

Guidelines for Teaching in the Online Environment

The following guidelines outline the expectations and responsibilities of instructors utilizing distance learning tools. For assistance with implementing the guidelines, please contact your campus Instructional Technologist.

I. General Information

Instructors teaching online or hybrid must utilize the Learning Management System (LMS) provided by Polk State College.

Online course sections become available to students six days prior to the start date of the course.

Courses showcasing the following requirements below can be found on the following website:

www.polk.edu/exemplary-online-courses

II. Required Training

Polk State College *Office of Instructional Technology and E-Learning* offers Online Teacher Certification – Getting Started and Teaching Online for instructors intending to teach hybrid or online courses. First time instructors are required to complete Getting Started and Teaching Online. Training is available to all instructors but is not mandatory for those previously certified. It is, however, recommended that instructors trained prior to the development of Getting Started and Teaching Online complete appropriate levels given the transition to Canvas and significant changes that occur in online teaching delivery and design.

Additional online teaching certification information can be found at: <https://www.polk.edu/teaching-online>

III. Course Content and Organization

A. Course Introduction

One week prior to the start of the term, the instructor will post...

1. Link to BCI page (FOOF – 2)
2. Syllabus (FOOF – 2)
 - a. Syllabus and BCI guidelines can be found in Procedure 1001 at:

<http://www2.polk.edu/businessandcommunity/rulesproc/Proc/1001.pdf>

At the start of the course, the instructor will provide in the course content section... (FOOF – 1)

1. **"Course Outline/Schedule"**
2. **"Getting Started"** message (How to Begin this Course; appropriate academic support resources; e.g., Smart Thinking, Atomic Learning)
3. **"Navigation"** overview of online components of the course
4. General and course specific **"Technical Skills Needed"***
5. **"Instructor Introduction"***
6. Opportunity for **"Student Introductions"***
7. **"Accessibility Information"** to align with Procedure 5008:
<http://www2.polk.edu/businessandcommunity/rulesproc/Proc/5008.pdf>
8. Online conduct expectations aligned with Rule 4.01 II(A-D)*
 - a. Include example of unacceptable behavior in the online environment

* Information, examples, and resources can be found at: www.polk.edu/exemplary-online-courses

B. Attendance and Participation

Online instructors are required to state their attendance policy in the course syllabus. Online class attendance begins the first day of the session. Because of the primarily asynchronous nature of online classes, the instructor will...

1. Clearly define academic dates/weeks/time units for which student attendance and participation will be determined.
2. Explain what constitutes attendance in online courses. Attendance in online courses frequently entails completion of certain academic tasks such as reading or viewing posted lectures and materials, posting/replying, taking quizzes, or submitting assignments.
3. Clearly identify due dates and times for all assignments.
4. Alert students that partial completion of academic tasks may (or may not) satisfy the attendance requirement.

C. Communication and Feedback

The College maintains communication with students in a number of ways: e-mail, discussion boards, dropbox feedback, web conferencing, social networking, and other forms of contact. This information has been shared with students in the [Guidelines for Students in the Online Environment](#). It is anticipated that instructors will adhere to best practices in online instruction to facilitate positive communication through the following:

1. E-mail will receive a response within 48 hours, excluding weekends and holidays.
2. Questions via other communication tools (i.e. discussion boards, social networking, etc.) will receive a response in a reasonable amount of time. Anticipated-response time will be clearly stated in course introductory information.
3. Assignment feedback will be provided in a reasonable amount of time: generally, a week after the due date. The anticipated time for assignment feedback will be clearly expressed to students in course introductory information or the syllabus. (FOOF – 3)

D. Learning Environment

Netiquette refers to a set of rules for proper online behavior and applies to tone in electronic/online communications. Rules for conduct in discussions, e-mail, blogs, chats, online rooms, and social networking sites and other aspects of communication content, such as quality, style, and grammar expectations, are addressed.

Polk State College expects students to adhere to specific guidelines in online environments. Student guidelines can be found at the following link: <[Guidelines for Students in the Online Environment](#)> It is anticipated that instructors will adhere to the same netiquette guidelines when communicating with students in the online environment. To promote appropriate and effective communication in the online environment, the instructor may choose to do the following:

1. Provide students with examples of "acceptable" and "not-acceptable" forms of communications
2. Detail specific guidelines for discussion postings
3. An environment conducive to learning will be provided to all students. (FOOF – 4)
 - i. All students are treated with courtesy and respect.

- ii. Ideas and comments can be exchanged in a collaborative manner.

