IBEST Online @ TCC

Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training
IBEST @ TCC

IBEST, or Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training, programs are for students who want to improve English language or basic skills but also want to earn a college level certificate or 2 year degree.

IBEST students have two teachers in each class, one professional technical instructor and one English language or basic skills instructor. In addition, IBEST students receive additional support for each professional technical course.

Tacoma Community College offers the following IBEST programs:

- Accounting Office Associate and Computerized Accounting Certificates
- Early Childhood Specialist Certificate
- Office Assistant Certificate
- Case Aide Certificate
- Medical Office Clerk Certificate
- Transportation and Secure Logistics Certificate

IBEST and the Learning Management System
Bringing IBEST Curriculum Online

During Winter quarter 2008 one of TCC's accounting instructors offered her IBEST 5 credit Accounting course on the Blackboard learning management system as a web enhanced course. At Tacoma Community College a web enhanced course is a traditional face to face course that places some course content online. Following this trend one of our office program instructors converted a 2 credit Customer Service course from face to face to hybrid online. A hybrid online course has some classroom seat time converted to online time.

These courses served approximately 16 IBEST students. The students appreciated the immediate feedback they were able to receive in the online environment. However, with the accounting course, the students discovered that they needed to do the work manually and take an additional step to load their answers. A more automated process may need to be explored for future sections.

Building a Learning Community Online
IBEST Tutoring Online

In conjunction with the hybrid online IBEST course, the ABE tutor for the course decided to use Blackboard to handle the tutoring sessions. The benefits were the ability to address specific questions and create a group of students who helped each other in the discussion forums. This contributed to creating active rather than passive learners, moving away from top down versions of instruction. Initially more than half of the students wanted to sign up. There was a mix of students: as many top students as those who were struggling. The mix of students also reinforced the idea that some of the most important learning in a class can occur outside of class by students interacting with each other to collaborate on ideas and assignments.