

Association for Information Systems

## AIS Electronic Library (AISeL)

---

Proceedings of the 2011 AIS SIGED: IAIM  
International Conference on Information  
Systems Education and Research

SIGED: IAIM Conference

---

12-15-2011

### Distance Learning In Hybrid Courses In A Us/France MBA Program: Two Years Of Experience.

Robert C. Nickerson

San Francisco State University, rnick@sfsu.edu

Kevin Kelly

San Francisco State University, kkelly@sfsu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://aisel.aisnet.org/siged2011>

---

#### Recommended Citation

Nickerson, Robert C. and Kelly, Kevin, "Distance Learning In Hybrid Courses In A Us/France MBA Program: Two Years Of Experience." (2011). *Proceedings of the 2011 AIS SIGED: IAIM International Conference on Information Systems Education and Research*. 29.

<https://aisel.aisnet.org/siged2011/29>

This material is brought to you by the SIGED: IAIM Conference at AIS Electronic Library (AISeL). It has been accepted for inclusion in Proceedings of the 2011 AIS SIGED: IAIM International Conference on Information Systems Education and Research by an authorized administrator of AIS Electronic Library (AISeL). For more information, please contact [elibrary@aisnet.org](mailto:elibrary@aisnet.org).

## **DISTANCE LEARNING IN HYBRID COURSES IN A US/France MBA PROGRAM: TWO YEARS OF EXPERIENCE**

Robert C. Nickerson  
Department of Information Systems  
San Francisco State University  
RNick@sfsu.edu

Kevin Kelly  
Department of Instructional Technologies  
San Francisco State University  
kkelly@sfsu.edu

### **Abstract:**

Online instruction has become part of many academic programs. With online instruction students can be located away from the physical classroom, a mode called distance learning. Sometimes online/distance instruction is coupled with face-to-face instruction in a hybrid or blended learning approach. San Francisco State University and the University of Nice-Sophia Antipolis use a hybrid approach to conduct several courses in their joint MBA program taught in Nice, France, and San Francisco, California. This paper looks at the first two years of experience in this program to examine faculty and student perceptions of the effectiveness of the distance delivery parts of the courses using different online tools. A survey of faculty and students who participated in the hybrid learning courses in the program was conducted, and the results are reported in the paper. The paper concludes that synchronous online tools were generally effective but asynchronous online tools were not.

**Keywords:** distance learning, online instruction, hybrid learning, blended learning

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

Online instruction has become a major part of many academic programs [Allen and Seeman, 2007]. Among other benefits, online instruction allows students to take courses when the students are not located near the physical classroom, an instructional mode called distance learning. Concerns are sometimes raised, however, about the lack of student in-person contact with teaching professionals in online/distance courses [Baek and Barab, 2005; Baek and Schwen, 2006; Hara and Kling, 2000]. In response to these concerns, some academic programs have created hybrid or blended learning courses in which some of the instruction is online and some is in-person, face-to-face in a traditional classroom [Dziuban, Hartman and Moskal, 2004].

San Francisco State University (SFSU) in San Francisco, California, USA, and the University of Nice-Sophia Antipolis (UNS) in Nice, France, use hybrid learning for four courses in their dual degree MBA MIB (Master of International Business) program. This program is taught in the Fall semester in Nice and the Spring and Summer semesters in San Francisco. During each of the Fall and Spring semesters the program offers four courses. Two courses are taught in a traditional face-to-face classroom in their respective locations by faculty from the local university (UNS faculty teach courses in Nice, SFSU faculty teach courses in San Francisco). The other two courses are taught by faculty from the other institution (SFSU faculty teach courses in Nice, UNS faculty teach courses in San Francisco) using a hybrid learning mode. In these courses half the course is taught over a 6 to 8 week period using distance learning with the professor conducting the course from his or her home university while the students are at the other university. The professor teaches the other half of the course at the other university in one week of intensive face-to-face instruction with the students. The motivation for this approach is mainly financial. Because the airfare and per diem cost for a faculty member traveling to the other location are extremely high, the decision was made that the faculty would only fly to the other location once

during the semester and only stay for one week rather than the entire semester, thus reducing the program's expenses and keeping the cost of the program to the students down.

