

Columbia College



Distance Education Handbook Online Teaching and Learning 2017-2018

(Updated since migrating from Blackboard to Canvas exclusively, in the summer of 2017)

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Section I – ONLINE LEARNING

Advantages of Teaching Students Online

- Students with Busy Schedules
- Self-paced
- 24/7 Classroom
- Transportation Problems
- Remote Areas
- Childcare Problems
- Update Skills for Employment
- Courses Not Offered Locally
- Disabled or Home-bound
- Shyness in Large Groups

There are three broad categories of online instruction:

1. **Fully Online Courses** - courses that meet fully online.
2. **Hybrid Courses** - courses that have a combination of online and face to face meetings. The on-campus meetings need to be specifically scheduled and listed in the Schedule of Classes.

Curriculum Committee approval of a DEA (Distance Education Addendum) form is required for online and hybrid class modes.

3. **Online Enhancement** - face to face courses that use the Internet and a course management software (Canvas) to supplement traditional face to face instruction.

Fully online and hybrid modes require the Department and Division Dean's approval to develop the fully or hybrid online courses and a minimum of 30 hours of training or enrolled in EDUC 50 - Online Course Development.

Section II – TEACHING ONLINE

If you want to know more about online instruction: Request to view some courses already developed in your subject area or a related area and discuss with the current online faculty.

- Visit Columbia College's [Online Faculty Support Page](#). This Web page provides the following support resources designed specifically for faculty.
- Visit Publisher websites.
- Check out the Online Education Initiative's [Online Course Development Rubric](#).

Many major publishers have electronic resources freely available to those who adopt their textbooks. While some publishers may provide downloads containing image banks, test banks, audio and video content, others may have already developed a Canvas course in your specific subject area. To access what many publishers call course packages, request directly from the publisher.

You may also access publisher websites directly to learn about which books may already have a Canvas-ready course available for adoption. While you will still need to learn how to use Canvas, it significantly decreases course development time.

Steps for Teaching Online at Columbia College

After having carefully considered the issues associated with teaching an online class the following steps should be taken to ensure your online course will be ready for the semester.

Step 1. Class Format

Determine the format of your course: Fully Online, Hybrid or Online Enhancement. You may also work in a Canvas Sandbox and copy the course after the content has been created and developed.

Step 2. Talk with your Division Dean and Department

NOTE: All fully and hybrid online classes must have the approval of the Dean of the Division responsible for offering the course. Meet with your Department and Dean to discuss the possibility of online instruction. This is also the time to discuss the class enrollment size for your course with your Division Dean.

Step 3. Curriculum

The course reference number for an online course is the same as the course reference number for the equivalent on-campus course. A DEA (Distance Education Addendum)

form request must be filled out in Curricunet anytime a course is offered in a new modality.

Here is an example of a DEA (Distance Education Addendum).

METHOD OF INSTRUCTION: ONLINE COURSE; This is a fully online course. Students must have access to a computer and an Internet connection.

TEACHING MODALITIES

- Orientation Sessions
 - Group Meetings/Review Sessions
 - Telephone Contact
 - E-mail
 - Asynchronous Discussion
 - Viewing Materials
 - Computer-or Web-based Activities
 - Written Activities
 - Reading Online Materials
 - Other Assigned Readings
 - Examinations
-

COURSE ANALYSIS

1. Describe how the teaching modalities checked above will facilitate regular and effective instructor/student contact.

Example Responses

1. Weekly asynchronous threaded discussions and synchronous chat allow for regular contact and ongoing conversations about concepts between instructor/students as well as between students.
2. The discussion board allows students to ask questions about the course 'out loud' and receive answers either from instructor or fellow students.
3. Telephone/email access allow students to have private contact with instructor.
4. Assigned regular activities (i.e., web-based activities, case studies) with follow-up written assignments provide students with opportunities to use or experience concepts in an interactive manner and summarize their findings which will be turned in.

2. Describe the strategies used to ensure authenticity of assessment.

Example Responses

1. Locked into browser during assessment.
2. Comparing assessment to written work turned in, lab exams (taken in the face-to-face class section) and threaded discussion responses.
3. Assessments are timed, show only one question at a time, and do not allow for backtracking.

All curriculum-related questions should be directed to the Curriculum Committee Chair or committee member.

