

# **Distance Learning Online Course Faculty Guide**

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## **Why Teach Online? Goals and Objectives**

True innovation in teaching does not result from adopting technology. It comes from re-examining current practice to discover opportunities for how instruction can be changed in order to address the needs of the learner. During this process faculty can be supported in trying to determine how technology can be used to enable new outcomes.

Effective learning on the web or in a classroom is dependent on the skills of the instructor to adapt to the needs of the students and the design of the instruction regardless of the technology involved.

### **Goals and Objectives**

The goals of this manual are to adequately prepare faculty to establish and teach an online class. It is hoped that faculty members would, as a result of reading this manual, understand the reasons for teaching online and how to prepare to do so. This manual, coupled with instructional support, should help faculty feel confident of their ability and help them to design, create and teach their online class.

The objectives are to present skills that will be necessary for the completion of these goals. These skills include basic computer concepts, communication tools and course management. Becoming a successful online educator will initially require additional time and effort for skill development that will subsequently expand professional ability.

### **Rationale**

The academic who teaches successfully online now needs a knowledge of pedagogy as it applies to the online environment and a knowledge of current appropriate software, hardware and network technology. Since the traditional skills of most faculty don't prepare them for these new demands, staff development has a critical role to play in the success of online teaching and learning within the college environment.

There are many different factors that place demands for online classes on colleges and universities:

- the increasing availability of multimedia capable computers, fast internet connection and internet access;
- the emergence of online technologies and course management systems that provides a cross-platform, non-proprietary multimedia delivery system;
- the promise of enhancements to the quality of the teaching and learning experience; and

- being part of the global education market.
- more people change jobs and careers often and need to learn additional skills and knowledge.
- people are living longer and find that learning adds quality to their life even after retirement.
- technology and economic progress should and has enabled people to work shorter hours and allow them to have more time for other activities, including learning.
- efforts to make instruction more learner-centered.
- the desire to provide access irrespective of where the student lives.
- the development of technology that supports online classes.
- the challenge of collapsing time and space between teacher and student.

A growing number of students are being brought in contact with computers at an earlier age, especially in the classroom. As a result, as they enter college they are not only more computer literate than their predecessors, they are expecting more out of the college or university in the area of computer technology. Some of the reasons online classes are appealing to students include:

- the student may have a physical disability and have difficulty traveling to a class on campus.
- the student lives in a remote area.
- the student is a single parent or a stay at home parent.
- a particular course is full or unavailable at a convenient time.
- a noted professor offers an online class.
- people who have to travel for a living.
- just about anyone who works full time.

Because of changing societal demands, growing salaries and inflation, virtually all colleges and universities are struggling with the cost of expenses. Online classes can address this obstacle and several other challenges because:

- traditional classrooms require fundraising for the purchase of land and construction of buildings for classroom space whereas these are drastically reduced for the virtual classroom.
- maintenance of these buildings is also significantly reduced, including overhead and utilities.
- cost and time of student travel can be reduced or eliminated, including parking lots and decals.
- instructors who are too sick to teach that day may still be well enough to conduct a chat room from their home.
- those that are traveling may be able to conduct class from a laptop, public library or another institution.

## **What is an Online Class?**

An online class is a complete course that includes lectures, notes, and assignments available to students who have access to a computer with required software and hardware. Interaction with the instructor and other students is provided through the use of discussion forums and email. Students must subscribe to an Internet provider, have an email address, and be able to operate a browser such as Netscape or Internet Explorer in order to participate in these classes. Students don't have to be online at a certain time every day, but will be expected to log on to the course website regularly, respond to any online discussions, and use the world-wide web as a research tool. Some online courses may have specific hardware and software requirements. These will be listed in the promotion of the course in the schedule of classes and in the Distance Learning Brochure.

Students enrolling in online courses must have a good working knowledge of Window's or Macintosh's graphical user interface and should understand basic functions such as point and click, double click, drag, select, file, choose, alias, and should be familiar with terms such as uploading/ downloading, log in, modem and plain text format.

