

BICS FAQs

Important questions from list below....can we address these first?

1. What is blended instruction?

The first question people ask me is**What is blended instruction?**
So, we need a definition.

Here's a variant of what is typically used (e.g., UCF, UMW, Maricopia, many others)...

Blended instruction courses offer curriculum through a combination of face-to-face and electronic mediums. In contrast to electronically enhanced courses that offer electronic supplements (e.g., access to PowerPoint slides, digital video, discussion boards) in addition to a full lecture schedule, blended instruction courses provide a significant proportion of the curriculum electronically such that some of the time that is traditionally spent in the lecture hall is reduced but not eliminated.

But there are some important points we need to consider regarding this definition....

1. In this definition you see an emphasis on replacement of F2F meetings. But is it necessary that some lectures be replaced with information technologies or, can information technologies instead supplement lecture? I think this is an important point because our definition needs to match 'our pitch.' Do we agree that although an outcome of a blended course redesign is likely to be reduced seat time, we don't want to flag 'replacement of f2f lectures?' One important reason not to flag this issue is related to people's current model of blended instruction – which tends to be some combination of F2F and distance learning where some lectures are replaced with 'online text.' Obviously this isn't what we have in mind but at this point perhaps it is better to avoid creating nervous instructors with the word 'replacement'. The only issue with NOT making replacement a requirement is that it will make it difficult to distinguish BICS from OID grants. Is this a problem?
2. too much emphasis on 'lectures' – many other types of classes as well (e.g., lab courses)

The ITTF provided the following definition – which deemphasizes 'replacement of F2F meetings' and importantly begins to take our focus away from where instruction occurs to how it occurs...

Blended instruction is a term for the delivery of instruction based on the integration of face-based instruction and computer-based instruction. In blended instruction, a significant amount of student learning is achieved through online instruction, resulting in changes to course structure and how/where students allocate their time in mastery of the course content. Blended instruction can be an important vehicle to begin to exploit the potential of technology to improve the quality of instruction, to increase access, to increase the amount of learning, and to maintain or reduce costs.

Can we take this even further with something like the following ...

Blended instruction meets course-learning objectives by using a combination of face-to-face meetings and information technologies in such a way that maximizes the benefits of both approaches. In blended instruction courses a significant amount of student learning is achieved through information technologies, which often results in changes to course structure and how/where students allocate their time in mastery of the course content. By combining face to face and information technologies it is possible to achieve course goals that cannot be attained by using either method of delivery alone. As such, blended instruction can be an important vehicle to improve the quality of instruction, to enhance student and instructor satisfaction and thus to improve learning.

(our definition could also be accompanied by several scenarios describing blended instructions courses that solve over-enrollment problems, see document titled 'what is blended instruction?')

2. Independent faculty proposals or departmental proposals or both?
3. What dollars for what purposes flow to the faculty member?
4. What are the purposes of the first and second phases of the RFP?
5. Ask for a budget or ask for "what types and amounts of work will be needed to achieve your goals"?
6. Ask for details on what they think needs to be done, or let the team in collaboration with the faculty come up with that as part of the RFP-2?
7. If the person has not applied to RFP-1, may the apply to RFP-2?
8. What are the main issues we hope to understand at the end of the first year?
9. Who are the members of the selection committee?
10. When will the selected proposals be notified?

Full list of Frequently Asked Questions (any you'd like to add?)

1. What is blended instruction?
2. Who can I contact to find out more about the RFP?
3. Who can I contact to find out more about blended instruction?
4. Who should I contact to discuss questions I have concerning my own ideas for blended instruction?
5. I submit a proposal to phase 2 without completing the phase 1?
6. What are the purposes of the first and second phase RFPs?
7. Can I reapply in subsequent years (e.g., 2004-2005, 2005-2006)?
8. Are multi-year proposals accepted?
9. Is departmental support required? If so, what type of support is necessary?
10. Can departments or teams apply?
11. How are instructors compensated for their participation?
12. Should a budget be included in the RFPs?
13. Should a timeline be included in the RFPs?
14. At what stage of readiness should a course (instructor and department) be?
15. Does the instructor need to have an extensive knowledge of teaching technologies?
16. Who are the members of the selection committee?
17. When will the selected proposals be notified?
18. Does the blend need to include information technologies?
19. Are you looking for major course redesigns only or can a component of the course also be redesigned?

20. Is it necessary that some lectures be replaced with information technologies or, can information technologies instead supplement lectures.
21. I have already completed a blended instruction course redesign. Can I apply/participate?
22. What types of enrollment problems are included?
23. What is an impacted course? A current list of impacted courses for the college can be found at <http://www.registrar.ucla.edu/soc/impat.htm>
24. Can a course with consistent low enrollments (e.g., with difficulty enrolling enough students) apply?
25. Can a graduate course be the focus of the course redesign?
26. Are the course redesigns restricted to those offered by the college of letters and science?