

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. Participants 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 manage their time.

Credit

Three graduate credits are available from Castleton University Center for Schools for an additional fee. If participants are interested in applying for the Online Teaching Specialist endorsement, graduate credits must be purchased.

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.
- Describe central concepts and current and developing theories that are central to the field of online teaching and learning.
- Anticipate and plan for the challenges of working in a virtual and asynchronous environment.

- Incorporate best practices for online teaching into their practice including principles of effective online instruction and strategies that promote creativity and innovation in virtual environments
- 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 2019 National Standards for Quality Online Teaching:

- **Standard A:** The online teacher demonstrates professional responsibilities in keeping with the best practices of online instruction.
- **Standard D:** The online teacher promotes learner success through interactions with learners and other stakeholders and by facilitating meaningful learner engagement in learning activities.
- **Standard E:** The online teacher models, guides, and encourages legal, ethical, and safe behavior related to technology use.
- **Standard F:** The online teacher personalizes instruction based on the learner's diverse academic, social, and emotional needs.
- **Standard G: Assessment and Measurement -** The online teacher creates and/or implements assessments in online learning environments in ways that ensure the validity and reliability of the instruments and procedures. The teacher measures learner progress through assessments, projects, and assignments that meet standards-based learning goals, and evaluates learner understanding of how these assessments measure achievement of the learning objectives. (Note: In courses that are already created, teachers may not be able to create or include additional assessments.)

Prerequisites

Participants are expected to be either experienced teachers or currently enrolled and in good standing in a teacher preparation program. Participants should have regular access to a computer with high speed internet as well as a webcam and microphone. Participants are expected to be proficient with the use of their computer, including desktop applications, email programs, and modern web 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. All posts should meet the expectations of the Discussion Board Rubric.
2. **Readings and Activities.** Participants are expected to complete the readings and activities given in each of the modules.
3. **Quizzes.** Many modules contain quizzes to help reinforce and further explore the material. Participants are expected to complete these quizzes with a passing score of 70% or better.
4. **Short Essays.** The class contains several required short essays. These essays are intended to give you time to reflect on the material.
5. **Course Planning Guide.** One of the primary purposes of Methods I is to prepare you for teaching your own online course. During this class you will likely encounter many ideas and hints that will improve your online teaching. The Course Planning Guide is intended to be a resource for collecting these ideas. Towards the end of each module you will update your planning guide by responding to that module's prompt in the Course Planning template. If you enroll in Methods II, you will be using this guide as a resource for personalizing your own online classroom. The more through you make your guide the more useful it will be to you in the future.

Module Outline

Module 1: Orientation

In this module participants will become familiar with using the Canvas system and learn how to navigate around their Methods and Content Area course. Participants will introduce themselves to their peers and discuss their own experiences with online learning, including what they 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 national 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 to 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. Particular focus will be paid to our responsibilities related to the legal mandates around students with 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.