Step 4. Getting a Canvas Account

- If it is a fully online or hybrid course this will be entered in Datatel with the appropriate coding. All Canvas Courses will be available automatically. Please request a Canvas sandbox from the Distance Education Coordinator for developmental purposes.

NOTE: If you are new to online teaching you and have been approved to teach a fully online or hybrid online course we require you to join a training cohort. If you wish to use the Canvas Course Management System as an enhancement to your face to face classes please contact the Distance Education Coordinator for information on how to get started and the variety of training opportunities scheduled.

If you would like additional experience and training check out [@ONE Training](#) for one hour desktop trainings and also an Online Teaching and Learning certificate. This fully online program prepares faculty to teach online in a Web enhanced, hybrid, and fully online courses. You'll master elective course design skills, increase your student success and retention rates, use your management tools and learn to leverage new media to inspire your students to excel.

Columbia College also offers EDUC 50, a 3 unit course "[Online Course Development](#)" which will introduce you to the Course Management System and online learning. There are always additional training for online development offered throughout the year. Check the training schedule at the [Online Learning Faculty](#) web page.

Give yourself enough time prior to the date you expect to offer the online course, so that the development course can be transferred to the current semester course. It is generally recommended that you start developing and loading content into the Canvas sandbox, one to three months ahead of the expected start date.

Step 5. Prepare pre-instructions for your students.

Have a short description of the course, the Syllabus, along with technology requirements available for students to view on your faculty Web page. Students are encouraged to check faculty Web pages for pre-instructions.

Step 6. Canvas Courses will automatically be created

Prior to the semester, **all courses** listed in the course schedule will have a Canvas course automatically created. A Canvas sandbox used for online development purposes can be requested from the Distance Education Coordinator.

NOTE: Students are added when the schedule is finalized, prior to the semester.

Step 7. Perform a Computer and Browser Check

Canvas recommends to use the latest [Browser and Computer Technology](#).

Step 8. Server Issues and Contingency Plans

Develop "contingency plans" in the event of server failure or adverse weather conditions. This may include an alternate web site, postponing of due dates, or using an external student email announcement (such as the Email blast).

Step 9. Bookmark Support and Help Information

A district Online Help Desk is available to answer student questions. The Help Desk staff will answer general Canvas questions dealing with procedural and technically oriented questions. You must be prepared to answer all content and course related questions students may have. The Online Help Desk hours and information can be found on the Canvas login page. The help desk will be staffed by trained MJC personnel. Questions that deal with obvious course content issues will be directed immediately to faculty via transfer to their office e-mail/voice mailbox. Simple technical questions will be handled by the staff member answering the telephone. The goal of the help desk is a "one-stop shop" where students' questions, problems, etc. are dealt with expeditiously, with respect and courtesy. The goal is to make every attempt to solve the problem at the time the student calls; if they can't do it then, we will make every effort to resolve it within 1 working day. Help Desk Email: onlinehelpdesk@yosemite.edu (Recommended) Phone: (209) 575-6412.

For evenings and weekends check out the [Online Learning Support Information](#) for the Canvas Help Desk.

Section III – WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW?

Just as there are characteristics that can be good indicators for how successful a student will be online, your answers to the following questions may indicate whether or not online instruction is a good mode of delivery for you:

- How would you rate your comfort with technology?

- How much planning do you do for your classes before the semester begins?
- How do you manage your time/ workload?
- How comfortable are you with using email to communicate with others?

Computer Skills Required: Teaching online can be a rich and rewarding experience; however, before deciding to teach online you may want to assess your computer skills. The following list is a basic skills requirement that may help with your decision.

- Ability to send email including attachments
- Copying, moving, renaming and deleting files
- Highlighting, copying, pasting and deleting characters
- Creating New Folders
- Navigating among existing Folders to locate or save files
- Using the Find feature to locate a file or folder
- Using both buttons of a standard 2 button mouse
- Maximizing, minimizing, restoring and resizing windows
- Using the Task Bar for moving between programs

Internet Browsers to perform the following tasks:

- Browsing web sites
- Use of the Bookmark or Favorites function while browsing
- Use of plug-ins. For example, Real Player, QuickTime, and Windows Media Player. Saving files as alternative file types
- Saving images while browsing
- Use of a fully featured word processor (Office 365, Word, WordPerfect, Open Office) to create document files, html files, rtf, PDF or txt files.