Cohorts 1 and 2 completed the program in 2009-10 and 2010-11, respectively. Different online tools, some synchronous and some asynchronous, were used for the distance learning parts of different courses in each cohort. With two years of experience, it is time to evaluate the delivery methods in the distance parts of the courses to determine how well these methods contributed to the students learning and how these parts of the courses could best be delivered in the future. The purpose of this paper is to examine faculty and student perceptions of the effectiveness of the delivery of the distance parts of the courses in this program. To accomplish this goal we examine the following questions:

- Which features of the online tools were most effective for delivery of the distance parts of the courses and which features could be improved?
- Overall, how effective were the online tools in the delivery of the distance parts of the courses?
- How well did the distance parts of the courses prepare the students in the course?
- Other than the online tools, what can be improved in the delivery of the distance parts of the courses?

To answer these questions, questionnaires were given to all faculty who taught hybrid courses in the two cohorts and to all the students in the cohorts. This paper presents the results of this survey.

This paper is organized as follows. The next section reviews literature related to hybrid learning. Section III explains how distance learning is used in the SFSU UNS MBA MIB program. Section IV explains our research methodology. Section V presents the results, and Section VI discusses them. The last section concludes the paper.

## II. HYBRID LEARNING

Numerous research studies [e.g., Cook et al., 2008; Smith and Palm, 2007] have found no significant difference when comparing student performance in classroom, or face-to-face, instruction and online instruction. Arbaugh et al. [2009] appropriately characterized this debate by de-emphasizing the comparison as the most important factor: Rather than choose one method over the other, attention may then shift to combining the two. Notably, a recent, high-profile meta-analysis of 50 studies found that "[i]nstruction combining online and face-to-face elements had a larger advantage relative to purely face-to-face instruction than did purely online instruction" [U.S. Department of Education, Office of Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development, 2010, p. xv].

Some literature highlights the potential benefits of employing a blended learning approach in the business disciplines. For example, Arbaugh et al [2009] found that instructors' use of this approach provide students with workforce preparation skills, as they would be expected to engage with co-workers, clients, and stakeholders in both face-to-face and online environments. Analyzing survey data from 405 undergraduate students at the Montpellier Business School, Meissonier, Houze, and Benbya [2006] found that a) motivation and self-discipline were the most influential factors in students' achievement of learning outcomes when working online, and b) those students' satisfaction with the educational experience was affected by the tools used for teaching and learning.

Non-discipline specific research also provides insights. Based on their study, Ranganathan, Negash, & Wilcox [2007] advise that programs considering the development of hybrid or blended courses should assess the needs of teachers and learners at the course level, as well as the needs of the institution itself, when determining the ratio of time spent in-person to time spent online. They found that the proportion of online vs. in-person instruction varies, ranging from 13% to 75% online and suggesting that 50% online represents a good compromise. Singh [2002] advises instructors to use the right tool for the job, that is, select technologies that would best help students reach each different learning outcome. This is especially important for a program with some instructors in one country and students in another country.

Instructors and students may employ specific strategies to achieve the benefits listed above. Returning to the meta-analysis, several studies found that by engaging students in action, reflection, and self-reflection, independent learners achieved their goals [U.S. Department of Education, Office of Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development, 2010]. Similarly, Ginns and Ellis [2007] posit that teachers should draw connections between the in-person and online activities, and assign them equal importance, in order to increase both the learners' scores and satisfaction levels.

### III. HYBRID LEARNING COURSES IN THE SFSU UNS MBA MIB PROGRAM

The hybrid learning courses in the SFSU UNS MBA MIB program varied somewhat by cohort. Table 1 lists the courses and their characteristics. Courses 1, 3, and 4 were each taught twice, once in each cohort. Courses 2 and 5 were only taught once in one cohort. Professors A and D taught their courses twice. The other professors taught their courses only once. The online tools used in each course are explained in the following sections.