## **What is Moodle?**

Moodle is a learning management system (LMS) designed to help educators create quality online courses. It was adopted as the common learning management system for Lane starting Fall Term 2006. Faculty at Lane can use Moodle to develop online materials, either as supplements to in-class instruction or as complete online courses. Moodle is supported by Lane's Information Technology department both in terms of technical server and student support. Moodle has been in use at Lane since 2004.

The word Moodle is actually an acronym for *Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment*, although originally the M stood for "Martin", named after Martin Dougiamas, the original developer.

More information about Moodle can be found at *moodle.org*

## **How do I get a Moodle Account?**

You already have a Moodle account. Moodle and Banner are working together, so your L# and ExpressLane PIN (first 6 digits of your PIN) is all you need to login and begin working.

Login at:

<http://moodle.lanecc.edu>

If your L# and PIN (remember, first 6 digits only) do not allow you to login successfully, contact the Moodle System Administrator via email, including your L# and relevant information at:

[moodleadmin@lanecc.edu](mailto:moodleadmin@lanecc.edu)

## **What does the Distance Learning Office Do?**

DL acts as a liaison between the college and distance learning students and is often the initial point of contact for DL students. It is important to meet with Distance Learning before you begin developing your online course. We need have a clear understanding of your course specifics to be able to convey this information to current and potential students and staff through personal contact, the DL website, and promotional materials.

### **Meet with the Distance Learning Coordinator**

As soon as you have made the decision to teach online and have been given authorization by your department head, contact Cynde Leathers ([leathersc@lanecc.edu](mailto:leathersc@lanecc.edu)), the DL coordinator, to discuss support services provided by Distance Learning and information pertaining to your course:

- Decide if you want to have an on-campus orientation session
- A time, date, and desired on-campus location for your orientation session (if you wish to have one)
- How students find your website and log in
- Technical support and training for faculty and students
- Course prerequisites, course number & credits, expected enrollments
- AAOT requirements your course meets
- Testing – on campus or online
- Student support services available
- Any other details unique to your course

## Where Do I Get Training and Support?

Lane instructors are encouraged to contact a faculty webmaster for assistance. They provide consultation and training on Moodle, web page design, multimedia use, online testing, instructor web pages, and Americans with Disabilities compliance.

They can be reached by:

- Sending an email to [online@lanecc.edu](mailto:online@lanecc.edu)
- OR
- Filling out a **Webmaster Work Order Request** at <http://teach.lanecc.edu>

Workshops or one-on-one instruction is available. For a comprehensive list of services and training provided by Lane's Faculty Webmasters, please visit: <http://teach.lanecc.edu>

You may be aware that some instructors at Lane teach online courses in a number of ways, from using an instructor web page, a blog, a bulletin board system, or some other "home grown" learning management system. Faculty webmasters can explain the differences in these systems, how they differ from Moodle, and help you assess if one these alternate systems may be a viable option for your online course.

Instruction and support are also available in the Instructional Technology Center (ITC), Building 19, Room 249. The ITC is a drop-in computer lab specially equipped to support a broad range of technology applications for online instruction. Feel free to use the lab whenever you like. For access to or assistance with the ITC, contact the IT Training Coordinator, Michael Levick ([levickm@lanecc.edu](mailto:levickm@lanecc.edu)), or a faculty webmaster.

## **Hardware and Software Recommendations for Teaching and Learning Online**

In order to fully benefit from an online class, it is recommended that you and your students have, at minimum, the hardware below.

### **Recommended Hardware**

- PC - Pentium III or compatible processor at 800 MHz or faster with Windows 2000, or Windows XP (minimum), Pentium 4 recommended
- Macintosh PowerPC G4 (minimum), Mac OS X 10.3 and higher
- 256 MB RAM minimum, 512 MB recommended
- Video resolution: millions of colors (24/32 Bit) at 1024 x 768 video resolution
- 1 GB of available disc space
- Speakers or Headphones (Optional if built-in speakers are adequate for listening to audio)
- 56K modem minimum, DSL or Cable modem recommended (56K modem connections will not support classes with streaming audio or video)
- Internet Service Provider with web and email access (Students: see <http://www.lanecc.edu/icl/emailfaq.htm> for information on email providers)

### **Recommended Software**

- Windows: Firefox 1.5 or Mozilla
- Macintosh OS X: Safari or Firefox 1.5
- Microsoft Internet Explorer 6 or higher is supported
- Microsoft Office 2000 or higher
- Anti-Virus Software

### **Why do I need to meet these specs?**

Online courses at Lane utilize progressive technology to enhance course delivery, instruction and learning. Therefore, it is recommended that all participants in an online course have consistent access to both hardware and software capable of supporting learning. By ensuring that your computer system meets these recommendations, you will be able to focus on the subject matter of the course rather than the technology. Due to the rapid changes in technology, we recommend that, if you are considering upgrading your computer system, you weigh the costs and benefits of purchasing a new system.