These skills are required in varying levels depending upon the type of online class you intend to teach. If you intend to utilize mainly text-based materials, the use of plug-ins for delivery of streaming audio/video is less critical. However, it is essential that faculty feel very comfortable using Windows or Mac platforms to perform the above functions.

Minimum Technological Requirements:

Students should be informed of the following minimum technical requirements. All faculty computers should already meet these specifications. If yours does not, contact your Division Dean.

Here's a list of some additional technology tools needed to be successful.

- Reliable computer or laptop, personal email and an Internet connection with a commercial Internet Service Provider (ISP) sound card, speakers and appropriate software is highly desirable.
- Easy access to all of the above on a 24/7 basis from an off-campus site.
- Previous email experience required, with knowledge of working with file attachments.
- Previous web browsing and web research experiences strongly recommended.
- Previous experience uploading and downloading files strongly recommended.
- Online chat experience strongly recommended. (Some courses use this option more than others)

Section IV – POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

If you decide to teach an online course, the following recommendations have been recommended by the Columbia College's Distance Education Committee:

1. All online classes offered at Columbia College and MJC will have a common "front end," which is currently Canvas.. Faculty is free to design courses in a way that best meets their objectives.
2. Faculty teaching online courses are responsible for acquiring the training necessary to teach online.
3. Faculty will provide a learning experience that is equivalent (not necessarily identical) to the same face-to-face course.
4. Faculty will clearly articulate to students course requirements and deadlines.
5. Maximum class size for online classes will be no greater than for the equivalent face-to-face course, except by mutual agreement of the faculty member and Division Dean. Recognizing that optimal class size for online learning is usually smaller than face-to-face classes (15-20 students, depending on the discipline), a faculty member and his/her Division Dean may choose to set the student cap lower than that for the equivalent face-to-face course.
6. Columbia College recognizes the complex intellectual property issues online education poses. These issues are negotiated between the YFA and YCCD.
7. Faculty must agree to abide by all state and federal laws when posting course materials, including the Americans with Disabilities Act.
 - a. It is the responsibility of the instructors to make sure all video/audio materials are closed captioned or accompanied by transcripts. See the DSPS Department for advisement and consultation.

8. Faculty must agree to abide by all state and federal laws when posting course materials concerning copyright laws and fair use policies.

a. Check with the Distance Education Coordinator for guidelines and rubrics.

9. Faculty is responsible for providing course materials. A faculty member may elect to use publisher-provided content; it is the faculty member's responsibility to contact the publisher.

Canvas is our Current Learning Management System.

There are regularly scheduled upgrades to the system throughout the year. If there are any changes to the CMS the Distance Education Coordinator will provide updates and training as deemed necessary.

The following are the basic tools and functionality within Canvas.

Learning Modules - The learning module provides an area in which to present lecture material, audio/video clips, supplements to on-campus lectures, and links to other areas, as well as other content materials.

Communication Tools - Within the content module, Canvas features several tools that allow for active learning, interaction, and diverse learning styles. These tools include: audio, chat, discussions, links, mail, quiz, search, self-test, and video. All of these tools can be linked directly to the content and some can be accessed separately.

The Grade Book - Allows students to view their grades in the course. The instructor can include comments, release statistics and use calculations to control grading scales. The instructor can decide what is released and how much information the student will be allowed to view.

Assessments - Student assessment is an essential part of any course, and Blackboard provides several tools to assess student learning online. The three primary assessment tools are: Quiz/Survey, Assignment Area, and communication tools for presentations.

Quiz/Survey - The Quiz/Survey tool allows for graded (quiz) or ungraded (survey) assessment. You can use any combination of multiple-choice, matching, calculated, short answer, and paragraph/essay questions. As well as having a variety of other question types, Canvas also allows for different quiz types, including self-test, randomized tests, and timed tests.

Assignment Area - The Assignment Area tool allows students to upload a file to the instructor. This tool can be used for essays, graphic files, sound files, video files, or any other medium. The instructor must define the assignment as well as the file type required for submission.

Adaptive Release - Faculty can control when a student can access course material through the Module Option. Content can be released based on: Successful mastery of the previous module.

ConferNow Zoom - Free to all California Community College instructors.

Vericite - An anti-plagiarism tool integrated within a Canvas Course.