Table 1: Hybrid Learning Courses in the MBA MIB Program

Course	Cohort/ Semester	Professor	Online tools	Temporal mode
1. Strategic Marketing	1/Fall 2009	A	Dimdim with Skype for audio	Synchronous
2. Information Systems for Strategic Advantage	1/Fall 2009	B	Dimdim with Skype for audio	Synchronous
3. Alliances and Networks	1/Spring 2010	C	Camtasia	Asynchronous
4. European Banking and Insurance Market	1/Spring 2010	D	Captivate	Asynchronous
1. Strategic Marketing	2/Fall 2010	A	Elluminate	Synchronous
5. Project Management	2/Fall 2010	E	Elluminate	Synchronous
3. Alliances and Networks	2/Spring 2011	F	Elluminate Skype	Synchronous Synchronous
4. European Banking and Insurance Market	2/Spring 2011	D	Captivate Elluminate	Asynchronous Synchronous

#### Dimdim with Skype for Audio

Dimdim ([www.dimdim.com](http://www.dimdim.com)) is an online (cloud-based) tool that allows collaboration among a group of individuals. When used in the courses in the MBA MIB program, the professors showed PowerPoint slides using Dimdim. Because sound quality was not acceptable with Dimdim, the professors used Skype for audio communication. At the time that Dimdim was used in the program, up to 20 participants could collaborate simultaneously without charge. Communication with this tool is synchronous; the professor and the students must all be online at the same time.

Dimdim is no longer available. The company was bought in early 2011 by Salesforce. It appears that Dimdim will be integrated into the Salesforce Chatter collaboration platform, which means it will likely only be available to Salesforce customers in the future.

#### Camtasia

Camtasia (<http://www.techsmith.com/camtasia>), a product of Techsmith, is a software tool that allows screen images and audio to be recorded for later playback. Almost anything that can be displayed on the screen can be captured by Camtasia, and sound can be recorded along with the screen images. The user must have Camtasia installed on his or her personal computer. The professor who used Camtasia in the MBA MIB program created online lectures by recording PowerPoint presentations as they were displayed on the screen and adding his/her voice explanations to each slide. The presentations were then posted to a university server for access

by the students. Communication with this tool is asynchronous; the professor must record the presentation first and then the students can view it at a later time.

### **Captivate**

Captivate (<http://www.adobe.com/products/captivate.html>) is an Adobe product that functions similarly to Camtasia. Material such as PowerPoint presentations can be imported into Captivate and then modified by the Captivate tool. Audio can be added to the presentations. The user must have Captivate installed on his or her personal computer. The professor who used Captivate in the MBA MIB program created online tutorials that were posted to a university server for later access by the students. Communication with this tool is asynchronous; the professor must record the tutorial first and then the students can view it at any later time.

### **Illuminate**

Illuminate, which was acquired by Blackboard in 2010 and has been rebranded Blackboard Collaborate (<http://www.blackboard.com/Platforms/Collaborate/Overview.aspx>), is a software tool that allows course presentation over the web. The software must be installed on a server available to the professor and the students through the Internet. When used in the MBA MIB program, professors showed PowerPoint slides with audio lectures using the tool. A chat window was also available so that the students could ask questions or respond to the professor's questions. Communication with this tool is synchronous; the professor and the students must all be online at the same time.

### **Other Tools**

In addition to the tools described above, professors and students communicated regularly by email. Skype was also used for some student-professor communication. Several courses also used a learning management system based on Moodle for posting course materials online for students. One professor used Box ([www.box.net](http://www.box.net)) to post materials online for the students.

## **IV. METHODOLOGY**

To examine the effectiveness of the delivery of the distance learning parts of the courses in the MBA MIB program, two nearly identical questionnaires were prepared, one for faculty and one for students. The questionnaires focused on four main points:

- What were the best and worst features of each online tool for delivery of the distance part of the course?
- How effective was each online tool in delivering the distance part of the course?
- How well did the distance part of the course prepare the students?
- How can the distance part of the course be improved?

The complete questionnaires are included in the Appendix.

The questionnaires were distributed to all faculty who taught in the program and to all students in Cohorts 1 and 2. The response rates are shown in Table 2. All faculty returned completed questionnaires for all the courses they taught. The low response rate for Cohort 1 might be attributed to the time that has passed since this cohort completed the program.

