior.)

I would have liked more face-to-face classes, because these lectures and discussions provided a framework for understanding the lab activities, the themes presented in the readings and the non-class use of technology.

Video lectures on days when there are no F2F sessions.

Better Lab Instructions for technology. I think more actual instruction on the ways to use and rhetoric of the communication tools would be helpful. The diverse readings were good but I felt maybe overwhelming and when read were never actually used in class (besides asynch debates). When a communication medium was criticized in class it felt like the professor was defensive about his use of the medium and this could sometimes squelch discussion (happened in F2F and Asynch)

None that I can think of – this is a great class!

I would give students a asynchronous discussion option earlier in the term. The class section discussions were much more interesting for me using tapped in. I also would do something further with the 2 small group assignments. I felt like we finished them and they went into the void. We didn't get any feedback nor did we discuss them or even look at each other's work. Also you might consider dropping Groove. It was a pain and not Mac compatible (yuck!)

I would have liked some of the readings to be a little more theoretical, or denser.

Since nature of course is across distance a lot of the time I felt I didn't get to know instructors and they didn't get to know me. Other courses the professors organize lunches w/ students or chances for extra group meetings. This could be an option here.

Very intensive, if not organized and disciplined yourself; could take most of your time.  
Maybe reduce the volume of work – which is also empowering.

I would've loved to have him F2F in class every week, but realize that this was not a reality. I think I would've enjoyed this course and my Harvard experience even more if he had been here.

It was mentioned earlier in the course but sometimes postings in async discussions seem to either end the discussion or confine thinking that there was a correct viewpoint. Since I know this was not the intention (esp. given class instructions), it was not a

significant issue. The assignment structure was a little unclear – it might be helpful to have a lab discussion about the options & expectations for the assignments.

Allow more lectures maybe only one or two, and have the students use the media while in the lab. Support the professor using various media by having the school purchase or get donated educational versions of software to allow students time w/ the various media.

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I think it would be great if we could have had a couple of face-to-face small discussion groups.

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I really enjoyed about Chris's magnets and projects, and reading his work. More of this would be great! Very little to improve really – this was my favorite course.

Select a non-web based assignment for Groove. It's lack of support for the interactivity websites provide was problematic.

More processing of the vast choice of reading. We rarely referred back to the readings and had little opportunity to process the content in them.

Dis-inhibit asynchronous discussions!

I would suggest that he mix up the groups in asyn discussion a bit more frequently.

Provide a way for students to drive async discussion topics.

At times, giving a stronger direction to online discussion and f2f discussions would have helped to guide our learning.

The only "improvement" I'd make would be to have students use handhelds in a real situation.

Consider using less experimental or freeware like Groove & the free video software, and try to get the school to make some investment in infrastructure.

While the purpose of the vignettes & memo was clear, I found that no feedback/sharing (o/than just putting them in iCommons) left me wondering if learning were lost.

None.

Less emphasis on asynch threaded discussion. A few more face-to-face meetings.

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I think it is a great course. Varying the media we use each week for assignments might help a little.

Less focus on async discussions as the primary communicative method outside of face to face class meetings.

In face-to-face discussions, it rarely felt as if we were learning together as a class. A student would make a comment, and Chris would respond. Other students didn't get a chance to comment on the original comment.

You limit your students by not cutting them loose from the training wheels of always posing a question for async discussion and not providing or encouraging discussions among students on ideas & topics inspired by the class – but of THEIR choosing.

For the asynchronous discussions, I think it might be interesting for a group or small gang of students to develop discussion questions for some weeks.

Most recommendations I have offered have been addressed mid-semester. However, my only suggestion is trying to find more time to integrate the readings into class discussions. Otherwise, class was great!

I experienced a bit of async burnout midway into the semester. Allowing students to use TI instead of async was very helpful.

I allow students to use a balance of both async & sync discussions from the beginning of the course (not such a heavy emphasis on async for the 1<sup>st</sup> half of the semester).

I think at the outset we would have done more to familiarize ourselves with the asynch discussion forum. As it was the 2<sup>nd</sup> most used learning medium we used, getting more exposure to its technical usage and rhetorical conventions would have been extremely valuable. One avenue may have been to assign small group “field trips” & presentations about selected discussion boards, commenting on function (threading, notification, usability) content (language conventions, formality, accessibility of useful information) an community. I think such an exercise would not only serve to expose those not familiar with discussion boards to the medium, but also give veteran users on the style and usage in format and informal settings.

**ADVICE TO STUDENTS**

4. To help prospective students choose wisely, what advice would you give to students who are thinking of taking this course (about its level, the amount of work required, any prior training needed, ways to get the most out of the course, etc.)?

This is a really worthwhile class because you get to experience the practical application of all these learning theories that float around HGSE. Also, some of the ideas, as well as the technology, is pretty cutting-edge. You don't need a background in technology (or education) to get a lot out of this class – just an open mind and curiosity about learning. Also, this class is totally what you make it – you'll get out of it what you put into it.

The course is about integrating technologies creating an effective learning experience for learners. So it is kind of one of the most important courses. It also assumes importance because the future would be about integrated learning rather than the existing way of learning.

