

Distance Education Reference Guide

This Distance Education Reference Guide is intended to provide faculty support in the creation and teaching of online courses. The contents include:

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Proposing an online course

For new courses, following approval of the Curriculum Committee, a request for offering a course in an online modality can be submitted to the Distance Learning Committee. The Distance Learning Committee will meet and provide approval, recommendations, and support for developing the course. Courses that are currently offered on campus, but that have not been offered in an online format, must also be submitted to the Distance Learning Committee prior to being taught online. The online course development form can be found on the Center for Adult Education's webpage.

Online courses meet the same learning outcomes as their campus counterparts. The level of academic rigor in courses is consistent between face-to-face and online learning modalities.

Regular and substantive interaction

The University of Evansville has the approval of the Higher Learning Commission to offer a limited number of **online courses**. The Department of Education requires that the delivery of online courses includes "regular and substantive interaction" between faculty and students. What does "regular and substantive interaction" mean in the reality of an online class?

1. Faculty initiate regular and substantive interaction with students

Faculty presence in an online class is not passive. Faculty actively guide the learning of students. In a correspondence course, as an example of a non-online distance education course, students typically complete assignments and assessments and faculty respond, essentially waiting for students to make the first contact. In online courses, however, "the faculty member guides the flow of events by initiating a lecture or other learning activities" ([WCET](#)). Faculty lead the course.

2. Online courses are not self-paced

Just as faculty lead the course in interaction, they also determine the pace of the course. Online courses include regular assignments with specific due dates with opportunities to engage in learning material each week. Students do not complete assignments at their leisure and submit them at the

end of a term, but are given specific timelines. Faculty interact with all students throughout the course on a regular basis.

3. Interaction occurs through substantive learning activities

There's no shortage of activities available to use in online courses to engage students in interaction and meet the goal of furthering student learning. General examples include synchronous online meetings, online discussions, assignments, group projects, exams, interactive tutorials and learning modules.

To read more about importance of regular and substantive interaction in distance education, see the following resources:

- [WCET: Interpreting what is required for “regular and substantive interaction”](#)
- [Saint Mary of the Woods College’s Administration of the Title IV Programs: Final Audit Report](#)

Blackboard

All online courses rely on Blackboard as the learning management system. Within Blackboard, faculty can deliver learning materials and a wide variety of assignments and assessments. They can participate in discussions, integrate media, and embed resources.

An extensive collection of guides that support the use of Blackboard can be found in [Acelink](#).

Blackboard technical issues can be directed to OTS and questions regarding developing courses within Blackboard can be directed to Leslie Barton.

Intellectual property

Within UE’s intellectual property policy, *online course materials* are defined as:

Online course materials include works, including but not limited to courseware, that are created and distributed in connection with online instruction such that the works are distributed to Students primarily through the internet, including credit or non-credit academic courses and programs and instructional avenues such as massive open online courses. Online Course Materials designed with stipends or pursuant to a release-time agreement are governed by this Policy unless otherwise subject to a written contract or agreement for such works.

UE’s Intellectual property policy states in section A1 Employee Traditional Works of scholarship:

Traditional Works of Scholarship created by an Employee will be owned by the Creator unless ownership is otherwise assigned by the Creator. Subject to other requirements imposed by a publisher, the University shall retain a royalty-free, worldwide, unlimited right to use such Traditional Works of Scholarship for non-commercial, educational purposes only. If the Creator of Online Course Materials leaves the University, the Creator grants the University a non-exclusive, royalty-free, worldwide, unlimited license to use such Online Course Materials for online instruction including the right to revise such Online Course Materials as the University may

deem necessary or appropriate in its sole discretion. Notwithstanding the foregoing, any Intellectual Property created for purposes of Online Course Materials that is developed by an Employee who (i) is not considered to be Faculty as defined in this Policy; and (ii) whose job description includes development of Online Course Materials, shall be owned by the University consistent with the provisions of this Policy.

Full-text of UE's [Intellectual Property Policy](#)

Copyright

Copyright is the legal protection of original works that provides creators with exclusive distribution, reproduction, derivation, and performance rights. The [UE Faculty Manual](#) states:

Although copying all or part of a work without obtaining permission may appear to be an easy and convenient solution to an immediate problem, such unauthorized copying can frequently violate the rights of the author or publisher of the copyrighted work, and be directly contrary to the academic mission to teach respect for ideas and for the intellectual property that expresses those ideas. Civil and criminal penalties are imposed for copyright infringement and judgments may be rendered against the individual as well as the institution.