Table 2: Responses to Questionnaire

	Number	Responses	Percent
Faculty	6	6	100%
Cohort 1 students	9	3	33%
Cohort 2 students	13	8	62%
All students	22	11	50%

## V. RESULTS

This section summarizes the faculty and student responses to the questionnaires.

### Faculty Responses

Previous faculty experience with teaching hybrid/blended courses ranged from zero to two courses with an average of 1.5 courses.

Half the hybrid/blended courses used a learning management system. In all cases the system used was a customized version of Moodle provided by SFSU. In addition to email, faculty used Skype for communication with some students.

Table 3 summarizes the faculty responses to the questions about the best features of each online tool and the features of each online tool that need improvement for teaching course topics, facilitating interactivity, and assessing student learning. Dimdim with Skype for audio was used in two courses by two different professors. The faculty liked the video, whiteboard, and screen sharing features of Dimdim. They also found the audio and instant messaging/chat features useful, but at the same time they felt these features needed improvement. Camtasia was used in one course. No specific comments were received from the one professor who used this tool. Captivate was used in two courses by the same professor. This professor felt that the tool allowed flexible student use, but that it was not good for interactivity or assessing student learning. Elluminate was used in four courses by four different professors. It got the most reaction from those who used it. Faculty liked Elluminate's many communications options, its interactive and polling capability, and its feature that allowed review of chat sessions for assessment of student participation. Faculty, however, felt that Elluminate's video capability was limited especially for group video conferencing, that some of its capabilities were slow, that its audio quality could be improved, and that the polling option was cumbersome.

Table 3: Summary of Faculty Responses About Online Tool Features

Online tool	Educational function	Best features	Features that need improvement
Dimdim w/Skype	Teaching course topics	Video, whiteboard, screen/document sharing, instant messaging/chat	Audio, video
	Facilitating interactivity	Audio, instant messaging/chat	Audio, video
	Assessing student learning	Audio, instant messaging/chat	Audio, instant messaging/chat, archiving

Camtasia	Teaching course topics	No comments	No comments
	Facilitating interactivity	No comments	No comments
	Assessing student learning	No comments	No comments
Captive	Teaching course topics	Students can listen to lectures at flexible times and locations	No personal interaction
	Facilitating interactivity	No comments	No personal interaction
	Assessing student learning	No comments	No assessment capability
Elluminate	Teaching course topics	Many communication options, audio, video, document sharing, chat, interactive whiteboard, easy switching to PPT view, polling of students, real-time view of student status (e.g., who is logged on), ability to give student facilitator's privileges	Video transmission capability for students, video conferencing (needs to be full-featured), connectivity (problems resulting in students sometimes losing access), speed (slow), load speed of PPT slides and conversion speed to Elluminate format, need for Java to be downloaded every time Elluminate session starts, set up time for instructor (about 30 minutes), real time viewing of screens such as Excel and Project (cumbersome, slow, distorted), drawing/typing interface (primitive), sound quality, audio conferencing
	Facilitating interactivity	Chat (private with professor or other student or public with all students), sharing microphones	Video transmission, capability for breakout groups for students, group voice communication, limited (6) video cams, visual clues to student engagement (to identify students who are doing other things during session), class discussion capabilities
	Assessing student learning	Chat archive (can be reviewed to track student class participation), student polling	Polling option (clumsy to use)

Faculty responses to the question of the overall effectiveness of each tool varied. The responses are given in Table 4. Dimdim with Skype for audio was viewed as adequate. Camtasia did not

receive comments on this question. Captivate was viewed positively. Elluminate had mixed reactions with three professors liking it and one professor saying the opposite.

Table 4: Faculty Responses About Overall Effectiveness of Online Tools

Online tool	Overall effectiveness
Dimdim w/Skype	"6 out of 10" "Effective enough"
Camtasia	No comment
Captivate	"Very good for learning but not for interaction"
Elluminate	"Good, 8 out of 10" "Good" "I liked it" "I did not like it"

Faculty responses to how well the distance part of the course prepared the students also varied. Table 5 shows the responses. Most faculty felt the distance part of the course with the online tool they used prepared the students to meet the learning outcomes of the course and for the face-to-face part of the course, although the professor using Camtasia felt the opposite.

