



Growing Online Learning

Lirim Neziroski, Ph.D., MBA
Developing an In-House
Orientation to Online Teaching

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Presentation Goals

- 1 How the Orientation to Online Teaching was created.
- 2 Course content, schedule, delivery methods, requirements.
- 3 Results and lessons learned.

Why Was the Orientation Necessary?

Handbook to Online Teaching required that instructors be qualified to teach online:

- “Overview of Online Instruction” at UIS
 - Similar course at a neighboring college
 - Previous course at another college
- + D2L Tutorials at PSC

- Incorporate D2L tutorials
- Incorporate PSC course design standards and evaluation rubric
- Shorter, more frequent sessions
- Cost saving
- Establish the Online Learning office as an influential partner for online programs and faculty development
- Desire to get more instructors qualified quickly
- Long-term interest



How Was it Established?

- Review of requirements in the Handbook to Online Teaching
- Review of similar courses at other institutions, including ILCCO
- Consultation with Faculty Senate, Academic Deans, and the Faculty Development Committee
- Major Components of D2L: Announcements, Course Content (modules), Assessments (discussions, assignments, quizzes), Gradebook, virtual conference software
- Strategies for Effective Course Design: modular organization, alignment of outcomes/content/assessments, accessibility, linking all items to modules, grading rubrics
- Strategies for Effective Online Teaching: instructor presence, student engagement, practice opportunities, feedback
- Created Syllabus (course description, learning outcomes, outline) and submitted for feedback

Course Description

This course provides an [introduction to online teaching and course design](#) in the D2L-Brightspace learning environment. The course will describe [strategies for effective online teaching](#) through student engagement, instructional presence, communication with students, and assignment feedback. The course will also describe PSC [course design standards](#), as specified in the PSC Handbook for Online Education, and it will describe strategies for meeting those standards. The course will also provide a [broad tutorial of D2L-Brightspace tools](#) for course design and online teaching, including: module setup; creation of assignments, quizzes/exams, and discussions; development of online instructional content (content pages, embedded videos, links); gradebook setup; assignment grading; and student engagement tools. Faculty taking the course will be given a blank course shell on D2L-Brightspace where they will incorporate course design elements of at least full unit for an online course they will be teaching; faculty will also participate in online discussions with peer faculty.



Course Outcomes

By the end of the course, participants will be able to:

- Describe and demonstrate strategies for effective online teaching.
- Identify PSC standards for online course design, and describe how to meet those standards.
- Apply PSC course design standards through the development of at least one module in an online class.
- Create a variety of course elements in an online course – modules, instructional content, assessments, grade items.
- Provide feedback on assignments.
- Interact with students through a variety of online communication methods.



Course Format

Teaching Methods

- Asynchronous fully online format on D2L
 - > recorded video overviews
 - > journal articles
 - > written + video D2L tutorials
- 4 weeks of content + discussions/assignments
- 1 week of course development in a D2L sandbox

- Recruited by Online Learning office via email.
- Referred by academic deans.

Activities/Requirements

- Create a Course Introduction module.
- Create/Post a variety of instructional materials in one learning module.
- Create a discussion, assignment, quiz.
- Setup the gradebook.
- Record a virtual classroom session.
- Provide student resources.
- Participate in weekly discussions.
- Review D2L sandboxes in small groups and provide feedback.

Brief Weekly Outline

Week 1: Standards for Course Design & Online Teaching
Course Information Module

Week 2: Instructional Content, Accessibility, Copyright

Week 3: Assessing Student Learning

Week 4: Student Engagement (Virtual Sessions, Email)
Student Resources
Logistics for Launching Your Course

Week 5: Finalizing the D2L Sandbox & Peer Reviews



Week 1

Standards for Course Design & Online Teaching

- History of Online & Distance Education
- Regular & Substantive Interaction
- Internet Accessibility & Universal Design
- Accreditation Guidelines (HLC, C-RAC)
- Examples of Quality Assurance (QM, ION)
- PSC Course Design Standards & Evaluation Rubric
- PSC D2L Course Template

Week 1

Course Information Module (Components of D2L Template)

- Welcome Email & Announcement
- Instructor Information
- Syllabus & Course Schedule
- Course Overview (topic, assignments, policies)
- D2L Course Navigation
- Tech Requirements, FAQ, Academic Honesty, etc.
- Student Introduction Discussion
- General Questions Forum



Week 2

Providing Instructional Content

- Modular Organization of Content
 - Examples of Instructional Content
 - Creating Customized, Personalized Content
 - Promoting “Instructor Presence”
 - Creating D2L Content Pages
 - Uploading Files & External Links
 - Uploading/Embedding Images & Videos
 - Ensuring Accessibility
 - Complying with Copyright & Fair Use
- > Create a Variety of Instructional Content

