

Beyond the hype: What e-learning can do for you

NewsU's e-learning success stories

So you've heard that NewsU's e-learning is an effective teaching tool, but perhaps you're skeptical. Or maybe you'd just like to see some specific examples of how your peers are using e-learning, so you can evaluate the benefits for yourself.

The News University team was wondering the same thing, and at AEJMC's 2007 conference they asked NewsU users to share their stories. The results indicate some innovative ways that e-learning is being used, which may have application in your classroom and for your own professional development.

NEW TWISTS ON TRADITIONAL CONCEPTS

It's difficult to consistently find new ways to keep students engaged. As a result, having readily available teaching modules for use both inside and outside of class helps keep creativity flowing and lessons fresh. Additionally, e-learning appeals to the generation of students who have grown up with video games and other interactive media.

"What I'm sensing is that they [students] want to engage with the content. That's what makes NewsU so effective. They can be involved with it. They can interact with the content as opposed to sitting back and reading it."

—Charlotte-Anne, Assistant Professor, Hank Greenspun School of Journalism and Media Studies, University of Nevada

"The NewsU module in color use and color theory has demystified this difficult to manage and often abused aspect of design. My students revel about the application of "simultaneous contrast" and other concepts that are often left unexplained in many key texts. My foray into NewsU had definitely scored a big hit with my online savvy students."

—Lulu Rodriguez, Associate Professor, Iowa State University

"I teach public relations writing. The grammar course was a wonderfully interactive way to provide an early

review. We've also used the "Lead Lab" and "Cleaning Your Copy" in class. The students give the exercises high ratings. And I see their skills improve."

—Vanessa Murphree, Assistant Professor, University of South Alabama

ADDRESS GAPS IN EXISTING PROGRAMS

When it comes to resources, not all journalism programs are created equal. But with e-learning programs, all schools—regardless of budget limitations—have access to a wealth of ideas and tools.

"I use NewsU in all three of the journalism classes I teach. Because my

—Jun Oguro, Associate Professor, Ryukoku University, Japan

PROVIDES RESOURCES FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

E-learning not only provides you with materials for classroom use, but it helps you sharpen your own skills and keep abreast of the latest advancements in the field.

"I am, without a doubt, a 25 to 30 percent better teacher because of NewsU. In teaching about everything from Web journalism to news writing to contemporary mass media, NewsU's lessons and examples are absolutely essential."

News University (www.newsu.org) is the e-learning home for more than 51,000 journalists, educators and students in 157 countries around the world. NewsU offers more than 50 focused, interactive courses that appeal to journalists at all levels of experience and in all types of media. Many courses take just an hour or two to complete and most are free. NewsU is a project of The Poynter Institute funded by a grant from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.

students have limited technology access at home, the site has the dual benefit of teaching them journalism skills and exposing them to instructional technology in my class. Most importantly, it helps bolster and support the skills and dispositions I teach in an interactive, engaging way. My students stay focused and their shared experience is a great starting point for instruction.

—Stephen Chiger, President/Teacher, Garden State Scholastic Press Association, University Academy Charter High School

I'm teaching "Media Writing," "Reporting and Editing," "Interviewing Skills" and others at one of the largest universities in Japan. In Japan there are FEW journalism schools for many reasons. These educational sources are very limited in Japan, therefore I am finding ways to teach writing and editing from News University's programs. I hope to have a chance to visit your institute in Florida and to learn what your staff is doing. We are going to start our new journalism course graduate school in the next spring."

—Richard Craig, Associate Professor, San Jose State University

"[Coaching Tomorrow's Journalists] has been inspiring for me as an instructor. When I have time, I go to NewsU simply for ideas for class."

—M. Peg Achterman, PhD Student Broadcast journalist, University of Washington

"NewsU has made me realize that I can continue to learn and add to my skill set without waiting for a major leap like grad school. Its bite-size sessions are innovative and interesting. I always came away feeling rejuvenated to tackle my job with confidence and enthusiasm. Thank you for taking the mystery out of learning and allowing even regular folks like myself a chance to continue alike in which the pursuit of knowledge is a joyful and rewarding experience."

—Macon McGinley, Professor, Georgia College

To read more e-learning success stories, visit www.newsu.org/stories.