Table 5: Faculty Responses About Preparation of Students

Online tool	Preparation to meet learning outcomes	Preparation for face-to-face part of course
Dimdim w/Skype	"OK, 7 out of 10" "Quite well"	"Good, 8 out of 10" "could be better prepared"
Camtasia	"very poorly"	"very poorly"
Captivate	"very good for learning"	"good"
Elluminate	"Good, 8 out of 10" "students learned the materials" "good" "not sure" "difficult to evaluate"	"very good" "students seemed well prepared" "good ... [for students] who take the studies very seriously"

Faculty responses to the question of how the distance part of the course (other than the online tools) can be improved received very few suggestions. Two suggestions were:

"Motivate... [the students] to use the microphone [with Elluminate]."

"Move to Skype video conferencing."

## Student Responses

Previous student experience taking hybrid/blended courses ranged from zero to four courses with an average of 1.1 courses.



Table 6 summarizes the student responses to the questions about the best features of each online tool and the features of each online tool that need improvement for teaching course topics, facilitating interactivity, and assessing student learning. Students who used Dimdim with Skype for audio liked the video capability (to see both the professor and the other students) and the ability to talk without waiting for permission, although one student felt this allowed for interruption of the speaker. Audio quality varied depending on the Internet connection. Bandwidth problems varied among the students. Students who used Camtasia had few comments about it other than that it allowed the student to hear the professor, although the sound quality was poor. The few students who responded about Captivate liked the ability to view topics at any time. They felt the navigation feature was error prone and cumbersome, and they noted the lack of interactivity. Students who used Elluminate liked especially the different communications capabilities and the polling feature. They also liked the chat feature, although they felt that some control should be put on excessive and overlapping chat. They were disappointed in the fact that only one person could talk at a time, and felt microphone passing was cumbersome and slow.

Table 6: Summary of Student Responses About Online Tool Features

Online tool	Educational function	Best features	Features that need improvement
Dimdim w/Skype	Teaching course topics	Audio quality, no interruption, ability to invite or let a participant leave without interrupting the session, low bandwidth needed, screen sharing, ability to see professor, ability to see PPT presentation	Bandwidth requirements, maximum number of participants, exchange of documents during the online class, audio echoes, inability to connect, button to signal professor that student has a question, audio quality (dependent on Internet connection)
	Facilitating interactivity	Video of student discussion leader, ability to speak without delay, note taking capability, messaging capability (Skype) for asking questions of the professor	Bandwidth, maximum number of participants, audio interruptions when someone is speaking
	Assessing student learning	No comments	Archiving
Camtasia	Teaching course topics	Ability to hear professor	Pause or rewind capability, sound quality
	Facilitating interactivity	No comments	Interactivity
	Assessing student learning	No comments	No comments

Captivate	Teaching course topics	Division of topics into sections, ability to be viewed at any time	Navigation functions (error prone), no notes feature
	Facilitating interactivity	No comments	Lack of interactivity, lack of ability to send questions to professor from any slide
	Assessing student learning	Archiving	Lack of ability to assess student learning
Elluminate	Teaching course topics	Whiteboard, PPT viewing, chat, video of professor, screen sharing, icons	Single microphone limitation, lack of group chat function, microphone passing (cumbersome), connectivity (problem with some students), lack of control of overlapping chat
	Facilitating interactivity	Chat, polling, video (of professor), microphone passing, PPT uploading	Lack of simultaneous speaker capability, lack of group chat, lack of control of excessive chat, lack of capability for professor to know whether student is engaged, microphone passing, simultaneous video limitations
	Assessing student learning	Polling, archiving	Lack of multiple microphone capability

Student responses to the question of the overall effectiveness of each tool varied depending on the tool. The responses are shown in Table 7. Dimdim with Skype for audio was viewed positively. Camtasia and Captivate received comments from only one student who thought the tools were average. Elluminate had mixed reactions among the students. Most felt it was very effective, although one student was dissatisfied with it.

