



Instructing Online

Course Overview



Instruction and Goals:

This course is designed to provide training to those who wish to serve as online instructors or course developers for *Hampton Roads Virtual Learning Center*. The experience of many online schools has shown that online instructors need a special set of skills to be effective, and that developers of online courses need a deep understanding of those same skills. By working through the tasks of this course, you will come to appreciate the important differences between traditional face-to-face instruction and online instruction, and you will begin the process of acquiring this special set of teaching techniques.



Course Description:

Your course, *Instructing Online*, is structured in Modules. Each Module begins with an Overview to give a bit of context for the learning, and then has a Pre-Assessment and a Warm-up to get you ready for the information that will be delivered in sections called Content Delivery. Each Module includes an Application that we designed to help you process the information you are learning, reflect on it, and put it into use in the context of a real online course. Throughout the Modules, interactive threaded discussions with your coursemates and instructors will add to the richness of your experience.

This course will emphasize these general skills and understandings:

- **The Nature of Online Learning for Students**

Course participants will be introduced to the general field of online learning as it is distinguished from more traditional delivery methods. The tools and techniques of instructional delivery in this specialized environment will be examined from philosophical and practical perspectives.

- **Facilitating Online Learning**

Course participants will develop skills in organizing student tasks to encourage higher-order thinking skills that are essential for knowledge transfer. Facilitation techniques that have been shown to build student collaboration will be explored. Participants will become familiar with the use of online discussion and group projects, among other techniques, that reflect the HRVLC focus on differentiation of instruction and responsive teaching. Opportunities will be provided for rehearsal of techniques to enhance student motivation, engagement, and persistence, to manage student learning tasks, to monitor and maintain on-task behaviors, and to evaluate student work.

- **Preparation to Teach *Hampton Roads Virtual Learning Center* Courses**

Participants will become comfortable in the use of the Desire2Learn learning management system in the roles of both student and online facilitator. Participants will become efficient in the use of instructor tools to personalize learning space and manage student information and activities.



Roles and Responsibilities:

During this course, your instructors will provide the timelines for completing all course components, moderate the threaded discussions held among coursemates, grade and comment on your submissions, and encourage you in your growth. Your role is to manage your time carefully so that you can complete all assignments on time, participate fully in the interactive features of the course, and seek the assistance and support of your coursemates and instructor early and often.

The following attributes will greatly contribute to a student's success:

Self-motivation - Students should be able to manage and direct their own learning environment and methods to fulfill course requirements and achieve individual academic success.

Independence - Successful online students are self-starters and self-motivated. They work well with the flexibility that the 24/7 any time, any place format provides. While the course instructors will provide deadlines and guidelines, each student must design and carry out his own learning plan.

Computer literacy - Although it is not essential to have advanced computer skills, students should possess a

comfort with e-mail, the Internet, file creation and saving, and basic keyboarding skills.

Time management - Students must be able to organize and plan their personal best "time to learn." There is no one best time for everyone, but the key to success is to make the time to learn.

Effective communication skills - Students must use e-mail and discussion forums to communicate with their peers as well as the instructors. The ability to read and to write clearly in order to communicate ideas and assignments is essential. Also, sharing reflections - of their own work as well as their classmates' - is a crucial component of a successful experience. This method provides the learner with rapid feedback as well as a means to inform instructors of any concerns or problems that they may be experiencing.

Personal commitment - Because there are no bells that begin and end classes, students must have a strong desire to learn and acquire knowledge and skills via online courses. Making a commitment to learn in this manner is a very personal decision and requires a strong desire to perform in order to achieve academic success. Overall, the staff believes that every individual who has the motivation and self-direction to take the courses will achieve success in an "any time, any place" virtual environment.



Policies and Procedures:

This course is a part of the Virginia's Community of Anytime Knowledge Professional Development Program and adheres to its Goals and Objectives as well as its Code of Participant Conduct.

