

Technology for Collaboration:

We began meeting through phone conferencing since we were not all able to physically meet up. Our wiki was the central place for us to post things. Having categories and folders really helped. The first meeting almost all had both a phone and a video connection. There was some sharing of screens and everyone had the wiki open and was either entering information into it or discussing what was in there. On other phone conferences DimDim was used and some of us were successful at sharing screens. We were all able to give feedback.

Since this was about learning styles and different ways to present learning, we considered doing a Powerpoint presentation with sound or a Camtasia video to show the learning path. We decided on a website to house the course. The website was intended to give structure to the learning and act as a container for the objectives, activities, and resources. A theme using many colors was chosen to represent the different ways of learning. The muted colors were chosen for the background to help the learner relax and focus on the content.

We wanted this website to be simple, and defined four categories. Everyone worked together to develop content for the categories and collaborated on editing. Defining the learning objectives really drove the design of the website. We knew we had to provide resources for learners to accomplish these objectives and became very clear about how to do this. We wanted to be responsive to learners and created content we ourselves were interested in reading.

Usability was a key consideration and we decided to use anchor links to help users navigate and get quickly to content. We used alt tags in for images. The images online for the Learning Styles Overview were small so they would download faster. We realized they might be hard for some learners to read, so added a print pdf with more readable and accessible content. Pedagogical Rationale was written and placed next to each chart to clarify our course overview. We decided to use a linking glossary to add to the kinesthetic appeal of the site. We also gave a lot of thought to the grouping of like elements, incorporating Gestalt theory. Our goal was to

keep it simple and keep related parts in close proximity.

We wanted the learning to appeal to all types of learners. If time permitted we would have made a video leading the learner down the learning path. To make the learning a more interactive experience, we selected a few related videos that were labeled under a subheading and easy to find in our "Resources" section. We wanted to make the "Learning Path" easy to follow and chose to put links, information and resources for particular activities together. We also wanted to maintain the link with iLearn so that it would be easy to post assignments. Designing iLearn to work with the website was intentional and we hope this made things easier for learners.

When the site was up it was easy for the team to test it since it was live. We communicated through emails and an occasional phone call. It was essential to send emails to all...even if it seemed redundant. We used GoogleDocs for transferring the Resources Page information and learned that there was a way to transfer links that we were not aware of. There were some technology glitches with materials done in Powerpoint—the best format for file transfer was Word.doc. Finding a way to create a pdf from the website was most helpful. It could be marked it up with post-its to identify last minute changes...which worked very well.