Linking

Within online courses, linking to materials rather than copying and embedding materials in a downloadable format is preferred. Links create a path for students to access resources without generating duplication issues.

Public Domain, Creative Commons, and Open Educational Resources

Works within the public domain, which includes materials where the copyright has expired and government works, can be used freely within online courses. Materials released by the creator/copyright holder under a Creative Commons license can be used within an online course as long as proper attribution is given and other parameters of the specific creative commons license (Share-alike, non-commercial, or no derivatives) of the material are followed. There is an increasing amount of material made freely available as Open Educational Resources (OER). These open resources include a wide range of material types (videos, learning modules, textbooks) and are made available to be delivered in online courses.

More information on locating public domain, creative commons, and open educational resources can be found in the online teaching orientation and in the resources listed at that end of this section of the reference guide.

Fair Use

Materials that cannot be categorized as public domain, creative commons, or OER may still be available to use within an online course if specific criteria are met. Fair use is an exception to copyright law that allows for the *limited* use of the materials that weighs each of these factors:

- 1. The purpose and nature of use**

Within this factor, the educational nature of the use within in an online course contributes to the case of usage falling under Fair Use.

2. The nature of the work

This factor favors the use of published, non-creative works over unpublished or creative materials

3. The amount and sustainability of the portion used

A small, non-central portion of the work is favored in this factor of fair use.

4. The effect on the market

Usage that doesn't have an effect on the market of materials is favored in fair use.

An educational use of material is not sufficient grounds for unauthorized use of copyrighted work; All fair use factors must be considered when determining usage. More information regarding Fair Use in the classroom can be found in the "Copyright Compliance in the Academic Community" section of UE Faculty Manual.

Requesting permission

When in doubt about whether or not the use of copyrighted material is permitted within an online course, permission to use may be requested from the copyright holder. The procedure for obtaining permission to copy can be found in the [Faculty Manual](#).

Materials that do not fall into any of the above described categories (available web links, public domain, creative commons, Fair Use, granted permission) should not be embedded within an online course.

Copyright Resources

[University of Texas Libraries Copyright Crash Course](#)

[Georgetown University: Instructional Material in Online Courses](#)

[Creative Commons Search](#)

Accessibility

"Accessible" means a person with a disability is afforded the opportunity to acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services as a person without a disability in an equally effective and equally integrated manner, with substantially equivalent ease of use. The person with a disability must be able to obtain the information as fully, equally, and independently as a person without a disability.

[Office of Civil Rights](#)

Increasing the accessibility of content in an online course is an important benefit to all students. Steps to take in making courses more accessible include:

- **Use Blackboard's built in formatting** (i.e. Title, header 1, paragraph)
Using the built in formatting aids in the ability of screen readers to more accurately read a module or page within the correct hierarchy
- **Add subtitles to video and audio content**

Subtitles and closed captions not only make content accessible to those with limited hearing, they also make audio/visual content appeal to a wider variety of learning styles. Faculty are not expected to manually type and add subtitles to course videos. To add subtitles to video content:

- Work with a professional captioning service like [Rev](#). Services typically charge \$1-3 per minute of video. Captions are typically received within 24 hours.
 - Contact Leslie Barton for in-house video captioning options. This service is provided at no cost, but it is best to allow for a one-week turnaround time, depending on work study availability, length of video, and backlog of needed videos.
- **Include descriptions of images**
Blackboard will prompt course editors to add an image description when embedding an image to make the image more accessible to those using screen readers.
 - **Create accessible Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and PDF files**
Access the guides on steps to take to increase file accessibility on the Online Learning Resources webpage.
 - **Avoid using color to create meaning**

Accessibility Resources

[EDUCAUSE: ADA Compliance for Online Course Design](#)

[University of Washington: Laws, Policies, & Standards](#)

Lecture Capture

There are many tools faculty can use for lecture capture and creating learning modules to deliver to students in online courses. Two primary lecture capture options at UE are Panopto and the lightboard.

Panopto

Panopto is a lecture capturing software that allows the capture of screen, web cam, document camera, or other video or audio streams. Within Panopto users can perform basic video edits and share the content easily within Blackboard.

To request access to Panopto contact OTS.

Once access to Panopto has been provided, step-by-step instructions on using it can be accessed in [AceLink](#).

