

BUNNY SLIPPERS OR BUSINESS SUITS

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Over the past few years distance learning has become more attractive to both traditional and nontraditional students. From the very beginning of correspondence courses to the online, self-paced learning of today, much of the reasoning behind the use of distance to teach has remained the same – students have found online learning to facilitate their needs for continued education while still managing schedule flexibility, a busy professional, family, and personal life. But to what end? Is the on-line learning environment offering a similar experience in the “learning” itself? Is there a sense of immediacy with responses and reactions between other students and professors, or do the students of online learning feel disconnected, perhaps even disengaged, from their cohorts in the class? What about a lack of connection with the professor? What sense of higher learning is gained by participating in online classes? What are the advantages/disadvantages for the professors? Are bunny slippers the answer, or does that provide a less formal and therefore less academic mindset?

This presentation takes a look at each of these aspects of online learning; the trials and pitfalls of developing a class on line, and the sense of “connectivity” that needs to be met, in order for *good* learning to take place.