

Modes of Online Learning

| <i>Mode</i> | Self-Paced (Asynchronous) | Facilitated (Asynchronous) | Virtual (Synchronous) |
|---|--|--|--|
| <i>Definition</i> | Learning mode in which the learner interacts with content delivered via eLearning courseware. Learning happens asynchronously and participants can complete training at any time. | Learning mode in which learner interacts with an instructor/facilitator and other learners via one or more online collaboration tools such as forums/discussion boards, chat, and email. Courses have a pre-determined timeframe (start and end dates), but interaction with instructor/facilitator and other learners may occur asynchronously. | Learning mode in which learners interact with instructor/facilitator in a live environment either through video conferencing or web conferencing. Interaction with instructor/facilitator and/or other learners is real-time. This mode is most similar to instructor-led, classroom training. |
| <i>Is Cohort Based Learning Possible?</i> | No, but can be used as a pre-work for a cohort based course/curriculum. | Yes | Yes |
| <i>Examples</i> | http://test.pacwcbt.pitt.edu/ExcelLv1Les1/ExcelLevel1Lesson1Start.swf http://www.e-learn.pitt.edu/cm6/scowindow.jsp?launch=/cm6/course/1694/a001index.html&org=PACWTP&course=8&sco=I_A001&user=Warn0003&key=B1E7069AA91C3060FA5CAC81D260044A&useJS=true&timeout=120&title=A001&ondone=/cm6/scodone.htm?orig=1694 I_A001 (Requires Login to Coursemill) | https://courseweb.pitt.edu/bbcswwebdav/institution/Pitt%20Online/common/Bb%20Exemplary%20Course/NUR%202261v2.swf | http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NGnuaZPcHFQ&feature=related http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iWfYK7oG-6Q&feature=related |

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| <i>Advantages</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24/7 availability of training to learner • Does not require a facilitator/ instructor • Allows learners with different levels of knowledge and skills to be successful • Can be deployed to new learners at any time • Content can be revised and re-deployed quickly • Learners can revisit content whenever refresher training is needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timeframe for learners to complete learning activities is flexible • Ability to ask questions and receive timely responses • Instructor/Facilitator can provides data to improve assessment of knowledge and skill acquisition • Monitoring of learner's quality of effort as well as completion is possible • Provides opportunity for social learning • Content can be revised and re-deployed quickly • Learners can revisit content whenever refresher training is needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real-time interaction between instructor and learner • Ability to ask questions and receive immediate responses • Ability to monitor of learner's quality of effort as well as completion • Provides opportunity for social learning • Can be viewed by multiple learners on shared or common equipment (PC) |
| <i>Disadvantages</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No opportunity for social learning • Ability to ask questions can be limited and/or responses may be delayed. • Obtaining valid assessments of knowledge and skill acquisition can be challenging • Ensuring learner's completion and quality of effort can be difficult • Learners with less web experience may be overwhelmed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set course time period limits the availability of learning • Requires significant effort to facilitate (preparation, providing feedback to learners, assessing learner's progress) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timing of learning is set and may not meet all learner's needs • Learners cannot revisit content (unless sessions are recorded and published) • Recorded sessions can be challenging and time-consuming to review. Also, they do not usually provide opportunities for interaction. |
| <i>Suitable Applications</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short courses/ smaller topics (1-3 hours) • Content that is delivered frequently to many learners • Shorter development/delivery timelines • Conceptual content • Introductory content • Overviews of processes, policies and systems | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer courses and more in-depth topics • Content that is delivered less frequently to fewer learners • Longer development /delivery timelines • Knowledge and skill building learning objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short topics/briefs/updates (less than 2 hours) • One-time delivery to many learners • Shorter development and delivery timelines |

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| <i>Resources Required by Learner</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to PC with mouse, speakers or headphones and ability to view video • Internet connection | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to PC with mouse, speakers or headphones and ability to view video • Internet connection | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to PC with mouse, speakers or headphones and ability to view video • High-speed Internet connection • Web Cam • Speakerphone/Headset |
| <i>Resources Required for Development</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructional Designer • Content Subject Matter Expertise • Content development tool such as Lectora, Adobe Flash, etc. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructional Designer • Content Subject Matter Expertise • MS Office applications | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructional Designer • Content Subject Matter Expertise • MS Office applications |
| <i>Resources Required for Delivery</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Management System (LMS) or Learning Content Management System (LCMS) EXAMPLE: Coursemill or Website • Technical Support (Help Desk) via phone, email and/or online chat • Subject Matter Support to respond to learner questions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Management System EXAMPLE: Blackboard or other collaboration tools such as discussion boards, SharePoint, etc. • Requires an instructor/facilitator with knowledge and skills for managing online learning • Technical Support (Help Desk) via phone, email and/or online chat | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video Conferencing Software • Web Conferencing Software EXAMPLE: WebEx • Requires an instructor/facilitator with knowledge and skills for managing virtual learning • Technical Support (Help Desk) via phone, email and/or online chat |
| Ability to electronically track learner's completion and assessments? | Yes | Yes | No |