



GUIDELINES FOR ONLINE COURSES

Instructor Expectations

Grading

- Instructors are required to provide timely grading and feedback to students. Students enrolled in online classes are limited in interaction with instructors, thus receiving appropriate feedback is paramount for their success.
 - Faculty teaching courses which are 10 weeks or less must grade assignments with expediency and within a maximum of 7 days. Faculty teaching courses which are over 10 weeks must grade assignments within a maximum of 14 days.
 - Final grades are to be posted in Banner within 4 days of course completion.
 - If a student does not complete 25% of a course and earns an F, then an FX should be assigned and the date of last attendance posted.
- Extensive feedback is required on all assignments, other than quizzes/exams, to ensure students are able to understand scores which are given.
 - Substantive papers (>500 words) should have inline and summative comments which provide needed feedback to students. Such comments should include both positive feedback acknowledging strengths and constructive feedback noting areas for improvement.
 - Instructors can also utilize audio or video feedback in Canvas to provide personal connections with students.
 - Rubrics should be completed for all major learning activities. This provides standardization for grading, explanation of points earned/lost, and expectations for assignments. The use of Canvas rubrics is encouraged but is not required so long as another rubric form is utilized.

Attendance

- Weekly attendance tracking is strongly recommended for all courses. This assists in student retention and determining date of last attendance. Faculty should utilize the Roll Call Attendance tool in Canvas to track attendance. Attendance should follow the guidelines specific to that modality.
 - Online Courses: Attendance should be noted weekly. Instructors should convey to students in the syllabus what counts for attendance. This can include assignment submissions, engagement in discussion forums, or email communication, but just accessing the course is not considered sufficient for attendance.
- Only submitted work, in-person meetings, synchronous online sessions, or communication with faculty count towards attendance. Logging into Canvas is not

adequate activity to count toward attendance. An attendance policy stating what counts for attendance must be included in the course syllabus.

- Faculty in online courses must have weekly tasks loaded into Canvas which can count for attendance. These do not have to be graded assignments and can include knowledge check quizzes, discussion board posts, or other standard assignments.

Community Emphasis

- Students attending online courses are often frustrated due to the lack of connection with other students and with faculty. Courses must include one or more activities which develop community within the class. This can include discussion boards, group projects, asynchronous presentations, optional synchronous sessions, email communication, or similar activities.

Testing

- Exams and quizzes for online courses need to be modified in light of the limitations with online monitoring. Student testing environments cannot be controlled, so faculty are encouraged to create assessment measures which recognize such limitations.
- All quizzes and exams must be open for a minimum of 24 hours to ensure students across all time-zones are accommodated. Time limits for completing such tasks is encouraged.
- Proctors can be utilized to limit potential cheating. Students are responsible for finding their own proctors and submitting appropriate paperwork per the instructor's policies.

Communication

- Instructors will keep a 24-hour email response time Monday through Friday, and a 48-hour response time on weekends.
- Faculty are to publish at least one announcement per week for all online courses. Announcements should offer encouragement for students, summarize weekly material, and draw attention to course-critical information.
- Instructors must post a welcome announcement for each online course prior to the start of the course. This announcement should include a course introduction, professor contact information, class expectations, and syllabus documentation.
- A faculty introductory video should be posted in Canvas before the start of the term. This can be part of an announcement, instructor introduction, or opening module.
- Preferred contact methods and times are to be posted in Canvas.
- Struggling students should be identified and individually contacted throughout the term.

Preparation

- Course materials must be in place and published in Canvas within one week prior to the course start date to ensure materials can be reviewed before the term begins. Content should be prepared and ready for students, but it is permissible to leave some aspects hidden until appropriate. Modifications can be made throughout the term, but the primary content should remain and be ready one week prior to the course start.
- Faculty are to verify that all links and videos are functional.

- A syllabus must be posted in Canvas and sent to syllabi@okbu.edu before the start of the term.

Course Standards

Content

- Course content must be equivalent to normal face-to-face classes. The standard for HLC accredited schools is that time on task should be 45 hours per credit over the span of the term (90hrs for 2 credit courses; 135hrs for 3 credit courses). Traditionally, this entails 1 hour in-class and 2 hours out of class each week per course credit. Non-traditional courses will need to ensure the time-on-task is equivalent to traditional seated courses.

3 Credit Course		
Course Format in Weeks	Total Hours/Week	Total Hours/Course
15	9	135
8	17	136

- Time on task includes time spent:
 - Reading textbooks, handouts, or lecture material.
 - Watching course recordings or online videos.
 - Engaging in discussion boards or group activities.
 - Researching, writing, and editing written assignments.
 - Preparing for and taking quizzes, tests, and knowledge checks.
 - Meeting with faculty or other students.
 - A workload calculator is available at: <https://cte.rice.edu/workload>
- Faculty should utilize a variety of approaches in developing courses. While recorded lectures can be beneficial, other methods may prove more advantageous in keeping students engaged with content, instructors, and classmates.
- All online courses will be reviewed by the Office of Online Learning to ensure courses are set up effectively to promote student learning and engagements. Compliance with HLC standards and OBU guidelines will also be assessed.

Design

- Modules are to be utilized to organize course materials. External content and learning activities are permitted but should be integrated into a course module.
- At least one assignment must be required for each week of the term. These can be set as graded or ungraded assignments, but they should be required tasks so that student attendance can be gauged.
- In order to ensure students experience engagement beyond written text, online courses must include a video in 75% of units, weeks, or modules, depending on course structure. The video should be separate from the weekly announcement, as it is part of the course design. Videos can be any length and can be internally developed or externally sourced.

Suggested options include, but are not limited to: module overview, course lecture, assignment instructions, or links to external content.

- Downloadable files must be available in formats which the university supports, such as a .pdf, .jpg, or Microsoft Office file extensions (ex: .docx, .pptx, .xlsx).
- Courses must pass Canvas's internal accessibility checker to ensure the course is accessible to all learners.