Methods I: Introduction to Online Teaching

Methods I focuses on the theory and best practices of teaching online while preparing for the challenges of working remotely. Experienced teachers will learn how to adapt their classroom expertise to an online setting.

Course Description

This course is designed to introduce participants to foundational skills and information that will give them a broad overview of the methodology of online teaching. It provides an exploration of the history and standards that have helped develop the field, reviews the available research on best practices of effective online instruction, and explores current theories on online teaching. Participants will explore best practices in making connections with students, establishing clear expectations, and delivering timely feedback through various modes of communication. Participates will be exposed to best practices in helping diverse populations access online learning, including both those students with different learning styles as well as special needs.   Participants will gain an initial understanding of how best to design, develop, and implement online assessments. Participants will learn about safe, legal and ethical use of technology for both themselves and their students. Finally, participants will develop skills to help them telecommute effectively while learning how to prioritize and managing their time.

Credit

Participants who successfully complete all requirements will earn a certificate for 45 hours of professional learning. Three graduate credits are available from Marlboro College Graduate School for an additional fee.

Course Objectives

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

- Describe the current state of online education as well as the history, standards, and possible future directions for the field.
- Anticipate and plan for the challenges of working in a virtual and asynchronous environment.
- Incorporate best practices for online teaching into their practice.
- Describe how to create a welcoming online class and use multiple modes of communication to make a personal connection with students.
- Use appropriate, timely, and specific feedback in order to communicate expectations clearly and motivate students.
- Describe how to adapt curriculum, instruction, and assessments to allow a diverse population, including those with special needs, to access online instruction.
- Describe the variety of different online assessments available and describe when you might appropriately use each type.
- Explain to their colleagues and students how to stay safe online and how to use technology legally and ethically.

Standards:

This course addresses the following iNACOL National Standards for Quality Online Teaching:

- **Standard A:** The online teacher knows the primary concepts and structures of effective online instruction and is able to create learning experiences to enable student success.
- **Standard C:** The online teacher plans, designs, and incorporates strategies to encourage active learning, application, interaction, participation, and collaboration in the online environment.
- **Standard D:** The online teacher promotes student success through clear expectations, prompt responses, and regular feedback.
- **Standard E:** The online teacher models, guides, and encourages legal, ethical, and safe behavior related to technology use.
- **Standard F:** The online teacher is cognizant of the diversity of student academic needs and incorporates accommodations into the online environment.
- **Standard H**: The online teacher develops and delivers assessments, projects, and assignments that meet standards-based learning goals and assesses learning progress by measuring student achievement of the learning goals.
- **Standard J:** The online teacher interacts in a professional, effective manner with colleagues, parents, and other members of the community to support students' success.

Prerequisites

Participants are expected to be either experienced teachers or currently enrolled and in good standing in a teacher preparation program.   Participants are expected to have regular access to online computers and be proficient with email and current Internet browsers.

Course Requirements

In order to successfully complete this course, participant must meet the following requirements:

1. **Discussion Postings.** Participants are expected to participate in each module's discussion forum by responding to the discussion prompt and responding to at least two other participants posts. At least one of the three posts should be during the first half of the module.

2. **Readings and Activities.** Participants are expected to complete the readings and activities given in each of the modules.

3. **Quizzes.** Participants must complete and pass each of the module quizzes.

4. **Short Essays.** Participants must complete the short essays as outlined in Pedagogy, Diverse Populations, Assessment and Safe, Legal, and Ethical Use. Essays should be between one and three pages in length.

5. **Course Planning Guide.** Participants are expected to complete a course planning guide.

Module Outline

Module 1: Orientation

In this module participants will become familiar with using the Moodle system and learn how to navigate around their course. Participants will introduce themselves to their peers and discuss their own experiences with online learning, including what they have feel has worked well in the past.

Module 2: History and Standards

Module Two discusses the current state of online learning; who in the nation is currently offering online classes as well as what formats are being used. The history of online education and standards for online teaching will be explored. Participants will become familiar with SREB and iNacol standards, as well as the knowledge and performance standards for the Online Teaching Specialist endorsement. The possible future scope and direction of online education will be discussed.

Module 3: The Virtual Instructor

The focus in Module Three is on helping participants understand the pros and cons of online learning, as well as the challenges and benefits of working remotely. Participants will consider how make working from home successful, including organizing your own ergonomic workspace and preventing feeling isolated.

Module 4: Time Management

Participants will reflect on creating a work / life balance. Emphasis will be put on managing teaching tasks and prioritization when assignments and questions can be submitted at any time. Proven time saving best practices will be explored.

Module 5: Pedagogy Online

In Module Five participants will review the available research on best practices of effective online instruction, and explore current theories and models for on online teaching.

Module 6: Establishing Rapport in the Virtual World

Module Six focuses on best practices in online communication, from welcoming students into the course to personalizing an online classroom and communicating with digital natives. It includes tips on phone calls, emails, and netiquette.

Module 7: Giving Appropriate Feedback

Module Seven explores how to create the best feedback for students. Participants will learn how to create timely, personal, and specific feedback through various modes of communication. Focus will be given to establishing clear expectations.

Module 8: Working with Diverse Populations

In this module, participants will be exposed to best practices in helping diverse populations access learning, including both those students with different learning styles as well as special needs.

Module 9: Assessment

In Module Nine, participants will gain an initial understanding of how best to design, develop, and implement online assessments. Emphasis will be on using interaction, participation, and collaboration to assess learning.

Module 10: Safe, Legal, and Ethical Technology Use

In our final module, participants will learn about safe, legal and ethical use of technology for both themselves and their students.