Take from: Sachs, D. (2007). *Pace University, blended learning, and localness: A model that works. JALN, 11* (1).

A. Example #1: CIS101

Several years ago, it became clear that the CIS101 course—an introductory course taught by Seidenberg faculty members to over 1,000 undergraduates each semester—had some challenges. One challenge had to do with the size of the lectures—72 students—and the other had to do with the overall design of the course. It became clear that blended learning would provide the perfect solution. Blended learning would provide better teaching environments. Students would come together for one two-hour course meeting each week—with no more than 28 students in the class. The other hour of instruction would be provided online. All of the students are local—and many of them need or want more flexibility in their schedules.

Such flexibility provides students with other course opportunities, and perhaps with some work options as well.

CIS101 has been described as follows: "This course introduces students to the essential knowledge required to achieve a well-rounded understanding of the explosive impact of the Internet and technology in all aspects of modern society. Computers are now the primary means of information retrieval, analysis and communication among individuals and organizations throughout the world. CIS101 provides students with the understanding of computer terminology, hardware, and software necessary to explore the resources of the Internet and exploit technology to its fullest on both a personal and professional level."

Prior to redesigning this course, and using a blended approach to teaching it, significant questions were being raised about whether any or all of these goals were being met.

The redesign team consciously chose to reconstruct CIS101 in such a way that for part of it (two course hours each week) students would continue to meet face-to-face, in groups of 28, with their professor. The other face-to-face hour each week would be replaced by online course instruction. This would serve several purposes. Students would learn about online instruction, they could access their course materials for this one hour of instruction "anytime, anywhere" and they could have more flexibility in their lives.

The course redesign team focused heavily on determining which course materials worked best and where.

Students in CIS101 are surveyed several times each semester. It is abundantly clear that the new course design for CIS101 works well. Students have much greater access to their professors, they have more flexibility in their schedules, and they are becoming gently and caringly introduced to online education.

B. Example #2: The Doctorate in Professional Computing Degree

Without a blended/local approach to education, Pace University's Doctorate in Professional Computing degree would most likely not be possible. Since 1999, this degree has attracted individuals who for the most part live nearby—within about 50 miles from the University campus—(as well as some who live farther away) who wish to participate in an educational offering that is demanding, time consuming and flexible. Students must be on campus 5 or 6 weekends (Friday night and all day Saturday) each semester.

All of their other work is conducted online. This degree, intended for full-time working IT and education professionals, offers the "best of both worlds" to these adults. They have the opportunity to interact face-to-face with their classmates, and they also have the chance to maintain their full-time jobs and family and community obligations.

Blended learning has been the key to the success of the Doctorate in Professional Computing degree.

When students are surveyed about the mix of on-campus face-to-face time and the off-campus online time, they always tell us that the mix is a perfect one. They value the on-campus time that can be used for group work, hands-on labs, and face-to-face meetings with their advisors and professors. And, for many of them, the conversation continues during those in-between times. They work in teams, and they provide each other with research and reports and conversations, all online, when they are not on campus. Students use a wide array of technology, in truly blended format, during the three or four years that they participate in this degree. They communicate regularly and effectively with each other, and quickly and easily go back and forth between the on-ground face-to-face meetings and the online email, attached files and Instant Messenger meetings that occur in between.

C. Example #3: The Bank of New York Project

The Bank of New York Project began in January 2006. Approximately 40 individuals from the Bank of New York are actively involved in pursuing two graduate certificates—one in Software Design and Development and one in Secure Software Development. All of the instruction is provided on-site by Pace

University professors at a nearby Bank of New York location. It is clear that face-to-face instruction is important to the Bank and to the students. Students value the time that they spend with their professors and eagerly look forward to working closely with them in a classroom setting.

It is also clear that blended learning has made a huge difference with this particular project, primarily with respect to calendar flexibility. Banks regularly close for certain holidays (Martin Luther King Day,

Presidents Day, etc.) and, in this case, that would have meant that the classes either would not have met those given weeks, or would have had to find other time to meet. Instead, it was "blended learning to the rescue". Both cohorts of students were provided with

Blackboard course shells for their classes, and professors were able to successfully integrate their online teaching with their on-ground instruction. When professors knew in advance that their classes were not going to meet, they were able to put all of the necessary course materials into the Blackboard shell, and the courses met anyway. And, when an unexpected snowstorm occurred and wiped out another scheduled class meeting, the class was again able to continue quite effectively.

Blended learning also provided a helpful answer to a calendar challenge. The Bank and the University wished to offer students a late Spring term—but it was also clear that the calendar would permit only offering a nine-week term ending by July 1st, rather than the usual 12-week one. Once again, blended learning provided the answer. Classes met face-to-face for nine class meetings, but students also had a significant amount of additional work (the equivalent of three weeks' worth) provided to them in an online fashion.

And finally, when it became clear that there was a need for students to have a Java class in their lives and that it would have to be scheduled during the summer, it was blended learning that made that possible.

Students were enrolled in a nine-week face-to-face class as well as a nine-week online class. They were permitted to attend either or both of the classes, and some students moved back and forth easily from one to the other. The professor who was teaching the students (and who was teaching both sections) knew them all, and "met them all" each week, one place or the other. Blended learning worked well in this case; the course took place during July and August while students came and went and they never had to miss a class