Proctorio - Lockdown browser Technology is the online test environment to prevent cheating. Provides web cam proctoring for lab and individual use.

SpeedGrader - allows you to view and grade student assignment submissions in one place using a simple point scale or complex rubric. Canvas accepts a variety of document formats and even URLs as assignment submissions. Some document assignments can be marked up for feedback directly within the submission. You can also provide feedback to your students with text or media comments.

Section VI - BEST PRACTICES

Principle 1: Good practice encourages contact between students and faculty.

Frequent and timely student-faculty contact is the most important factor in student motivation and involvement, particularly in a distance education environment. Evidence of faculty concern helps students get through challenging situations and inspires them to persevere. Knowing a few faculty members well enhances students' intellectual commitment and encourages them to think about their own values and future plans.

Examples of evidence to look for:

- A "welcome message" is provided at the beginning of the course that encourages student-to-instructor contact for course-related discussions or concerns.
- The instructor encourages and fosters a healthy exchange of ideas and sharing of experiences among course participants.
- The instructor initiates contact with, or respond to, students on a regular basis in order to establish a consistent online presence in the course (and prior notice is given to students in the event that the instructor will be unavailable for more than a few days, such as might be the case during professional travel).
- A prominent announcement area is used to communicate important up-to-date course information to students, such as reminders of impending assignment due dates, curriculum changes, scheduled absences, etc.
- The instructor holds regular office hours, and by appointment, that are mediated by technology (e.g., the telephone, chat areas, ConferNow Zoom) to accommodate distance students.
- Student inquiries are responded in a timely manner.

- The instructor provides students with interaction space for study groups, "hall way conversations," etc.

Where to look:

- Discussion forums
- Course Menu
- Inbox messages
- Posted Announcements
- Course Syllabus
- Chat & Virtual Rooms

Principle 2: Good practice develops reciprocity and cooperation among students.

Learning is enhanced when it is more like a team effort than a solo race. Good learning, like good work, is collaborative and social, not competitive and isolated. Working with others often increases involvement in learning. Sharing one's own ideas and responding to others' reactions sharpens thinking and deepens understanding.

Examples of evidence to look for:

Regular opportunities for students to engage in one or more of the following activities:

- Formal and/or informal discussions of course topics
- Collaborative course assignments
- Study groups
- A "meet one another" activity at the beginning of the course so students can begin to make personal connections.
- Encouragement to students to strengthen their online presence in the course by sharing links to their e-portfolio, personal Website, and/or posting a photo of themselves to the class profile..
- Group assignments that follow the basic tenets of cooperative learning in order to avoid the common pitfalls of "group work."
- An explanation of the criteria for "good" discussion participation.
- Modeling of good discussion participation practices by the instructor.
- Discussion prompts that help to guide and elicit student participation in class discussion activities.
- Instructor facilitation of class discussions by encouraging, probing, questioning, summarizing, etc.
- Student interaction space(s) for study groups, "hallway conversations," etc.

Where to look:

- Instructional materials / Assignment directions
- Discussion forums
- Inbox Messages
- Course syllabus
- Chat space
- ConferNow Zoom

Principle 3: Good practice encourages active learning.

Active learning methods engage students in the learning process by encouraging them to discover, process, and apply information. Empirical support for the positive impact of active learning on student achievement is extensive.

Examples of evidence to look for:

Student activities that involve one or more of the following:

- Active use of writing, speaking, and other forms of self-expression
- Opportunity for information gathering, synthesis, and analysis in solving problems (including
- the use of library, electronic/computer and other resources, and quantitative reasoning and
- interpretation, as applicable)
- Engagement in collaborative learning activities
- Application of intercultural and international competence
- Dialogue pertaining to social behavior, community, and scholarly conduct
- For General Education courses, three or more of these activities are integrated into courses
- offered in the knowledge domains (<http://www.psu.edu/ufs/geic/framework.html>):
- Opportunities for students to “customize” their learning by tailoring assignments to their personal and professional interests and needs.

Examples of student work where they:

- Think, talk, or write about their learning
- Reflect, relate, organize, apply, synthesize, or evaluate information
- Perform research, lab or studio work, or physical activities
- Participate in, design, or develop educational games and simulations

Where to look:

- Course syllabus
- Instructional materials
- Assignment Areas
- e-Portfolios (Portfolium)
- Discussion forums

Principle 4: Good practice gives prompt feedback.

