**ISP 150**

**Online Courses**

**PURPOSE**

Establishes the standards for online courses, aiming for best practices and effective teaching and learning. Especially important are the ideas of designing, starting, communicating within, delivering, monitoring, and improving the course.

**SUMMARY**

Online courses must be equivalent to face-to-face courses in content and quality, including equivalent contact time expected for the credit hours of the course. To help students achieve the learning outcomes, online courses should be designed with student engagement, interaction and reflection in mind. Clackamas does not endorse self-paced courses that require little or no instructor and student engagement.

To best ensure quality of online courses, all teachers assigned online courses must be given adequate preparation and training. The focus should always be on effective teaching of the material. From the design of the course through its implementation and ending, instructors should strive for substantive interaction and active engagement with all students. If instructors wish to improve their online courses, Clackamas fully supports their professional development in this area. It is imperative that all CCC classes maintain high quality and offer meaningful educational experiences.

**STANDARD**

1. **Assigning the course.** It is up to all departments to make sure that their online courses are commensurate with their face-to-face in both content and quality, particularly with student engagement in mind. No faculty shall be assigned an online course without adequate preparation and training (see article 12.C of the full time faculty contract, article 2.Q of the part time faculty contract [2016-9]. If a department has no set training procedure, it is highly advisable that an instructor contact Instructional Support and Professional Development (ISPD) at least three months before teaching an online course for the first time.
2. **Designing the course.** Even before the course meets, instructors should design a course intended to provide a high-quality learning experience within the different parameters of an online class. It is crucial to consider and comply with both copyright law and the Americans with Disabilities Act (for instance, using closed caption videos, webpages that will work well with screenreaders, and so on). Given that students’ primary interface with the course will be online, instructors should be particularly mindful of their legal responsibility to provide accessible and well-sequenced course materials that help diverse learners attain the outcomes for the class.
3. **Starting the course.** Beginning an online class is difficult for many students. Instructors have a particular responsibility in the first week of the course for making sure that students are able to navigate the expectations for this particular course, and for ensuring that students know how to contact the instructor, how to interact with each other, and how to locate and access other support resources.
4. **Communicating within the course.** Instructor presence is vital to a successful online class. Online students are best served by both regular and speedy instructor response, ideally within 48 hours for emails or discussion board questions, and within one week for feedback on assignments. Instructors should strive to get to know their students through frequent, active, and meaningful communication.
5. **Delivering the course**. How an instructor teaches an online class requires as much (or even more) mindful attention and effort as any face-to-face class. Students need to be engaged with interactive and frequently updated course materials, and given meaningful opportunities to provide feedback on their learning experience.
6. **Monitoring the course.** Paying attention to what is going on in the course, and with the students who are taking it, is essential. Instructors should monitor their courses and their students actively, communicating and adapting as the situation requires.
7. **Improving the course.** Any instructors who wish to improve their online teaching abilities – whether it is because they are undertaking an online course for the first time or simply in the interest of lifelong learning and professional development – can contact the Instructional Support and Professional Development department. This can involve questions about accessibility, copyright law, technology options, and pedagogical strategies. Continuous engagement, reflection, and improvement is essential to effective teaching.

**REVIEW HISTORY**

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| ISP Committee | Adopted | [Date] |
| College Council | Reviewed | [Date] |