Assignment Criteria:

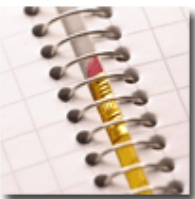
Each task assigned in the course will include a description of the criteria by which it will be judged. However, the following elements are expected in every assignment in the course:

- On-time submission - All assignments must meet submission deadlines unless special arrangements have been negotiated with the course instructors ahead of time.
- Skillful use of English - Because one of the goals of all public school instruction is to strengthen our students' formal communication skills, participants in this course should seek to model those same skills.
- High standard of Academic Honesty - Students are expected to submit only their own work, to properly cite ideas and quotations from sources, and to demand the same of all coursemates.



Assignment Checklist:

Your instructors have created a list of the assignments and Due Dates in the course to help you manage your time. You will find this list by clicking on the "Checklist" link in the Navbar at the top of the course window. Checking the box beside each assignment as you complete it will help you keep track of your progress.



Syllabus:

At the conclusion of this course, participants will **understand that**:

- Online course facilitation and traditional face-to-face instruction require some very different techniques and skills. Being skillful and experienced in face-to-face teaching does not, in itself, guarantee success as an online teacher.
- The use of online course content, by teachers or students, presents special ethical and legal issues.
- Philosophic approaches to instruction such as differentiation, collaboration, and so on, can nearly always be transferred to online instruction with adequate preparation and training.
- The online instructor's skill in developing a "learning community" among online coursemates is essential to student commitment, persistence, and success.
- The online instructor's skill in developing a "learning community" among online coursemates is essential to student commitment, persistence, and success.
- The online instructor plays an essential role in fostering reflective discussions, which are crucial in leading students to higher-order thinking about course content.
- Student learning style, learning preferences, and physical limitations impact the appropriateness of online learning as a venue for instruction.

At the conclusion of this course, participants will **know**:






- Desire2Learn provides six internal communication tools to provide feedback to students, parents, and other appropriate stakeholders: News, Email, Pager, Chat, Blog, and Grades.
- Desire2Learn users are able to use built-in tools to modify their view of the learning space.
- Desire2Learn provide online instructors with built-in tools to monitor student participation and progress.




At the conclusion of this course, participants will **be able to**:

- Select among various online teaching strategies to engage students in activities leading to attainment of learning goals.
- Create an online environment that fosters a learning community of students through communication tools, collaborative activities, and group projects.
- Locate Internet resources, analyze the reliability and value of those resources to enhance, extend and support their district's virtual school online content.
- Develop strategies to assess student learning needs and to vary course materials to respond to student learning preferences and physical limitations.
- Identify use effective strategies for assessing learning in the online environment.
- Use the features of D2L to manage course content.
- Use the features of D2L to establish a grade book and manage grades.

Course Design for Instructing Online

Instructing Online has several recurring elements that you'll meet in the course modules. When you see the icon for each element, you'll know something about the type of activity to be accomplished.

 Read	When you see this icon you will be reading important articles and instructional materials that pertain to the specific area of study.
 Plan	When you see this icon you will be participating in planning processes pertaining to the specific topic being discussed in your unit.
 Explore	When you see this icon you will be engaging in activities that will enhance your virtual course curriculum organization and facilitation skills.
 Dropbox	When you see this icon, you will be submitting your work to the electronic Dropbox.
 Video	When you see this icon, this is indicative of the need to view a video.
 Listen	When you see this icon, you will be listening to a podcast.
 Good Tip	This icon alerts you to juicy information about online instructing.
 Remember	Don't forget to remember these important points.
 Discuss	When you see this icon you will be using the online discussion area to share ideas, resources, and thoughtful conversation with your classmates and online facilitator.
 Cool Stuff	Optional activities

Cool Stuff	
 Interactivity	Engage with some content in an interactive activity.
 Reflect	Consider this! Spend a bit of time thinking through the issues.
 Task	You will see this icon when you have an assignment of a type not described by other icons.

Copyright © 2010
HRETA, Inc.