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## Developing a Web-Based Course in Phases

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**Developing a Web-Based Course in Phases**, Tom Rodriguez, DSN. Texas Women's University, TWU, Houston, TX, 77030.

**Introduction:** Distance education has grown in popularity and usage. At the same time, enrollments at postsecondary institutions continue to increase. This places significant growth pressures on institutions of higher learning. Institutions providing nursing education have historically faced limited faculty resources. This has made it difficult to meet demand for distance education; and an "all-at-once" approach to course development does little to ease this problem. In this approach, resources are expended up front before a course is offered.

**Purpose:** This abstract describes an alternative, "phased" approach used to develop a hybrid, online, assessment course for RN to BS students.

**Methods:** The first semester, RN to BS students were enrolled in a traditional face-to-face assessment course for generic students. In acknowledgement of knowledge already possessed, these students were allowed to either attend class or complete theory independently. However, students were still required to attend laboratory sessions and to write the same examinations as generic students. In the second semester, learning modules were offered online. By the third semester, students were provided with a separate syllabus for the hybrid online course, web-based modules for completing theory, web-based case studies, and computerized examinations. The students were now only to come to campus for laboratory practice.

**Conclusion:** It is possible to develop web-based courses in phases. Disadvantages of this approach were that faculty felt as though they were managing two courses. Additionally, some students considered themselves "guinea pigs" during course development. Finally, some students evaluated the course negatively until it was more fully developed.

Advantages of phased online-course development were that faculty and monetary resources were conserved during course development. Additionally, faculty were able to complete the course in stages during three semesters while working at a manageable pace considering their other responsibilities. From this point of view, this approach does "more with less."