## **Your Online Course - Faculty Responsibilities**

### **Before the term begins – prepare yourself – know the course**

Being a distance learning instructor requires as much careful preparation as any other course, although your responsibilities will not be exactly the same as for your on-campus class.

Establish clear guidelines of your expectations of the students—their involvement, output and what level and aspects of collaboration are expected and acceptable and their commitment/obligation to their fellow students. This should be clearly defined in the introduction to the course.

### **Prepare the course syllabus**

Composing your syllabus is your responsibility. Please be sure to include the following information in your online course syllabus.

#### **The course syllabus must include:**

- College's complete mailing address
- Sponsoring instructional department's name
- Course Title/Course Number/Course Registration Number
- Term course is being offered
- Instructor contact – name, phone, email address, mailing address, FAX number, office hours and location
- List any college prerequisites for the course
- Required texts and materials – complete title, author, edition and ISBN
- Complete course description
- Course learning objectives
- Grading criteria
- Instructor contact – how and when
- Withdrawal policy and deadline to drop with tuition refund
- Schedule change deadlines
- Exams – date, time, location, grading scale
- Optional review and discussion sessions
- American Disability Act Statement
- Information specific to students at outreach centers including exam procedures with dates, times, and grading details.

## **Students need to know:**

- Best times/methods to contact you
- Generally how soon a student can expect a response from you (i.e. 24 hours, 2 working days, etc.)
- List any required orientation meeting or on-campus meetings for this course
- Please specify if students should contact you (email or phone) if they cannot attend orientation
- Explain how and where a student obtains your Moodle enrollment key (if you are using one)
- Specify whether the testing is online or on campus or a combination
- Specify when access to the course will be made available to registered students; and how to gain access (i.e., Students won't be given access until the first day of the term)
- Explain how to get technical assistance if a student has trouble logging in or with course navigation
- Mention that students can order textbooks over the phone using VISA/Mastercard or in person at the LCC Bookstore
- Specify how students will receive test/project grades (i.e. via e-mail, postal service, etc.) and when to expect grades (i.e. within two weeks of submitting project/test, etc.)
- Statement that urges students to check the course website frequently (in case you change an assignment or deadline)
- Create a link to your instructor web page (if you have one)
- Create a link to the Distance Learning webpage ([www.lanecc.edu/distance](http://www.lanecc.edu/distance))

Students can find the following information on the DL Webpage:

- our office phone numbers/location
- general information about distance learning
- Online course orientation schedule
- Distance Learning Annual Schedule
- information on software and hardware minimum specs
- Computer lab information – where students can access online courses
- DL Quick Links box – links to all online course websites, Moodle, and many college resources
- Student Resources link - (Details Sheet updated each term by Distance Learning sent to you via email) contains Administrative Withdrawal Policy, Bookstore hours, Library hours and website, and much more

## **Your on-campus online course orientation:**

An orientation brings your students together to learn how the class is conducted and is usually similar to the first class meeting for any other class you teach. Orientations can be held in a computer lab with a projector where you can show them how to log on and some of the various web site features. This initial meeting gives students a chance to ask questions and resolve technical issues early on, and is particularly beneficial for students who are new to online courses. Orientations are usually scheduled for 60 or 90 minutes and are held in the evening during the first week of the term.

Your orientation may include brief information on:

- how to access the course
- why specific tools are being used as part of the learning activities and how to use the tools;
- protocols, e.g. for contact with staff and students; submission of assignments;
- the importance of participation and your expectations in respect to their participation;
- how to upload, download, print, etc.
- how to navigate through the course tools and materials.

