New Mexico State University Alamogordo
Online Delivery Standards

The Instructor actively participates or demonstrates his/her presence in the course on a consistent, weekly basis. The desire is for faculty to model engagement expected of students. Students are more successful when they actively participate in any course. When students see ways in which the instructor is engaging with students, they are more likely to engage with the instructor and their peers. These expectations help create an interactive environment like the one found in a face-to-face course.

In order to achieve this best practice, the instructor will:

- Delivery Standard 1 - Respond to student email within 48 hours during the scheduled work week for a full-term course or within 24 hours for any short-term course*.

  It is understood that faculty have non-traditional work hours, especially adjunct faculty. The goal of this standard is flexibility, but consistency. It is within acceptable practice for an instructor to "work" Tuesday through Saturday, for instance, as long as an instructor's workweek is clearly defined for students.

  If an email is received on a Friday, then a response is expected by Monday of the following week. If an instructor has an alternate schedule, which provides for a nontraditional work week, this should be clearly explained to students at the beginning of the semester.

- Delivery Standard 2 - Utilize a help forum and respond within 48 hours or 24 hours during any short-term course*.

  Best practice for online instruction encourages the use of "help" forums and other forms of open, threaded discussion. These forums can be helpful for both students and instructors, as often students answer questions for each other. Regular participation on a "help" discussion by the instructor can mediate many forms of course questions as well as notify an instructor when something in the LMS has not worked as expected. This equates to in-class question/answer sessions. Students ask open questions to an instructor and all students have access to that question as well as the answer.

- Delivery Standard 3 - Communicate in a constructive and supportive manner.

  It is understood that email between a student and an instructor is private, particularly in order to protect student privacy rights. However, constructive and supportive communication can be provided in open help forums as well as in announcements. Best practice encourages multiple forms of communication within a course, and this communication should be professional, constructive, and supportive.

- Delivery Standard 4 - Provide meaningful feedback within 1 week of an assignment due date. This time should be adjusted in a short-term course*.

  Timely feedback is important in order for students to progress through a course. Not all assignments can be graded in a single week; this is dependent upon the size of the class and the complexity of the assignment. However, an instructor can give meaningful feedback in a timely manner which may include announcements on how grading is progressing, reasons for delayed grading, and general feedback to the entire class regarding assessment after grading is complete.

- Delivery Standard 5 - Provide formative feedback that supports progress toward summative projects when necessary.

  In any course, it is detrimental for students to work on projects or course content that has summative components without having feedback from their instructor on earlier work. For instance, a mid-term or final exam is generally precipitated by earlier assignments and/or discussions. Students should receive feedback so they can make appropriate changes as they prepare for summative projects. This feedback can come in many forms: comments on quizzes, quizzes with multiple attempts, non-graded quizzes, revision opportunities, peer review which includes instructor comments, or individual feedback and coaching via email.

- Delivery Standard 6 - Communicate to the entire class weekly. This time should be adjusted for a short-term course*.

  Best practice in online instruction supports engaging and ongoing communication between the instructor and an entire class. It is not always necessary to communicate elaborate information weekly, but some consistent communication should come in the form of weekly announcements or regular class updates.

- Delivery Standard 7 - Encourage regular interaction between students.

  It is impossible to replicate the kind of interaction students experience in a face-to-face class in an online environment; however, attempts should be made to create student-to-student interaction. Interaction among students can support learning objectives, create meaningful exchange of ideas, and provide an enriched experience for students as they work through course material. Student-to-student interaction can come in the form of threaded discussion, peer review, team projects, and open forums.

*Short-term course would include any course 8 weeks or less.

Biography

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