**ISP 150P (proposed)**

**Online Courses Procedure**

**PURPOSE**

States procedures for creating and delivering high-quality online courses. Especially important are the ideas of designing, starting, communicating within, delivering, and monitoring 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.

**PROCEDURE**

1. **Designing the course.** Crucial elements of a well-designed online course leading to high-quality education and student success include:
2. Deliberate focus on the learning outcomes, especially while choosing readings and materials and designing assignments. Active learning and student engagement are key for student success. Instructors also are advised to consider the sequence of readings, materials, and assignments in order to scaffold learning toward attainment of the outcomes. Moreover, the class homepage should visually reflect this sequence.
3. Awareness of both accessibility and copyright law, making sure that all readings are legally available for students and that proper means of access are provided for diverse learners (e.g., closed caption videos, webpages that will work well with screenreaders, and so on). Instructors are also recommended to consider a variety of modes and instructional materials to reflect the nontraditional delivery method of the class.
4. Prominent and easily navigable syllabus. This must meet all requirements listed in ISP 160A, including the following:
   1. Schedule of readings, assignments, and tests with accurate and current dates;
   2. Clear parameters and expectations for grade calculation;
   3. Office hours for the instructor, as well as contact information (email and office phone);
   4. List of readings, texts, or course materials;
   5. Learning outcomes for the class;
   6. Available resources such as the Disability Resource Center and the Learning Center;
   7. Other important policies such as academic honesty and late work.
5. An online gradebook so that students have access to their progress.
6. **Starting the course**. To set students up for success in the potentially difficult beginning of an online class, instructors should:
7. Check all links and clips to make sure they are current and functioning properly before making the class visible to students.
8. Open the course by (at the latest) the start of the first day of the course. What is visible to students on that first day should include syllabus information, especially the means for contacting the instructor.
9. Notify students that class has started (for example, via email, through a News Update on Moodle, or through other means), with particular attention to their expectations for interaction, as well as to the fact that they have access to technical and academic support should they need it. Instructors may also consider a course orientation.
10. Provide an introduction to the course, including its overall objectives, its general operating structure, and a clear path for getting started. This can be on the course homepage itself, though it can also be provided in an email. An introduction to the instructor is also recommended.
11. Make the syllabus both prominent and online-friendly. Students should be guided through reading the syllabus and showing they understand the requirements (as a face-to-face class might take the first class session to discuss the syllabus).
12. Provide an introduction activity for students. Online learning can be isolating, but it is both possible and desirable to build a community for learners to relate to and interact with one another.
13. Communicate actively with students as they begin the course. This includes frequent check-ins with the class website, but also vigilant email communication in the opening days. See also point 3 below.
14. **Communicating within the course.** To maximize student engagement through effective online communication, instructors should:
15. Make their presence a visible and integral part of the class, participating in discussions and responding directly to student questions;
16. Respond to emails and discussion board questions in a timely matter, ideally within 48 hours;
17. Make every effort to provide grades and feedback on assignments within one week of receiving completed work so that students are able to apply and build on course concepts and skills;
18. Promote a sense of community within the class, encouraging students to respond to each other to deepen understanding and engagement;
19. Consider online office hours as well as in-person ones.
20. **Delivering the course**. How an instructor teaches an online class requires as much mindful attention and effort as any face-to-face class. Optimal delivery strategies include the following:
21. Facilitation of discussion by instructors, including meaningful response and commentary;
22. Interventions to re-direct inappropriate behavior;
23. Learning activities designed to promote interaction and active learning;
24. Timely and personalized feedback provided early enough for students to adjust their performance;
25. Frequent assessment of student learning, and a willingness to make changes based on such assessment;
26. Weekly announcements, reminders, or posting of new material to help keep students engaged.
27. **Monitoring the course.** To effectively monitor students as they engage with the course, instructors should:
28. Contact inactive students, in a timely manner, ideally no later than the end of the first week;
29. Pay particular attention to student progress early in the course and actively communicate with students when they fall behind or seem to be underperforming;
30. Refer students to the appropriate learning services and resources as needed;
31. Provide access to current grade status and keep the gradebook current;
32. Fix broken links, typos and mistakes or otherwise update the course content as appropriate;
33. Provide opportunities for students to ask questions about or give feedback on the course and be willing to adapt as necessary.

**REVIEW HISTORY**

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