## **How do students find out about orientations?**

Distance Learning publishes a schedule of online course orientations every term. The schedule lists all credit online courses and also clearly identifies courses that do not have an orientation session. The orientation schedule is mailed to students who are registered in an online course 10 days before the beginning of the term. The Distance Learning brochure lists orientations (or indicates no orientation) for all credit online courses and is available outside room 253 in building 19 and at various locations on campus. The orientation schedule and Distance Learning brochure are both available online at [www.lanecc.edu/distance](http://www.lanecc.edu/distance). And finally, beginning about one week before the first day of the term, when a student registered in any Distance Learning course logs into ExpressLane, they will see a message alerting them to check the online Distance Learning Orientation Schedule.

### **Students who live outside of the local area:**

You may have students enrolled in your course who live outside our local area, possibly in another state or country. You will need to give some thought to how to accommodate those students if necessary. This may not be a concern for you if your course does not require on-campus visits or proctored exams.

If your exams must be taken in a proctored environment, Distance Learning provides guidelines at [www.lanecc.edu/distance/testing.htm](http://www.lanecc.edu/distance/testing.htm) to help students find a suitable proctor. We require students to send us a completed “proctor form” signed by the proctor. We will forward a copy of the proctor form to you. You can then send your exam and instructions for the proctoring the exam to the proctor. Most exams and instructions can be sent via email or fax.

### **Distance Learning Online Course Survey**

At the end of each term, students enrolled in online courses have the opportunity to respond to the Online Course Survey. The survey is available when a student logs into ExpressLane. The survey is not an instructor evaluation, but rather an instrument to collect Distance Learning student demographics and to evaluate the online course delivery method.

## **Moodle Online Course Procedures**

### **Student Accounts:**

- Moodle logins are the student's L# and the first six digits of their ExpressLane PIN.
- Student accounts are created when class lists in Banner are "loaded" to the Moodle system. The first "load" will occur prior to 8 a.m. on Monday, the first day of the term. The Banner-to-Moodle process occurs two to three times per day.

### **Where Students Access Your Moodle Online Course:**

- Students login to Moodle at: <http://moodle.lanecc.edu>
- Students can log into all credit online courses by going to [www.lanecc.edu/distance](http://www.lanecc.edu/distance), clicking on the DL Quick Links box, and choosing "Log in to Online Courses"

### **When Students Can Log In:**

- Enrolled students will be able to log in to their Moodle classes by 8 a.m. on the Monday the term begins. Faculty must have online courses ready by the Friday before the beginning of the term.
- New students who officially enroll in your class via ExpressLane after 8 a.m. on the first day of the term will have to wait to log into Moodle after Banner updates the Moodle system. Banner-to-Moodle updates occur twice daily at 6 a.m. and 12 noon. Students who have dropped a class in ExpressLane are officially withdrawn from you course but will not automatically be dropped from your Moodle course.

### **Who Gives Technical Assistance to Students?**

Students who have trouble logging in or navigating online courses may obtain assistance at the Student Help Desk (SHeD):

- The SHeD is located in Building 4, Room 201
- Phone: 541-463-3333 (ext. 3333 on-campus)
- Email: [SHeD@lanecc.edu](mailto:SHeD@lanecc.edu)

## **Who Gives Technical Assistance to Faculty?**

Moodle login problems for faculty and other technical problems should be sent to [moodleadmin@lanecc.edu](mailto:moodleadmin@lanecc.edu)

Instructors who need assistance in “using” their functioning Moodle courses should send their issues to [online@lanecc.edu](mailto:online@lanecc.edu)

## **Where are the Computer Labs located?**

Most online courses may be accessed in the Instructional Computing Labs on the main campus (Bldg. 4, Rm. 201 and Center Bldg., Rm. 455), and at Lane’s centers at Cottage Grove and Florence during their regular operating hours (<http://www.lanecc.edu/icl/labhours.htm>).

## **Recommended Links for Students:**

- Online Learning Assessment - Are Online Classes Right for Me?  
[http://cf.linnbenton.edu/disted/de\\_survey.cfm](http://cf.linnbenton.edu/disted/de_survey.cfm)
- 25 Survival Tips  
<http://www.kctcs.edu/distancelearning/surviving.htm>