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TEACHING SILVICS: STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND EVALUATIONS IN WEB-BASED AND TRADITIONAL CLASSROOM COURSES

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ABSTRACT: There is interest in Web delivery of lower-division forestry courses at Northern Arizona University to accommodate transfer students and scheduling conflicts. We have taught "Trees and Forests of North America," a sophomore-level required course for forestry majors, for five years with good results as measured by student performance on exams and student evaluations. Fall semester 2001 marks our first completely Web-based version of the course; 25 students enrolled with 30% of the class residing outside of the Flagstaff area. Students covered the course material using a combination of linked Web sites and a commercially available dendrology CD set following a weekly schedule based on the classroom course. We used student evaluations and identical test questions to compare student performance in the Web-based and classroom courses. These data provide a preliminary indication of the feasibility of using a self-directed, Web-based approach to teaching silvics in forestry curricula.