Week 3: Evaluating Student Learning

- Aligning Assessments with Outcomes and Content
- Practice Opportunities & Feedback
- Formative vs. Summative Assessments
- Creating Effective Discussions & Grading Discussions
- Creating Assignments & Providing Effective Feedback
- Grading Rubrics, Turnitin, Academic Honesty
- Creating Quizzes/Exams, Respondus, Accommodations, Exam Review Sessions
- Practices for Effective Online Exams
- Organizing the Gradebook & Linking Assessments
- Linking Assessments to Modules
- 10-Day Verification, Submitting Midterm & Final Grades
- > Create Discussion, Assignment, Exam, and Setup Gradebook

Week 4

Interacting with Students

- Engaging Students in Online Courses
 - Direct & Indirect Methods of Student Interaction
 - Teaching Virtual Online Courses with Video Conferencing
 - Announcements, Emails, Automated Emails, Assignment Feedback, Class Discussions
 - Tools for Evaluating Student Engagement (Class Progress)
- > Post a 15-min recording of a virtual lecture

Week 4

Providing Student Resources

- Links to Academic Student Resources (Library, Tutoring)
- Links to Student Services (Disability Services, Advising, Financial Aid, Enrollment, Counseling)

- Content-Specific Resources

 - information about MLA-APA citation

 - links to additional online learning material (practice quizzes)

 - sample outlines or previous student work

- Course-Specific Resources

 - links/support for external learning platform (Pearson, Cengage)

 - course materials (calculators, software, equipment)

 - information about clinicals, labs, service-learning

 - links to professional organizations in the field

-> Upload Student Resources modules from D2L Template

-> Provide additional course-specific resources



Week 4

Final Course Logistics

- Checklist of all required materials in the D2L sandbox
- Record & post a video overview of the D2L sandbox
- Information about Group Peer Reviews
- Copying a Course & Making a Course Active
- Module of Resources for Participants in the Orientation

“Feedback” Form, not Evaluation

Course Information Module: Course includes a Course Information module with Instructor Information, Syllabus, Class Schedule, Course Overview, and other important information about the course.

How the Course Meets this Requirement

- Instructor Information:
- Syllabus:
- Class Schedule:
- Course Overview:
- Other Important Information:

Suggestions for Improvement

- Instructor Information:
- Syllabus:
- Class Schedule:
- Course Overview:
- Other Important Information:

Instructional Content: Course includes a module with a variety of relevant and engaging instructional content.

How the Course Meets this Requirement

- Module includes an overview and a list of learning goals:
- Type of Instructional Content:
- How it’s relevant to the course and meets student needs:
- How it’s engaging:
- How it meets accessibility standards:

Suggestions for Improvement

- Overview & Learning Goals:
- Type of Content:
- Relevant & Meets Student Needs:
- Engaging:
- Accessibility:

Results

Session Cohort	Participants	Results
October	13	12 completed on time 1 completed after a revision
November	18	6 completed on time 4 completed after a revision 8 dropped or never completed
December	11	3 completed on time 2 completed after a revision 6 dropped or never completed
Total	42	21/42 (50%) on-time completion 7/42 (16%) completed after revision 15/42 (36%) did not complete

28/42 (66%) successfully completed



Challenges & Lessons Learned

- Orientation was very popular and college clearly had a need for it.
- Very positive feedback from participants.
- Orientation was overwhelming for inexperienced online instructors.
- Developing & Teaching the Orientation was also overwhelming.
- Thanksgiving & Christmas holidays were difficult to work around.
- Instructors needed more than 5 weeks.



Challenges & Lessons Learned

- Confusion about how to organize content.
- Experienced instructors copied existing online courses.
- Many PSC standards did not apply to virtual online classes (need modified rubric).
- Lack of instructional designer pushed many course design elements to instructors.
- Accessibility, Multimedia, & other D2L components were too technical and advanced. (Separate course for Developing Multimedia)

Challenges & Lessons Learned

- Examples of effective online courses would have been useful.
- Instructors referred by deans and adjuncts were less successful.
- Many peer reviews were late and not detailed.
- Many faculty feared the college would no longer support ION professional development, and they wanted a recognized credential.

Summary

The Orientation to Online Teaching provided a service to the college and professional development to many faculty.

But, the holiday season and the last-minute urgency of getting instructors qualified created some unnecessary complications. Some course components were also too advanced for beginning instructors.

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