

Transforming Your Course

How to transform your course to online?

TIP
1



Start with Your Course Learning Outcomes

Course learning outcomes drive learning in all courses. Write specific, meaningful & measurable learning outcomes, stating what the students will “know” or be able to do by the end of the course. For more info on creating learning outcomes, please see: <http://stearnscenter.gmu.edu/teaching/student-learning-outcomes>

TIP
2



Apply Instructional Design Principles

Use Backward Design & Course Mapping: Identify the desired learning outcomes, plan learning experiences which map to the outcomes, and determine how learning will be assessed. Please see: <http://stearnscenter.gmu.edu/teaching/course-mapping>

TIP
3



Adopt a Learner-Centered, Active Learning Approach

Carefully plan the types of interaction in your online course. Encourage students to dialog, write, think, and evaluate. Design purposeful activities which promote learner interaction, and which leverage the online environment.

TIP
4



Develop Your Online Teaching & Technology Skills

Select and integrate technology tools to support learning in your online course. Take advantage of The Stearns Center resources available to Mason faculty for transforming teaching, including the Course (Re)Design Academy, Online Course Design Institute (OCDI), and the Open Online Course Design Labs.



Transform your course through careful re-examination of course design, pedagogy, assessments, & technology in order to optimize the online learning experience.

Stearns Center: Digital Learning

The Digital Learning Instructional Design Team is available for consultations to help Mason faculty to develop or redesign your course for online or hybrid format; to enhance your course using evidence-based practice; and to integrate multimedia into your course.

Please contact Stearns Center Instructional Design team at idteam@gmu.edu or 703-993-6200.



Stearns Center: Teaching Excellence

The Teaching Excellence Team is available to provide assistance, guidance, and mentorship for Mason faculty at all stages of the teaching and learning process.

Principles for effective teaching relate to teaching across all delivery formats, including face-to-face, online, and hybrid.

Please contact The Stearns Center at stearns@gmu.edu or 703-993-6200.

Best Practices from Mason's Online Faculty

What is one tip for transforming your course to online?

Promote Learner Interaction & Communication

"Inspire your students by creating a highly interactive online environment, where students may share personal experiences relating to course material. Tools such as blogs and discussions promote peer interaction, while journals and other assignments allow for direct student-teacher communication. In my online dance appreciation course, I find such discourse to be a vital component for synthesizing and understanding course material."

-Karen Reedy, Assistant Professor, School of Dance, CVPA

Use Weekly Quizzes and Discussion Boards to Enhance Learning

"Encourage daily learning and self-examination with many brief quizzes and discussion boards. In my online and in-person clinical psychology courses, I present case examples via text and video that illustrate textbook concepts. I ask students to answer items and discuss techniques to assess, treat, or prevent people's psychological symptoms. Students also evaluate the benefits and costs of their own or other's suggested techniques. They learn to apply research knowledge, think critically, and communicate concisely."

-Jerome Short, Associate Professor, Psychology, CHSS

Design Creative, Engaging Activities for the Online Environment

"Encourage your students' creativity, which enlivens the online learning experience. In my online history course, I had students role-play different perspectives on the bombing of Hiroshima (e.g. reporter in Japan, adviser to President Truman, a curator at the Smithsonian). They loved the assignment and it brought the history to life for them, which is always important, but especially critical in online learning."

-Suzanne Smith, Professor, Department of History, CHSS

Learn More!



Backward Design
retrieved from Stearns Center website at:
<http://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/backward-design>

Morrison, D. 2012. How [not] to Design an Online Course. Online Learning Insights. Retrieved from:
<https://onlinelearninginsights.wordpress.com/2012/08/06/how-not-to-design-an-online-course/>



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