Instructors help students frequently assess their knowledge and competence and provide them with opportunities to perform, receive meaningful suggestions, and reflect on their learning.

Examples of evidence to look for:

- Information about course feedback methods and standards on the course syllabus.
- Option (or requirement) for students to submit drafts of assignments for instructor feedback.
- Meaningful feedback on student assignments that is provided within a publicized, and reasonable, time frame.
- Assignment feedback that is clear, positive, specific, and focused on observable behavior that can be changed.
- Clearly communicated course and individual assignment grading criteria.
- Up-to-date, student-accessible course gradebook.
- An open discussion forum where students can ask questions, and receive instructor feedback, about course content and activities.
- Student surveys that provide the instructor with feedback for course improvement.

Examples of student work that demonstrate advancement toward learning goals.

Where to look:

- Course syllabus
- Instructional materials / Assignment directions
- Assignment areas and e-portfolios
- Course gradebook
- Discussion forums

- Survey instruments
- SpeedGrader

Principle 5: Good practice emphasizes time on task.

The frequency and duration of study, as well as effective time management skills, are critical for students and professionals alike. Students need help in learning to manage and prioritize their study time.

Examples of evidence to look for:

- A published course schedule that outlines topics to be covered and assignment due dates so students can plan their workload accordingly.
- Information on the course syllabus that provides an estimate of the amount of time students should spend on the course (e.g., “On average, most students spend eight hours per week working on course assignments. Your workload may be more or less depending on your prior experience with computing and the Web in general, and with this subject in particular.”)
- Time-to-completion information on course assignments (e.g., “This assignment should take you approximately 2 hours to complete.”)
- Course-specific study tips that provide students with strategies for utilizing their time well.
- Assignment feedback that provides students with information on where to focus their studies.
- Assignment due dates and timeframes that take into account the nature of the target audience.
- For example, a course targeted to working adult professionals might incorporate a weekend into an assignment timeframe.
- Course statistics that demonstrate that time-to-completion and weekly time-on-task estimates are on target.

Where to look:

- Course syllabus
- Instructional materials / Assignment directions
- Assignment areas and e-portfolios

Principle 6: Good practice communicates high expectations.

As the saying goes, “if you don’t know where you are going, how will you know when you get there?” Effective instructors have high, but reasonable, expectations for their students. They clearly communicate those expectations and provide support to their students in their efforts to meet those expectations.

Examples of evidence to look for:

- Explicit communication of the skills and knowledge every student needs to have in order to be successful in the course.
- Explanation of course learning goals and how assignments are designed to help students achieve those goals.
- Frequent feedback provided to students through written explanations and detailed feedback on assignments.
- Motivation and encouragement that inspires students to move past the easy answers to more complex solutions.
- Routine use of critical and probing questions when communicating with students about course assignments and activities.
- Examples of high quality work, along with a discussion of the differences between exemplary and developing.
- Examples of student work that demonstrate advancement toward learning goals.

Where to look:

- Course syllabus
- Instructional materials / Assignment directions
- Assignment areas and e-portfolios

Principle 7: Good practice respects diverse talents and ways of learning.

People bring different talents and styles of learning to the learning environment. Some bring a wealth of relevant experience to a course, while others may be new to the topic at hand. Likewise, students who are strong in a discussion situation may be less adept at lab or studio work. Students need the opportunity to demonstrate their talents and to “personalize” their learning so that it is relevant to them. It is also important to give students opportunities to learn in ways that may be less comfortable in order to improve their learning skills.

Examples of evidence to look for:

- Use of a variety of assessment tools that gauge student progress.
- Alternative assignment options that allow students to demonstrate their progress in a manner that is best conducive to their talents. For example, a podcast might be allowed as learning evidence instead of a written paper.
- Supplemental online materials are provided to students who lack prerequisite knowledge or who would benefit from having content presented in an alternative manner.
- Timely, corrective feedback for online activities.
- A positive online climate where students are encouraged to seek assistance with course content and learning activities if needed.
- A policy for accommodations that is stated on the course syllabus.
- Accommodations are proactively offered for students with disabilities.

Where to look:

- Course syllabus
- Instructional materials / Assignment directions
- Assignment areas and e-portfolios
- Discussion forums

Updated 10/17/2017