Table 7: Student Responses About Overall Effectiveness of Online Tools

Online tool	Overall effectiveness
Dimdim w/Skype	"good job"
	"very effective"
Camtasia	"Average"
Captivate	"Average"

Elluminate	“very effective” “quite satisfactory” “highly effective” “not very efficient” “Effective” “successful” “effective” “Somewhat effective”
------------	--

Student responses to how well the distance part of the course prepared them varied. Table 8 gives the responses. Dimdim w/Skype was viewed positively, but Camtasia and Captivate received negative comments from one of the two students who responded. Elluminate received mostly positive responses except from one student who was dissatisfied with it.

Table 8: Student Responses About Preparation of Students

Online tool	Preparation to meet learning outcomes	Preparation for face-to-face part of course
Dimdim w/Skype	“Well enough” “pretty good”	“Very well” “good”
Camtasia	“Not well enough”	“Not well enough” “decent job”
Captivate	“Not well enough”	“Not well enough”
Elluminate	“as prepared as I would have been in a regular classroom setting” “Very well” “It sufficed” “Good blend” “gave the cohort the background material” “Somewhat”	“well prepared” “Very effective” “Not very well” “Good blend” “Very well” “Very well”

Student responses to the question of how the distance part of the course can be improved (other than the online tools) received a number of suggestions, some of which were:

“Have short [student] presentations ... instead of having the teacher speak the entire time.”

“Ask students to do some group work and gather once a month to follow the online class.”

“More involvement of more students in the eClass.”

“Make the online lectures more interactive.”

“professors [need] to be better prepared and knowledgeable about how best to run a distance discussion.”

“all the students [should] get together in a classroom and watch the professor online together”

## **VI. DISCUSSION**

From the faculty and student responses to the questionnaires we can observe the following with regard to the four tools used in the distance parts of the courses:

### **Dimdim with Skype for Audio**

This tool was generally viewed favorably by both faculty and students with similar features that they liked and features they felt needed improvement. In addition, students liked certain features that faculty did not comment on, such as the ability to see the professor during the presentation. Students also had more complaints about this tool than the faculty, including complaints about bandwidth requirements and limitations on number of participants in an online discussion. Overall both faculty and students felt the tool was effective in the distance learning parts of the courses, and they were satisfied with the preparation the students received in this part of the course.

### **Camtasia**

Of the few comments made about Camtasia, most were neutral or negative from both faculty and students. Neither faculty nor students felt this tool was very effective or prepared the students in the distance part of the course.

### **Captivate**

Captivate received different reactions from faculty and students. The one professor who used it like it and felt it was effective in the distance part of the course and prepared the students well. Student comments, however, were mixed, with neutral or negative responses to questions of effectiveness and preparation of students. The lack of personal interaction was noted by both faculty and students as a limitation of this tool.

### **Illuminate**

Illuminate, which was used in the most courses, was generally viewed positively by both faculty and students, although one professor and one student had decidedly negative comments about it. Both faculty and students liked its many communications options. Faculty noted, however, the long setup time required using this tool. Students were frustrated by the inability to have more than one speaker at a time with it. Overall, however, most faculty and students thought it was effective or very effective in the distance part of the course and that it prepared the students well.

## **VII. CONCLUSION**

Our goal in this paper was to examine faculty and student perceptions of the effectiveness of the delivery of the distance parts of hybrid courses in the MBA MIB program. From the responses to the faculty and student questionnaires we can conclude:

- The features of Dimdim and Illuminate were preferred to those of Camtasia and Captivate.
- Dimdim and Illuminate were viewed as more effective in the distance learning parts of the courses than Camtasia and Captivate.

- Dimdim and Elluminate were viewed as preparing the students better than Camtasia and Captivate.

We note that Dimdim and Elluminate are both synchronous while Camtasia and Captivate are both asynchronous.