Lightboard

The lightboard is a glass chalkboard that allows the user to capture writing and instructor presence in a way that mimics an instructor writing on a whiteboard in a classroom. Faculty can record chunked portions of lectures that rely on writing on a board. The videos can then be edited in the Lightboard room and then embedded within Blackboard. Step-by-step instructions can be found within the lightboard room which is located in the basement of the Clifford Memorial library, near OTS. Stop at the information desk in the library to ask for the lightboard room to be unlocked. The lightboard room can be reserved through the resource scheduler.

More information regarding the use of the lightboard can be found in [AceLink](#).

For assistance in using the lightboard or to set up a demonstration, contact Leslie Barton.

Student Support Services

Students in online courses have access to the same advising, tutoring, counseling, career services, library resources, and support services that are available to all UE students.

Libraries: The University's collection consists of approximately 170,000 ebooks and 22,000 unique e-journals. Current research databases, numbering approximately 100, can be found on the libraries' [website](#). In addition, users who need research assistance can request online consultations (using Skype) with a librarian. These sessions can be supplemented by phone or e-mail contact, etc. Print research materials (books) can be shipped to users as needed. Digitization of small portions of books or articles (as defined by "fair use" guidelines) is also supported for online students. Interlibrary Loan is available to all students. This service allows the borrowing of materials that are not owned by UE Libraries.

OTS: The Office of Technology Services Help Desk is available to all students and faculty. It is staffed from

Career Services: The Center for Career Development provides comprehensive career development services to UE students and alumni. Students can contact the Career Center for assistance in every stage of your career development and visit their website for career resources.

Counseling and Health Education Office: The Counseling and Health Education Office provides online resources regarding alcohol, tobacco, domestic violence, mental health. Students have access to ULifeline which provides anonymous, online resources for mental and personal wellness.

Disability Services: When students need extended time for exams or other types of accommodations, students register with Disability Services and provide documentation in order for the staff to approve and arrange the accommodations within an online course. The Instructional Technologist will work with faculty on the implementing the accommodation within an online class.

The Office of Veterans Affairs provides support to veterans, active service members and families. A dedicated certifying official within the financial aid office is available to both prospective and admitted students on and off campus. The certifying official is available via phone, Skype and email to discuss benefits awarded and options for programs at the University.

Writing Center: The Writing Center offers online writing resources and individual in-person or remote writing assistance for students needing help with any stage of the writing process.

Online Course Syllabus Template

The online course syllabus template is available for use in AceLink. It contains the elements of the campus course syllabus template with the following additions:

- **Virtual Office Hours**

Faculty establish office hours in which they can be virtually available to online students

- **Technology Policy:** Participation in an online or hybrid course requires regular access to a computer with an internet connection. While some class activities can be completed on a mobile device, many cannot and it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that access to a computer and the internet is maintained throughout the entirety of the course. In the event that a student cannot complete an assignment because of a technology difficulty, the student is expected to contact the Office of Technology Services (OTS) immediately to submit an incident. The student must also contact the instructor via the preferred method of communication to ensure that the instructor is made aware of the situation.
- **Communication Policy:** In an online course, it is expected that there will be regular and substantive interaction between the faculty member and the student. The instructor will frequently and regularly initiate communication with students and it is expected that students reciprocate this communication. Students are also expected to actively participate in course discussions and collaborate with other students to achieve course learning outcomes.
- **Student Resources:** Whether taking classes online or face-to-face, all students have access to support resources. Click on the links below to learn more what each resource has to offer and how to contact each department.

[University Libraries](#): Conduct research, access resources, and contact librarians for any research related help.

[Academic Support Services](#): Contact the Center for Academic Advising to connect with academic support services including supplemental instruction, tutoring, and time management and study skills help.

[Writing Center](#) : The Writing Center provides access to writing resources, appointments for one-on-one writing help, and assistance with any stage of the writing process.

[Counseling Services](#): Counseling Services strive to help students overcome any interpersonal, psychological, and developmental issues. Contact Counseling Services for any of your individual counseling and personal development needs.

[Center for Career Development](#): The Center for Career Development provides comprehensive career development services to UE students and alumni. Contact the Career Center for assistance in every stage of your career development and visit their website for career resources.

Online Course Resources and Professional Development

Online Learning Resources: Resources for students and faculty can be found on the Online Learning Resources page on the Center for Adult Education.

Online Teaching Workshops: Contact Leslie Barton to participate for an up-to-date schedule of upcoming workshops related to online teaching and technology integration.

Online Learning Consortium: UE maintains a membership with the Online Learning Consortium (OLC) which offers a wide variety of professional development opportunities related to teaching and designing online courses. Faculty are encouraged to browse through OLC development opportunities. Contact Lindsay Roberts to obtain membership information when registering for development courses.