Guidelines for Teaching Online Courses

Reporting attendance in online (WEB) courses:

1. Reporting First Day of Attendance: Each instructor will state his/her policy in the syllabus on how the first day of attendance is determined in his/her online class. Each instructor will create an assignment, which—when completed—will count as an orientation to the online course.

2. Reporting Last Day of Attendance: Each instructor will state his/her policy in the syllabus on how the last day of attendance is determined in his/her online class. For example, “The date of the last assignment completed in the course will serve as the last day of attendance for reporting purposes” could serve as such a statement.

In online (WEB) courses the instructor should:

1. We suggest that faculty teaching online courses take and complete the Quality Matters course “Teaching Online-An Introduction to Online Delivery” by the end of their first semester of employment. This course will be paid for by Distance Education.

2. Have access to technology required to teach online classes such as high speed internet and a computer.

3. Have completed training for teaching online courses as outlined in the Training Checklist for Teaching Online Courses.

4. Be familiar with the layout of the course: Content Modules, Quizzes, Dropbox, Discussion Board questions, Due Dates, and News Items.

5. Test the online course before class begins to ensure that all links (local to the course and outside the course) are active.

6. Create at least one News Item that welcomes the student to the course and provides the department name, course number, course name, instructor’s name, and the preferred method the student should use to contact the instructor (college email, eLEARN email, secretary phone, office phone, etc.).

7. Email all students using CLASSLIST the same information in item 6.

8. Follow the established schedule for the course and complete assignments, quizzes, projects, and papers by the assigned due dates.

9. Answer all emails within 48 hours excluding weekends and college holidays.

10. Communicate any schedule/calendar/due date change to students within 48 hours of the change.

11. Complete grading of assignments, quizzes, projects, and papers within two weeks after the due date. Post the final course grade for each student in GRADES after creating a new grade item called “Final Letter Grade.”

12. Initiate communication with all students in the course at least three times a week in the form of individual or class emails, discussion boards, chats, blogs, graded papers, or other assignments.

13. Notify students if you will be unavailable outside the guidelines listed above.

14. Maintain eLEARN course records to include emails, discussion board posts, chats, dropbox assignments turned in, and test grades.

15. Identify and correct content inaccuracies, unclear instructions, broken links, missing files or other issues. Do not make changes to department owned courses.

16. Contact Instructional Design (Vickie.Mills@ws.edu, 585-2694) for additional training.
In department-owned courses

1. Be familiar with and follow course rules for conduct of the course as established by the department.
2. Notify your faculty sponsor, department head or dean of content inaccuracies, unclear instructions, broken links, missing files or other issues in your course. Do not make changes to the course without approval.

Best practices

• Initiate one form of communication with every student every day for the first two weeks, during midterm, and during the last two weeks of the semester.
• Tell students your turn around time on emails and graded items.