Overall we find that the synchronous tools were perceived as effective in the distance parts of the courses and that the distance parts of the courses using these tools was perceived as preparing the students well. On the other hand, the asynchronous tools were perceived as not very effective in the distance parts of the courses and that the distance parts of the courses using these tools were perceived as not preparing the students well. We do not find these observations surprising given that the synchronous tools come closer to mimicking an actual classroom environment than the asynchronous tools. Responses to the questionnaire indicate the interaction among students and faculty in a course is an important concern. Synchronous tools provide this interaction (although it may be limited) but asynchronous tools do not provide for interaction.

With regard to the question of how the distance parts of the courses can be improved, we did not receive sufficient suggestions from faculty to comment. Students, however, provided several suggestions including having more student involvement in the distance learning parts of the courses and having the students view the online presentations together at a single location rather than individually at separate locations.

Based on this analysis our recommendations for future delivery of the distance parts of the courses in the MBA MIB program are:

1. Use Elluminate or a similar feature-rich synchronous tool for delivery of course material in the distance parts of the hybrid courses. Since Dimdim is not a viable product anymore, it cannot be recommended.
2. Find ways to increase student interaction during the distance parts of the courses.
3. Do not use asynchronous tools for delivery of course material in the distance parts of the courses.

Future research in this area may include an annual survey of faculty and students about the distance learning parts of the courses to determine if perceptions change as faculty become more familiar with this mode of delivery.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors wish to thank the faculty and students in Cohort 1 and 2 of the SFSU UNS MBA MIB program.

## LIST OF REFERENCES

- Allen, I.E., and Seaman, J. (2007) *Online Nation: Five Years of Growth in Online Learning*. Needham, MA: The Sloan Consortium.
- Arbaugh, J.B.; Godfrey, M.R.; Johnson, M.; Pollack, B.L.; Pollack, B.L.; Niendorf, B.; and Wresch, W. (2009) "Research in online and blended learning in the business disciplines: Key findings and possible future directions" *The Internet and Higher Education* 12(2), pp. 71-87.
- Baek, E.-O., and Barab, S. A. (2005) "A Study of Dynamic Design Dualities in a Web-Supported Community of Practice for Teachers" *Educational Technology & Society*, 8(4), pp. 161-177.
- Baek, E.-O., and Schwen, T.M. (2006) "How to Build a Better Online Community" *Performance Improvement Quarterly*, 19(2), pp. 51-68.

- Cook, D. A., Levinson, A. J., Garside, S., Dupras, D. M., Erwin, P. J., and Montori, V. M. (2008) "Internet-Based Learning in the Health Professions" *JAMA (Journal of the American Medical Association)* 300(10), pp. 1181-1196.
- Dziuban, C., Hartman, J., and Moskal, P. (2004) "Blended Learning" *EDUCAUSE Review*, 2004(7).
- Ginns, P. and Ellis, R. (2007) "Quality in blended learning: Exploring the relationships between on-line and face-to-face teaching and learning" *The Internet and Higher Education* 10(1), pp. 53-64.
- Hara, N., and Kling, R. (2000) "Students' distress with a web-based distance education course" *Information, Communication & Society*, 3(4), pp. 557-579.
- Meissonier, R.; Houze, E.; and Benbya, H. (2006) "Performance factors of a "full distance learning": The case of undergraduate students in academic exchange" *Communications of Association for Information Systems*, 18, pp. 239-258.
- Ranganathan, S.; Negash, S.; and Wilcox, M.V. (2007) "Hybrid learning: Balancing face-to-face and online class sessions" *Southern Association for Information Systems (SAIS) 2007 Proceedings, Paper 32*, pp. 178-182.
- Singh, H. (2002) "Blended learning and work: Real-time work flow learning" in C. J. Bonk & M. G. Moore (Eds). *The Handbook of Blended Learning: Global perspectives, local designs*, pp. 474-490. San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons.
- Smith, R. J. & Palm, L. J. (2007) "Comparing Learning Outcomes between Traditional and Distance Introduction to Philosophy Courses" *Discourse: Learning and Teaching in Philosophy and Religious Studies*, 6(2), pp. 205-226.
- U.S. Department of Education, Office of Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development. (2010). *Evaluation of Evidence-Based Practices in Online Learning: A Meta-Analysis and Review of Online Learning Studies*. Washington, D.C.: Author.

