

# Supporting Online Students

## Course Description

How can we maximize the success of our online students? This class is designed to help all educators who work with students taking remote classes to support student learning. Through the lens of example student personas we will examine features of the online class, skills of the online student, specific support systems we can create, and how to interpret student data. The class will cumulate with participants creating a resource map which will be helpful to the school and individual students in showing what supports are available for students.

This class is a 6 week, 15 hour class designed for all educators who support students taking online classes. This includes school counselors, administrators, librarians, paraeducators, and any other educators students may turn to for assistance.

## Credit

Participants who successfully complete all requirements will earn a certificate for 15 hours of professional learning.

## Course Objectives

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

- Define different models of online and blended learning and what they look like in the classroom and to students.
- Assist students in locating important information including technical support, enrollment, and class information.
- Talk to students about how to structure their time and space in order to be successful.
- Describe the skills students must leverage to be successful online learners and how educators can help students grow those skills
- Advocate for students in creating individualized support systems that will support learning particularly with special populations.
- Review student activity and participation and make recommendations on how students can improve their learning and success.

## Prerequisites

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 engaging with 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. **Course Planning Guide.** Participants are expected to maintain and complete a course planning guide throughout the class to organize their thoughts around student supports.
4. **Resource Map.** Participants are expected to complete a final project that will act as a resource map for educators and students around what local resources are available to students taking classes online.

## **Module Outline**

### **Module One - Preparing for Learning**

Participants will become familiar with different kinds of online and blended learning and the role stakeholders have in each kind of class. An overview of Vermont Act 77 and other legislation related to online and blended learning will be included. Through a discussion with their peers, participants will explore their experiences around online learning and the difficulties and successes they personally experienced. We will also meet our student personas who we be thinking about during each module.

### **Module Two - The Online Class**

The focus in Module Two is on the student's online class and the technology they use. Participants learn about how to approach technical problems students are having as well as discuss the format of online classes. Emphasis is placed on assisting students in getting information about the online course including teachers' information, course pace and expectations. Participants learn how to assist students in enrolling in and preparing for their classes, including talking about where and when students will access their classes.

### **Module Three - The Online Student**

This module discusses the online students and specific proficiencies that students must master in order to successfully complete online coursework. Specifically, what can we identify as meaningful skills in students that attribute to their ability to be self-directed learners. Participants discuss how to recognize the various stages of mastery students move through and how to recognize when students need additional supports in developing those skills. The class will look at strategies to support student's personalized learning plans. Particular attention will be placed on the primary skill of persistence and how we can help students recognize and use the skills they already have around using their available resources.

### **Module Four - Specific Support Systems**

In Module Four we look at specific support systems that are available for both all students as well as special populations. Participants evaluate online classes to anticipate and proactively make plans for difficulties that each student may encounter. A discussion around how to advocate for Principles of Universal Design in online classes will help participants become advocates for their students.

**Module Five - Data Response**

When progress reports come out it can often be a wake up call to both students and their support systems. In this module participants explore what data is available to them about student work and how student supports can be adjusted in response to student performance.

**Module Six - Creating Resource Maps**

As a culminating project, participants will create resource maps for educators and students to show what support systems are available locally that can help students with online classes maximize success. Participants will share discuss and share these maps with each other.