

Tools for e-course arrangement
(structuring, presentation, interactive communication, etc.)

How to put case-studies for active student projects on the web?

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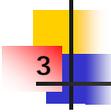


2 Student learning trends

- Successful learning occurs when the student
 - is motivated,
 - practises
 - digests
 - receives feedback

- The traditional didactic approach is declining in popularity
- We see a general increase in
- problem-based learning – student motivation important
- learner autonomy – students want to decide for themselves
- learner independence of place and time - flexibility

KVL

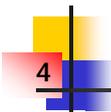


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Case studies – what is it?

- A description of a physical situation or setting
- Always based on “true” circumstances / events – real life
- Always contains a real problem / dilemma
- There is no “right” decision, room for disagreement

- “Decision” Case Studies:
 - students act as decision makers, providing solutions
 - propose a plan or course of action and project its consequences
- “Retrospective” Case Studies
 - based on true past circumstances
 - there was a dilemma, a decision has been taken
 - students evaluate the decisions and discuss alternatives



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Case studies – why ?

Case-studies are

- student centred – engages and involves them
- ideal for active and problem based learning
- if students projects and reporting are included this can fulfill the need for feedback and assessment

Web-based case-studies

- provides a self paced learning environment, independent of time and space
- are suited for shared learning experience between students, on or off campus
- may provide opportunities for student self assessment
- may be used for increased international perspective



Web Case

WebCase: Determination of Good Practice in the Design, Delivery and Support of Web-based ODL Case Studies (EU MINERVA Action)

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Partners

- University of Newcastle upon Tyne, UK
- University of Aberdeen, UK
- Università Degli Studi di Pisa, Italy
- The Royal Vet. & Agricultural Univ., DK
- Szent Istvan Univ., Budapest, Hungary
- Swedish Agricultural Univ., Sweden
- Univ. of Tübingen (Language Center), Germany



The objectives of the project:

- Evaluate a number of models for the **design** of web-based case study materials.
- Determine guidelines of good practice in the **delivery** of these materials in an international, distributed learning environment
- Disseminate and **support** the wider uptake of such models and resources.

<http://webcase-online.info>



Case Studies <http://www.webcase-online.info/>

These are best viewed with Netscape version 6.2 or higher at a screen resolution of 1024 x 768. (They can also be viewed with Internet Explorer 6)

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How to design cases for the web?

Typical student questions – helps set the necessary structure of case:

- “Why am I doing this”?
 - That’s why it should address a real-life issue – tell up front!
- “What, exactly, do I have to do?”
 - Project work or task solutions based on the case – state clearly!
- “Where can I find the information?”
 - In a comprehensive Case Description with a clear structure

Typical teacher questions – helps in assembling and constructing case

- “What content do I include?”
 - Depends to some extent on target group, but.....see later
- “How do I structure and present all the material?”
 - Design and language
- “How do I load it on the web?”
 - Technical development
- “How do I deliver it and integrate it into a course ?”
 - Support and tutoring



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Web-based case studies –

Content

Structure:

- Clear and simple
- Obvious location of info (site map)
- “Bite-sized” information packages
- Links:
 - Internal to include additional material - documents, spreadsheets
 - External to maintained sites
- Material
 - Existing material? Good, **but will always need editing**
 - Should always be complete and self-contained
 - Illustrate richly (graphics, photos images, maps etc.)
- Language
 - Simple, clear, direct + task checklist
 - Glossaries for specific terminology

- Issue
- Project
- Case Description
- Case Environment (Region or “Setting”)

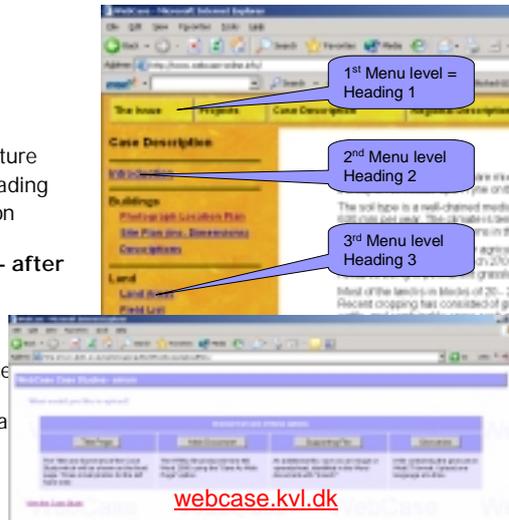


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Web-based case studies –

Technical

- Construction / Uploading:
 - Entire case text is written in Word template
 - Headings are used to create structure
 - Instructions are provided for uploading
 - Server scripts creates website upon upload
 - **No html/web-skills required – after 2 h workshop everyone can construct a webcase!**
- Using:
 - Loading speed vs. quality = reduce sophistication!
 - Link function – use external links a addition, not for core material.



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Web-based case studies –

Delivery:

- With introduction vs. totally self-contained (pure distance)?
 - If at all possible provide introduction
- Embedded in a virtual learning environment (VLE/LMS) vs. standalone?
 - If students are not familiar with it – don't!
- Provide project tools?
 - Spreadsheets
 - Models for more advanced analyses

Advantages of VLE:

- Note-taking and searching
- Discussion boards
- File sharing
- Monitoring (for teacher)

Disadvantages of VLE:

- Technically more complicated
- Students dislike facilities or interface they are not used to

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Web-based case studies –

Support (Teacher/instructor/tutor)

- How to set the support
 - Good introduction - then perhaps more self-contained
 - Be very explicit about case tasks to do for the students
- Where to use
 - for particular students / groups or specific modules?
 - Specify clearly!
- How do students access
 - mail, discussion group, chat?
 - Specify clearly!
- Learner pre-requisite knowledge
 - academic (tutorial element?)
 - technical (ICT problems)

Target audiences – Local, remote and international students

How to target

- students with very different prerequisites (academic levels)?
- both on-site (mainly local) and remote (mainly foreign) students with the same case-study?

Webcase conclusion

The same case may be used for widely differing target groups (Bsc/Msc, local/foreign), but:

- Tailor projects/exercises and tasks to the specific target group
- Provide variable but **immediate support**



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Conclusions

Web Case

- Web-based case-studies are ideal for e-learning, because they
 - motivate and engage students, independent of time and space
 - gives shared learning experience between students and may give increased international perspective
- The case study content should be
 - extremely clearly structured
 - with clearly defined student project and tasks
 - in a simple and concise language
 - illustrated richly with graphics and photos
- Existing paper based material can be used
 -**but never without editing !!**
- Putting case studies on the web can be simple
 - Word template / server scripts enables novices to construct a webcase within hours
- Variable delivery and support of a case study enables multiple target groups
- Handbook and training material available from <http://webcase-online.info>



Web Case
WORKSHOP – Worksheet
10 Easy Steps in Building Your Own On-line Case Study