## APPENDIX

### Faculty Questionnaire

1. Course:
  2. Semester:
  3. Professor:
  4. How many times have you taught a hybrid or blended learning course before teaching in the Nice MBA program?
  5. What software applications were used for course delivery during the distance part of the course? Note that learning management systems and email should not be included in this list or considered in questions 9 to 15.
  6. Was online material stored (archived) so that students could view it at a future time?
    - Yes
    - No
  7. Did you use a learning management system in the course?
    - Yes
    - No
 Which one?
  8. Other than email, what means of communication, if any, did you use with the students outside of lecture?
- Questions 9 to 15 deal with the software applications that you used for course delivery during the distance part of the course:
9. What are the best features of each software application for teaching course topics?

10. What features need to be improved in each software application for teaching course topics?
11. What are the best features of each software application for facilitating interactivity among students and between the students and the professor?
12. What features need to be improved in each software application for facilitating interactivity among students and between the students and the professor?
13. What are the best features of each software application for assessing what students learned in the course?
14. What features need to be improved in each software application for assessing what students learned in the course?
15. Overall, how effective was each software application in course delivery during the distance part of the course?
16. How well did the distance part of the course prepare the students to meet the learning outcomes of the course?
17. How well did the distance part of the course prepare the students for the face-to-face part of the course?
18. Recognizing that this course will continue to be half (20 hours) distance learning over 6 to 8 weeks and half (20 hours) face-to-face instruction during one week in Nice or San Francisco, what could be done to improve the distance learning part of the course?
19. What other suggestions do you have to improve this course?

### Student Questionnaire

1. Course:
2. Semester:
3. Professor:
4. How many times have you taken a hybrid or blended learning course before taking the courses in the Nice MBA program?
5. What software applications were used for course delivery during the distance part of the course? Note that learning management systems and email should not be included in this list or considered in questions 6 to 12.

Questions 6 to 12 deal with the software applications listed above that your professor used for course delivery during the distance part of the course:

6. What are the best features of each software application for learning course topics?
7. What features need to be improved in each software application for learning course topics?
8. What are the best features of each software application for facilitating interactivity among students and between the students and the professor?
9. What features need to be improved in each software application for facilitating interactivity among students and between the students and the professor?
10. What are the best features of each software application for assessing what you learned in the course?
11. What features need to be improved in each software application for assessing what you learned in the course?
12. Overall, how effective was each software application in course delivery during the distance part of the course?
13. How well did the distance part of the course prepare you for exams and other forms of assessment used in the course?
14. How well did the distance part of the course prepare you for the face-to-face part of the course?
15. Recognizing that this course will continue to be half (20 hours) distance learning over 6 to 8 weeks and half (20 hours) face-to-face instruction during one week in Nice or San Francisco, what could be done to improve the distance learning part of the course?
16. What other suggestions do you have to improve this course?

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**Robert C. Nickerson** is Professor and Chair of the Department of Information Systems in the College of Business at San Francisco State University. He is the founding Director of the SFSU UNS MBA MIB program. His research interests include taxonomy development in information systems, wireless/mobile systems, electronic commerce systems, and database design models. He has published numerous research papers in these and other areas, and he is the author of 14 major textbooks on information systems, computers, and programming. He has been on the editorial board and guest editor of several journals. He has been a regularly invited professor at several European universities including the Universities of Nice-Sophia Antipolis, Paris Dauphine, Grenoble, Strasbourg, and Mannheim, and he has been an invited speaker at other European universities and research institutes. He holds a Ph.D. in Information Sciences from the University of California at Santa Cruz.

**Kevin Kelly** served for over six years as Manager of Online Teaching and Learning, and Media Distribution and Support at San Francisco State University. He received his doctorate in Organization and Leadership from the University of San Francisco, focusing his dissertation research on students' perceptions of the higher education transfer process. He lectures about instructional design, learning improvement, learning with technology, and distance education at San Francisco State University and Santa Clara University.