Common Concerns & Ways to Avoid Them

Common Concerns

- Students won't/don't use the blogs or podcasts
- Posts/comments on blogs are superficial or overly brief
- Attendance drops because so much coursework is available online
- Digital divide/lack of computers
- Too much time spent teaching the technology rather than the content
- Errors of fact permanently archived on the web
- Accessibility issues for students with disabilities
- Privacy issues
- Copyright issues
- Opportunities for plagiarism (see the Center for Teaching's resource site on plagiarism issues: [http://centeach.uiowa.edu/plagiarism](http://centeach.uiowa.edu/plagiarism)).

Designing Blog and Podcasting Assignments

- Should be relevant to the course goals and be sure to explain its relevance to your students
- Lay out explicit criteria and expectations for use of blogs and podcasts
  - Require a certain number of posts
  - Require commenting on posts
  - Define what constitutes a good post or a good comment
- Good blogging and podcasting assignments are structured, guided, and clear; avoid vague or open-ended assignments like "post to your blog once a week"
- Provide technical resources and training to students
  - Become proficient in the technology yourself
  - Avoid assignments that require technical expertise without providing the tools to do it
- Integrate blogging and podcasting into the existing curriculum of the course as a means of creating greater interaction with course content
- Be open and clear about privacy concerns on the Internet, and be sure to comply with FERPA regulations
  - Make your blog private and available only to enrolled students
  - Allow students to post under a "handle" or pseudonym
- Utilize and communicate a clear, well-defined rubric for evaluation