

**Dr. Alina M. Zapalska** received her B.Sc in Mathematics and Physics from College #2, Krakow, Poland, M.Sc. in Industrial Chemistry from the Agricultural University, Krakow, Poland, and M.A. in Economics and M.Sc. in Agricultural Economics from the University of Kentucky. She also earned her Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Kentucky. She is currently a Professor of Economics at Marshall University, Huntington, WV, U.S.A.



Her extensive teaching experience in various areas of economics, finance, and international business has spanned over than 20 years. She taught in Europe before coming to Marshall University in 1991. At Marshall, she has been involved in developing new curriculum, on-line courses, new delivery methods, new and alternative types of assessment, and putting together teams of people to work in these areas.

In 2000 she was appointed to a five year position as adjunct professor of Economics at Auckland University of Technology in Auckland New Zealand (AUT) in recognition of her previous and ongoing contribution to the development of curriculum, research, and delivery approaches for a number of academic groups and in different faculties at AUT.

Dr. Zapalska has been actively involved in research. Her international work and study experience has enabled her research to be focused on analyzing economies of Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Thailand, China, New Zealand, Australia, and Bangladesh. Her research interests focus on varied issues that include teaching Finance and Economics, experimental methods in Finance and Economics, entrepreneurship, and issues surrounding economic and financial reforms, transition in the post-communist economies, and international trade and finance. Her research efforts have yielded seventy refereed journal publications, several conference proceedings, a textbook, book chapters, and research projects for the Center for Business and Economic Research at Marshall University. She has also been involved with organizing exchange programs and summer programs in Europe, New Zealand, and Australia.

Dr. Zapalska is actively involved with local, regional, national, and international professional and academic organizations. She is an active president, member, and chairperson of many national and international academic organizations. She has obtained several outstanding and prestigious research, teaching, and service awards at the college and university level here in the US and abroad. She has been recognized at Marshall University in scholarship and research by receiving the 1999-2000 Marshall University Distinguished Artist and Scholar Award for teaching, research and service, the 1999-2000 Charles E. Hedrick Outstanding Faculty Award for excellence in Arts, Social Science, Humanities, Education and Business, and the 2002 Outstanding Researcher Award for the Lewis College of Business.

Professor Zapalska has been using WebCT Vista as a means for teaching and learning for the last several years. She feels that in business and economics education, technology has become an integral part of the instructional process. In particular, WebCT Vista makes a great array of resources available for students and enables students to take more active roles in their education. WebCT VISTA creates learning environments that are flexible, dynamic, and capable of responding to a wide variety of individual needs and learning styles and provides interaction among students and instructors. WebCT VISTA also provides opportunities for addressing the development of a variety of skills such as analytic, problem solving, drawing reasonable inferences from observations, synthesizing and integrating information, thinking holistically, creatively, and critically, and being able to distinguish fact from opinion. WebCT Vista courses open new educational access to nontraditional and geographically dispersed students. The online setting provides a level of flexibility and convenience not provided by traditional classroom courses.

Dr. Zapalska's online courses as well as her traditional on-campus courses are structured around readings and supplemental lessons posted on the class WebCT. Course readings include materials provided by the publisher and the instructor. The publisher-supported WebCT material contains text chapters, quizzes, chapter reviews, exams, and on-line articles. Professor Zapalska's material includes PowerPoint presentations, assignments, homework, sample examinations, quizzes, bulletins, and instructor's feedback on homework and class assignments.

Based on Professor Zapalska's research on pedagogy, she feels that with the use of WebCT, students assume greater responsibility for their own learning and are more willing to communicate and share their results with others. They are able to develop and practice the skills necessary for cooperation and collaboration with others. Writing skills are enhanced as students examine journal articles and transcribe their reports on bulletins. The feedback and critical thinking forms provide the opportunity for students to demonstrate what they are learning and how to grow in specific areas, if needed, in a way that does not count against them through formal measures.

WebCT improves test presentation and standardization, offers enriched display of information, provides increased variety of testing forms, provides equivalent scores with reduced test time, reduces measurement error, provides improved scoring and reporting, and gives immediate feedback to both students and faculty. It also provides simple mechanisms for storing and retrieving valuable information and allows the instructor to easily tailor tests.