E. Course Activities

Instructional Materials

Course objectives in any one course number, regardless of delivery mechanism or content, should be the same. However, in the online environment, certain instructional elements should be considered. For example, a traditional lecture may be segmented into significantly smaller learning “chunks” to allow for shorter videos which would be more likely to promote success for the online learner. The course materials are provided in a timely manner. (FOOF – 5)

Considerations unique to the online learning environment necessitate the following:

1. Modules are in a logical order. (FOOF - 6)
2. The course designed facilitates readability and ease of course navigation to meet the needs of diverse learners. (FOOF – 7)
3. All materials are professional in appearance and text is clear of spelling and grammatical errors. (FOOF – 8)
4. Clear explanations regarding which materials and resources are required, and which are optional, in order for the student to complete course activities and assignments. Refer to www.polk.edu/exemplary-online-courses for examples of appropriate information.
5. Each module/unit of content should explain purpose, learning objectives, and align with the assessment measures. (FOOF – 1)
6. For each assignment, the instructor's expectations should be clearly expressed. Assignments and tasks should be distributed over the term with regular deadlines. (FOOF – 1)
7. Source materials used in the course must be clearly identified and appropriately cited. Consistent with Procedure 4004, all instructors will adhere to appropriate copyright guidelines: <http://www2.polk.edu/businessandcommunity/rulesproc/Proc/4004.pdf>
8. Proficiency is demonstrated in the subject matter through utilization of appropriate instructional materials and feedback provided to students. (FOOF – 9)

Learner Interaction and Engagement

Polk State College endorses interactivity in its online courses. Refer to www.polk.edu/exemplary-online-courses for examples of appropriate information.

There are opportunities for interaction and tools for learner engagement that support student learning outcomes (i.e. discussion boards, chat, simulations, games, etc.) (FOOF – 10)

F. Course Technology

The course technologies are readily obtainable, and hyperlinks and multimedia are updated (non-functional items are removed/replaced).

External Tools

Multiple external tools (i.e. Hoonuit, , SMARThinking) are available to embed into online courses. Appropriate information on using the tools will be included in the course.

Publisher Materials

When publisher materials (e.g., My Math Lab or a companion website) are used in a course, the following information must be provided:

- Technical requirements (Hardware and Browser Requirements)
- Installation instructions
- Login instructions and privacy policy
- Publisher Technical support
- Whether materials are mandatory vs. optional

Web Conferencing

Collaborate, which offers instructors an additional mode of online communication with students, has been implemented at Polk State College. When web conferencing is used in a course, the following information must be provided:

- Participation requirements (mandatory vs. optional)
- Meeting schedule (dates, times)
- Connectivity and login instructions
- Microphone, speakers, camera requirements
- Technical requirements (hardware and browser requirements)
- Technical support
- Expected participation behaviors (as appropriate)

Contact a campus Instructional Technologist to learn more about Collaborate.

G. Assessment and Measurement

Faculty must inform students of their progress throughout the duration of the course. Canvas includes a *Grades Tool*. It is recommended for fully online and hybrid courses that a grades tool be used to inform students of their course progress. For training opportunities on Canvas' Grades Tool, an instructor can contact his/her campus Instructional Technologist or visit the Teaching and Learning Innovation Center(s).

The course has appropriate instructions, evaluative criteria, and due dates for activities or assignments. (FOOF – 12)

The course includes diverse learning activities and assessment instruments to support instruction and enable students to track their progress. (FOOF – 12)

Proctored and/or In-Person Exams

Faculty who require students to take proctored exams, in-person exams on campus, or online proctoring must provide students with advance written notice of date(s), and include links to institution-specific academic support services and how to access these services (e.g., location of testing center and/or proctored test sites, hours of operation, phone numbers, and email addresses for key personnel).

For local in-person testing, instructions and test materials must be provided to the appropriate TLCCs. For at-a distance students who are unable to test at a TLCC, faculty may offer proctored exams via the online testing service or at a non-Polk testing center. Students are responsible for identifying a testing center in their location and for providing the

necessary information to the instructor so materials and instructions can be submitted to that site. Students may access the National College Testing Association for help identifying a testing center in their area. In the interest of facilitating a suitable testing arrangement in a timely fashion, the instructor may provide the student the Remote Test Site and Proctor Approval Form for the collection of that information. The instructor will provide the necessary test materials and instructions to the approved test location along with instructions for the return of the materials.

Document Originality Checking

One of the following statements below should be included in the syllabus if an originality checking service is being utilized per Procedure 1001.

This section shall contain a statement regarding the use of a plagiarism detection service and/or the Originality Check feature in PAL.

- *If students are required to submit their paper to a plagiarism detection service via the Canvas Assignment:* This course utilizes an automatic plagiarism detection service. Your paper will be submitted to the service upon submission to selected Canvas Assignment. Please remove your name from your paper prior to submission. For more information about this service, please visit <https://Turnitin.com>.
- *If the instructor will submit only select papers to a plagiarism checking service/software: (Note: Instructors must remove student name and other personal information prior to submission.)* This course utilizes an automatic plagiarism detection service. Your paper may be submitted to this service to check for originality. For more information about this service, please visit <https://Turnitin.com>