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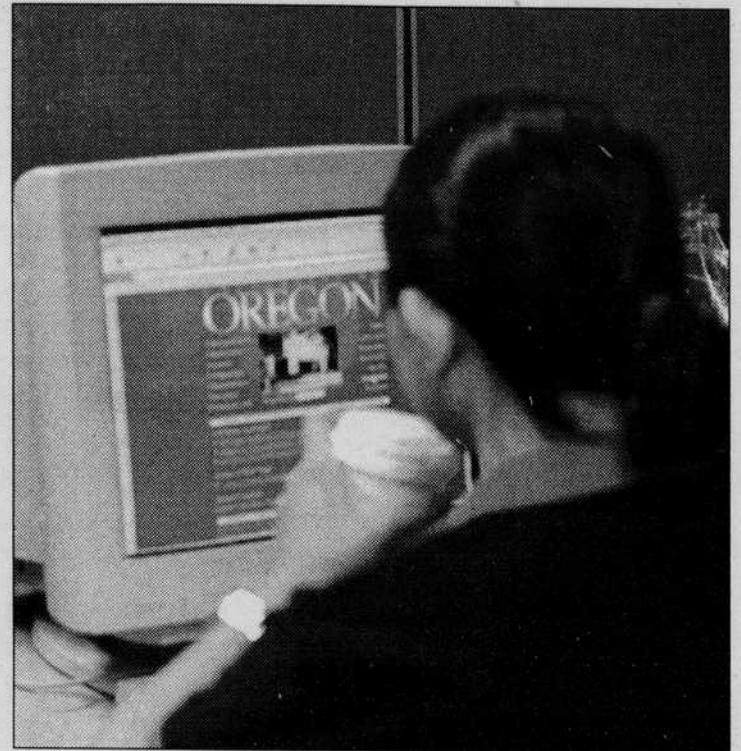


Photo illustration by Azle Malinao-Alvarez Emerald

University students are pointing and clicking their way toward completing degrees.

## Courses on-line hold appeal for students

■ Opting to take classes over the Internet has become a viable solution for students with conflicting schedules

By Kristy Hessman  
Oregon Daily Emerald

Stay in your pajamas, don't brush your teeth, roll out of bed, sit in front of your computer and you're in class — class on-line, that is.

It seems more and more students are taking advantage of the Internet, especially when it comes to getting an education.

"We started with on-line classes at the University in fall of 1997," said Sandra Gladney, program coordinator of Community Education. "There are typically between 12 to 18 courses offered on-line each term."

Classes available range from the social sciences and economics, to astronomy, physics and geology, along with a few multicultural art classes.

The classes require that students have access to e-mail and the Internet, Gladney said.

But are on-line classes as good as traditional classroom-based classes?

"Absolutely," Gladney said. "Some students say that they are auditory and need to learn the information that way, but most students that take the classes are highly motivated."

The way students adapt to the course typically depends on which course it is and students' other priorities.

"On-line classes are great for students who have commuting or family commitments, or whose class schedule doesn't work with their other commitments," Gladney said.

Although it might sound appealing for freshmen and sophomores to take many of their classes on-line in the comfort of their homes or dorm rooms, they may not be the best thing for these students.

"For traditional freshmen and sophomore students who are on campus already, on-line classes may not be the best fit," Gladney said. "Unless it is someone who has a clear goal."

Some students who have earned

their credits through the keyboard have found that on-line classes were more focused than real classes.

"I felt like the class was actually shorter than the normal class," junior pre-journalism major Tara Hadley said of her microeconomics class.

"It allowed me to learn at my own pace and really focus on concepts of the subject."

Other students also like the freedom on-line classes provide.

"I liked that I didn't have to get up for class and could do the work at my own pace," senior international studies major Renee Spath-Espiau said.

Spath-Espiau took a geology class over the summer.

"It was easy — I got four credits in only four weeks," she said. "However, if I had a question I was out of luck."

While many students are currently participating in classes on-line, the concept is still quite new.

"The University is still in the pioneering stage," Gladney said.

"The faculty and individual departments are really leading the way, although it's not a University wide thing yet."


Many teachers are and have been using the Web to support their classes with notes and extra class materials, but classes on-line are still not offered in every department or as a way to attain an entire degree.

"Some schools are misleading that say they offer degrees on-line," Gladney said.

"When you read the fine print for many of these schools you find that you have to come to campus for exams or for a two-week intensive class time."

While taking classes on-line can make achieving school goals easier for some students, whether on-line classes are right for a certain individual really depends on the person.

"You really have to ask yourself, 'Do I work better by myself or in a cohort group?'" Gladney said.



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PEAS 382	Scuba (dive master II)	2
PEAS 399	Sp St. Scuba (navigation)	1

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