Resources for online instructors

Cloud-based services

These services provide a place for your students to access course materials when Blackboard is down. They are typically also easier for the instructor to work with than Blackboard and offer faster downloads to students.

https://www.dropbox.com/home
https://onedrive.live.com/
http://www.115.com/?lang=en

The last one is particularly important for students in the People's Republic of China, where access to the first two services might be sporadic.

Audio Editing

Audacity This software allows you to edit audio files for inclusion into narrated PowerPoint presentations and other uses. Audacity has greater functionality than the audio editing capabilities in PowerPoint and, unlike Mediasite, you can edit a portion out of the middle of an audio file and merge the remaining parts into a single file.

http://audacity.sourceforge.net/

Video Production and Editing

Windows Live Movie Maker This free software allows you to edit existing video clips and record new videos using your webcam. Unlike Mediasite, you can cut pieces from the middle of a video and merge the remaining sections into a single file. This software also allows you to choose from different output qualities, from VGA to HD.

http://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows-live/movie-maker

CamStudio This free software allows you to record your screen and your voice at the same time. This is especially helpful for working out examples on the screen, such as creating spreadsheets and using a calculator emulator. Highlight your cursor so that students can follow your steps more easily on the screen. You can edit the output using Windows Live Movie Maker (see above).

http://camstudio.org/

PowerPoint We are all familiar with the basics of PowerPoint, but the software has learned some new tricks since its introduction. One can associate audio files (see above) with slides and then turn the resulting narrated presentation into a video file for students to access.

Virtual meeting services

join.me This free service (non-commercial license) allows you to share your screen with a student over the internet. This is useful for reviewing online exams with students when you do not wish to make your questions available to students after exams. As most online exams pull questions from pools, coordinated student groups could gather all questions from the pools and make them available to future students. Reviewing exams individually with students via sharing your screen helps reduce this possibility. This service is best used with a separate phone call for conversations with the student. When phone calls are not possible due to student location, join.me can be used in parallel with Skype (see below) to converse.

https://join.me

Skype This free video-conferencing service allows professors to have face-to-face conversations with online students regardless of their location in the world. Face-to-face conversations are critical for discussion of grades, as student identity can be confirmed by having the student hold up their I.D. to the webcam. Face-to-face conversations are also helpful when fielding complaints. Students in online classes often do not feel as if their instructor is a human being since they have never met in person. As a result, students are often willing to type hateful and malicious comments into emails to their professors. Requiring all complaints to be registered during a Skype call with webcam activated forces students to look their professor in the eye and realize that their professor is also a human being.

http://www.skype.com/en/

Online Proctoring Services

Kryterion/SmartProctor This service, free to the professor but paid for by students, provides online proctoring of exams hosted on platforms such as Blackboard or McGraw-Hill's Connect. Professors register their exams with Kryterion in advance, providing a password which the online proctor enters into the student's computer after momentarily taking control of the student's system. Students then take the exam while the proctor watches the student via webcam to note suspicious behavior. Proctors offer warnings to students suspected of engaging in deviant behavior and notifies the professor of suspicious activities.

https://www.smartproctor.com/home.html

Online Collaboration Tools

Google Docs This service, free to all, can be very useful to both professors and students. Google docs will allow you to convert any Word document to a Google Doc. For team projects, team members can collaborate online in real time and chat with other team members – right from

inside the document. A Google Doc can be uploaded to your desktop as Word, Open Office, RTF, PDF or HTML file. Google Docs can be created on iphones and Androids.

https://support.google.com/docs/topic/21008

Google Sheets This service, which is also free, allows the creation and formatting of spreadsheets and allows users to simultaneously work with others. As with Google Docs, team members can collaborate online in real time and chat with other team members. Google Sheets also allows spreadsheets to be created on iphones and androids. Google Sheets can import and convert an Excel spreadsheet to Google Sheets. Google Sheets can be exported to Excel.

https://support.google.com/docs/topic/20322

Google Slides. Google Slides allows you to prepare Powerpoint type presentations with others in real time. Google Slides can import presentations from Powerpoint, as well as export to Powerpoint. Videos and images can be inserted into these presentations. Google Slides presentations can be crated on iphones and androids.

https://support.google.com/docs/answer/49008?rd=1

<u>Other places to find resources for online teaching</u>

MERLOT is a curated collection of free and open online teaching, learning, and faculty development services. You will have to join, but

http://www.merlot.org/merlot/index.htm