

TEXAS A&M ESSENTIALS

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**TECHNOLOGY OPENS A
WHOLE NEW REALM
OF POSSIBILITIES
IN TEACHING,
MANAGEMENT AND
ADMINISTRATION OF
COURSES**

Enhancing Student Learning through Technology

The extensive use of instructional technology at Texas A&M University enhances student learning and empowers instructors to use best practices in higher education. Technology in courses engages students in presentations and discussions, assists in meeting teaching objectives and tasks, and has been shown to improve learning and retention.

TECHNOLOGY-ENHANCED TEACHING AND LEARNING

Technology opens a whole new realm of possibilities in teaching, management and administration of courses. Whether it involves using computers and projectors in the classroom or employing technology tools to broaden instruction and make teaching and learning more dynamic, Texas A&M has resources and experts available to help instructors enrich their teaching.

This is where the combined efforts of Instructional Technology Services (ITS) and Instructional Media Services (IMS), departments of Texas A&M Information Technology, serve to assist the university teaching community. ITS fosters effective use of technology in teaching and learning, manages many of the university's online learning systems, offers training for numerous teaching tools and provides technical support for instructors. IMS provides, supports and maintains multimedia equipment for Registrar-controlled classrooms and other locations on the main Texas A&M campus.

Through easily accessible support and no-cost, hands-on training that promotes best practices, instructors gain technical proficiency to use proven teaching tools in the best way possible. As an added benefit, instructors also learn about the underlying pedagogical concepts behind the technology and the compelling reasons why to use instructional technology in the first place.

A SOLID FOUNDATION

Instructional technology at Texas A&M operates on a reliable, centralized infrastructure designed to facilitate effective and efficient teaching and learning. ITS manages eLearning (powered by Blackboard Vista), the university's enterprise-level learning management system, along with more specialized applications, such as Turnitin (for plagiarism detection and proper citations) and Respondus (for online assessments). ITS also administers student response systems (clickers), Blogs @ TAMU (powered by WordPress), Wikis @ TAMU (powered by Atlassian Confluence), eCapture (powered by Camtasia Relay) and the Texas A&M Second Life Campus. IMS maintains multimedia equipment in over 147 Registrar-controlled classrooms. The technology ranges from Symposiums (an interactive presentation display tool) and computers to DVD players and projectors. IMS' Smart Classrooms have customized computers featuring a persistent control panel dashboard that operates a ceiling-mounted data projector, DVD player and podium-mounted document camera. The computers can also capture screen recordings of lectures using Camtasia Studio and wireless microphones.

COMPREHENSIVE TECHNICAL SUPPORT

No matter how instructors choose to deliver their courses—whether face-to-face, completely online or a combination of the two—ITS and IMS staff are available to assist instructors in creating engaging and up-to-date curriculums. Both departments provide support via phone, email, one-on-one personal

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consultations and even onsite assistance. ITS has implemented ITS Help, a customer-centric online technical support system, and continually develops help documentation in the ITS Docs wiki. IMS operates three media centers throughout the campus to provide on-demand assistance and equipment rentals.

As the pace of online learning and classroom technology accelerates at Texas A&M, both ITS and IMS continue to improve their services and support for numerous instructional systems, software and devices. Both departments stay on the forefront of emerging trends in instructional technology to help put instructors in control of how they teach their courses. With the advancements that technology-enhanced teaching and learning brings to higher education, students and instructors alike will continue to benefit from the extensive use of instructional technology at Texas A&M.



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