

BEST PRACTICES FOR ONLINE TEACHING

The Office of Distance Education and eLearning helps instructors create online courses based on the following considerations, which were developed using prevailing literature in the field and experience designing online courses at Ohio State.

Visit go.osu.edu/online-teaching for more details, resources and examples. To schedule a consultation with an instructional designer about an online course, visit go.osu.edu/contact-odee.

COURSE FORMAT, RIGOR AND INTEGRITY

The following considerations can help you ensure that an online course is equivalent in quality to an in-person course.

Format and Pacing

✓ Policies

- ★ Students have opportunities for regular and substantive academic interactions with the instructor
- ★ Students have a required participation activity (e.g., discussion response, assignment) at least once each week
- ★ Learning outcomes and instruction time are equivalent to an in-person class of the same number of credit hours
- ★ The syllabus provides clear expectations about any required synchronous (live, scheduled) sessions

Academic Integrity

✓ Recommendations

- ★ The course syllabus includes policies about academic integrity that are specific to online learning
- Major assignments include specific academic integrity parameters in the directions
- Course technologies (e.g., online proctoring, plagiarism check) or other strategies are in place to deter cheating

COURSE TECHNOLOGY AND MATERIALS

Students perform best in courses that are clear, navigable, welcoming, functional and accessible.

Materials

✓ Policies

- The documents, instructions and materials in the course are in formats that are accessible for all students
- Copyrighted materials are either provided to students securely through the library or a detailed fair use claim has been documented

Carmen Website

✓ Recommendations

- ★ Content and activities are organized into weekly modules or another clear navigation structure
- ★ Clear, consistent directions are included in Carmen about what students are expected to do with all materials and activities
- The course is built with an online-learning-specific Carmen course template

Other Required Technology

✓ Recommendations

- The course syllabus lists all required technology, with instructions for how to access technical support for those technologies
- The course syllabus includes accessibility, data privacy and cost information for any non-Ohio State technologies



TEACHING STRATEGIES

Research on online learning shows that these four areas have significant impact on student learning, engagement and satisfaction. The following are a variety of possible strategies for incorporating these areas into online courses.

Successful courses need not employ all of these strategies.

Instructor Presence

Students' perception of instructor presence has an effect on their engagement; students are more engaged when their instructors are a frequent and positive presence in the course.

✓ Strategies

- ★ Regular planned instructor communications with the class via regular announcements or weekly check-ins
- Instructional content (e.g., video, audio, interactive lessons) visibly created by the instructor
- Regular instructor participation in class discussion (e.g., Carmen discussions or synchronous sessions)
- Regular opportunities for students to receive personal instructor feedback on assignments

Student Peer Contact

Students engage more in courses when they have an opportunity to interact with their peers and feel they are part of a community of learners.

✓ Strategies

- Opportunities for students to interact academically with classmates through regular class discussion or group assignments
- Opportunities for students to interact socially with classmates (e.g., group video conference sessions, course Q&A forum)

Variety of Teaching Methods

Students understand and engage with course material in a variety of ways. Overall student success in a course is maximized when there are frequent, varied learning activities.

✓ Strategies

- Opportunities for students to receive course information through a variety of different sources, including indirect sources (e.g., textbook and lectures) and direct sources (e.g., scholarly resources and field observation)
- ★ Variety of activity and assignment formats, providing students with multiple means of demonstrating learning
- Opportunities for students to apply course knowledge and skills to authentic, real-world tasks in assignments

Student Support and Metacognition

Students have successful, meaningful experiences when they understand how the components of a course connect together, when they have guidance on how to study, and when they are encouraged to take ownership of their learning.

✓ Strategies

- ★ Instructor explanations provided about the learning goals and overall design or organization of the course
- Context or rationale provided to explain the purpose and relevance of major tasks and assignments
- Guidance or resources provided for ancillary skills necessary to complete assignments (e.g., library research, technology tools)
- Opportunities for students to take ownership or leadership in their learning (e.g., choosing topics of interest for assignments)
- Opportunities for students to reflect on their learning process (e.g., goals, study strategies, progress)
- Opportunities for students to provide feedback on the course

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