Online   Teaching

Principles of Effective Online Teaching

Online course design is not Rocket Science. It's harder. Faculty have to constantly be creative, accommodating and flexible every semester. Here are some guiding principles for new DE faculty.

Since most of the course is already authored and designed for online delivery, instructors may believe they simply need to serve as the proverbial "guide on the side" as the students navigate the learning system. Not true! The class does not teach itself.

Principle #1

Show Up & Teach

Principle #2

Stay Engaged

Faculty instructor can help create a successful learning experience by practicing proactive course management strategies such as monitoring assignment submissions, and communicating and reminding students of missed and/or upcoming deadlines.

Although the online classroom environment provides tremendous flexibility of time and place of study, establishing and communicating a course pace and pattern of work can aid both instructor and student, and alleviate confusion around how the course operates.
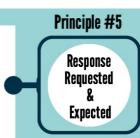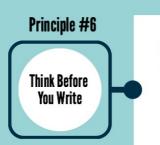
Principle #3

Establish Patterns

Principle #4

Plan for the Unplanned

Something will always go wrong. For those small or not-so-small occasions when "life happens," having a strategy for informing students of these changes can go a long way to maintaining course continuity.

Timely instructor feedback is essential for the online learner to manage their learning experience. Instructors are expected to respond to student inquiries within one business day.

Principle #5

Response Requested & Expected

Principle #6

Think Before You Write

Most experienced online instructors can relay a variety of stories about a dialogue with a student that went awry due to a misinterpretation or misunderstanding of the intended message. Take special care to be as clear and concise as possible. Using numbered directions helps with student focus.

Principle #7

Help Maintain Forward Progress

Students in the online classroom rely on the timely return of assignment and exam grades in order to maintain positive forward progress in their studies. Student who have access to their grade in progress stay invested in the course.

Principle #8
Safe and Secure

Using the institutionally supported learning management system provides increased degrees of security and confidentiality and keeps "institutional business" within the appropriate confines. Use campus email. Encourage student to use their campus email.

Principle #9
Quality Counts

Instructors need to establish strategies for addressing the quality of the online learning experience, including content resources, instructional design strategies, and systems performance.

Principle #10
Reflect & Redesign

As with many aspects of the online learning, environment plays a critical role in determining student and instructor satisfaction. Reflect on weekly interactions and redesign for the following semester. Ask for individual or class feedback.