Innovative cooperative webcourse involving students in Mexico and the United States

By William L Hommel and Dolores Dib

The following information will be presented in the context of the course material, which will project so that everyone can see the interaction that the students experienced.

During the fall semester of 2001, Rodolfo Carvajal of UPAEP was at the University of Central Oklahoma and saw a demonstration of one of my webcourses. He expressed an interest in doing something similar at UPAEP. I suggested that we try a joint course with students participating at both universities. Over the next year we worked out the arrangements while Dolores Dib, at UPAEP, and I developed a webcourse on mesoamerican art which covered much of the material in the course she was already offering. During the spring semester of 2003, the course was successfully offered on line with students in Oklahoma and Puebla discussing the material in the chatroom and getting to know something about each other as well as the material of the course.

The course used a text that was available in both English and Spanish. Lecture material in the form of images and text was placed on the website of the course. This material was also bilingual. Discussion questions in both languages were placed on the course's bulletin board to aid the students in studying the material and prepare them for the chatroom discussions. An instant translation program was linked to the course so that students, who were not bilingual could get a rough translation of comments so that they could answer in the chatroom discussion. A Spanish-speaking student was on a computer next to me to aid in translation. The only aspect of the course that was not used by both sets of students was the exam. Exams were given separately at UPAEP for their students and online for the UCO students. The presentation will show all of these aspects of the course in projected images. This will approximate the student's experience in taking the course.

Each institution registered and collected tuition and fees from the students, who were participating at their institution. This solved the problem of whether to charge students out of state tuition, etc. The students who participated at UPAEP received certificates from UCO.

The presentation will show the webct course as it was presented in spring 2003 with all the bilingual lecture material, discussion questions, and chat transcripts.