Be ready for a confusing, all out introduction to using communication tools. (This advice coming from an IT professional...). Be ready for little guidance in using tools and figuring things out on your own.

I found the course material very interesting and exciting to learn about. It was less time consuming than other courses I've had.

The course – by its nature – has less clear structure than many others. The online discussions can be invigorating... though some felt keeping up with them was a chore. This isn't a class where you can just "slide by." But if you put in the work you can get valuable experience.

Workload is appropriate. Might be repetitious if student has already used most of the media discussed. Student must be self motivated, the value of course truly is limited to how much you put in.

Very self-directed learning. You get out what you put in. Watch out because all the time you have free to do the posts can creep up on you. The lack of class meetings may be a drawback to some. Great course to learn more about an up & coming area.

To plan their time well to have a well balance of course time in relation to other courses. Be ready to feel physically and emotionally pushed by your learning experience in this course. Be mindful that there can be many "hidden homes" with the class online discussions which span well beyond weekly class time. This is not a casual 5<sup>th</sup> class to take. You get what you put into it.

I think it's a great course to really understand about diversity of learning styles & media, but if you aren't open to step outside of your comfort zone, deal w/ possible technical

glitches & give up traditional face-to-face interactions somewhat, you might be frustrated. But if you are open to the experience, you'll get a lot out of it.

This is a great course. It will help give you a broad perspective of how media can support learning. You will have to get used to the "uncomfortable ness" of using various media initially.

This course is a lot of work. Readings & online work take a lot of time. However, it is worth the investment. Comfort working alone and with technology is a plus, but not necessary. The course allows for a learning curve with the technology.

Take it! Again, informal learning reinforces our biases. Formal learning, especially this course, forces us to learn new mediums. As a result, we are better educators because we have additional tools to reach more learners. Moreover, we are empowered with the knowledge of bridging distance & time.

Take this course. It will change the way you think about distance learning and yourself as a learner. You get what you put into the course. The amount of work required is reasonable.

The work involved is what you put into it which will ultimately shape your experience. You will get what you require at a very baseline level if you put in the minimum required participation. More than likely, however, your interest in the subject matter and your engagement with your classmates will cause you to want to spend additional time participating, researching and attending.

Left blank.

It's great for a huge range of backgrounds – lots of help is provided throughout. Workload is a lot, but evenly distributed so "crunch times" aren't so bad. If you can manage your own time effectively, you'll be fine.

No experience necessary. Good overview of available tools.

This course is a must for anyone even considering taking it. I am not a techie, nor has anyone need to be to take the course. Mediated interaction is going to increase in importance over the next several years and learning how to use media to enhance teaching is going to be crucial in the future.

Be ready to explore, and explore outside of class assignments.

This class requires students to be self-motivated and you really need to keep up with the online discussions.

Whether or not you like the technologies for yourself, this class provides a great introduction to distance learning with technology.

This is a great course for students w/ all levels of technical expertise. It requires a lot of independence and a willingness to experiment w/ different technologies. It also requires a lot of distance learning.

You absolutely must be an independent, self-motivated student to succeed in this class, because it is what you make of it: reflects your participation.

Course pace & amount of work is consistent w/ the majority of course I have taken here.

Great course!

To not be afraid of the technical nature. The TFs and professor were always available to the students for help on all aspects.

This course requires taking on a lot of personal responsibility for your learning since it does not meet face-to-face each week.

The readings and participation are quite intense at times, but the more you put in, the more you will get out. Be prepared not to like some of the media – this is what the course is all about!

This course has a manageable workload and is very easy to do if you have technology knowledge.

This course requires a lot of motivation on the part of the student as it is very open ended and free form – there isn't a lot of guidance which is both exciting and challenging. This means you can get a lot out of the class but only if you are willing to put in a lot of effort.

This is not a traditional course. The structure is different, the content is different.

The work of the class is not overly difficult, and Professor Dede is simply brilliant in communicating a profound view of the “forest” while still considering a variety of “trees.” The class is intensive in hands-on usage of a wide spectrum of learning technologies. But despite the wealth of experience contained in this class the ideas of students and small intimate discussions helping individuals digest the experience me lacking.(?)

I would encourage students not to be afraid to take the course due to any apprehensions about the level of experience with regard to using various technologies, as they are presented in a very accessible manner & are great learning opportunities. This course is an excellent means to experience many styles of communication of learning, and I would recommend it to anyone who wishes to do so.

There is a lot of reading so learners need to balance themselves. No prior background needed. Choose assignments that benefit your growth in the professional world.

If you are thinking of taking this class, but are feeling apprehensive because you don't have a strong background in technology – DEFINITELY take the class. There is no reason to be intimidated. Professor Dede masterfully designed this class so that all people, regardless of technological literacy, can succeed. This class is a lot of work. One major strength of the class is its flexibility. Professor Dede designed the course so that there are no face to face meetings some weeks. For people who enjoy flexibility in their schedule and learning, this is a nice benefit.

Be prepared to express yourself regularly/weekly!!! You cannot "hide out" in this course. Your voice being heard by all (in some form) is a course requirement. It is very challenging & a terrific learning experience.