

Have you considered going online?

Are you thinking about offering a face-to-face course in the online modality? Are you wondering why or if you should? Or, what the benefits are for you as an instructor, and also for your students? Are you curious about the steps involved and what support is available?

Western Michigan University's Online Education department is dedicated to helping WMU faculty successfully transition face-to-face courses to the online environment. Online Education partners with academic units to offer educational opportunities via alternative delivery methods, such as web-based courses and programs, Open Learning (open entry courses with six months to finish), and Compressed Video Interactive Television (CVIT) courses. In addition, Online Education's instructional design team partners with faculty members to assist in the preparation of course materials and teaching strategies for different modalities.



“The Interdisciplinary Health Sciences Ph.D. program puts a strong emphasis on research collaborations across disciplines in both our on-campus and online courses. [The online] courses allow us greater flexibility to explore in-depth issues with experts beyond the confines of our campus. For example, this semester students had the opportunity to have in-depth discussions on global health delivery systems with guest instructor Dr. Rob Lyerla, the Epidemiology and Analysis Division Chief with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS in Geneva, Switzerland. [Online education] allows us to bring the world’s leading scientists to our students, enhance the educational experience, and directly contribute to the overall success of our doctoral program.”

**Kieran Fogarty, Associate Professor,
Interdisciplinary Health Sciences**

“I have been teaching online for several years now. I can teach from anywhere...my students can be from anywhere!”

**Lynne Hall, Part-Time Instructor,
College of Health and Human Services**



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Online Instruction: Creating new connections with today's undergraduate and graduate students



**Western Michigan University
Online Education**

What are the benefits?

Moving a face-to-face course to the online modality can have a number of benefits for both instructor and students. Below are just some of the benefits that WMU faculty have described in creating an online course.

Instructor benefits

- Faculty remain current in the era of continuously-evolving teaching practices.
- Preservation of course materials; course information is located in one area, and can be updated at any time.
- No photocopies necessary; students can print course materials on-demand.
- Faculty can be more easily accessible to students, instead of just during scheduled office hours.
- Faculty who teach graduate courses to those who attend school part-time and work full-time are able to reach a broader student audience than what is available locally in Kalamazoo; for instructors of specialized subject areas, online courses can serve a more wide-ranging area.
- Online instruction can make face-to-face time more efficient because of the online discussion that students have participated in prior to meeting.
- Faculty can reach students where they currently are, wherever that may be.
- EUP revenue share for the academic department.



Student benefits

- Even the quiet student tends to participate equally.
- The majority of the participation is through writing and posting comments, which helps the student improve writing skills.
- Grades can be returned instantly and are always accessible to the student; the student can have a better understanding of their standing in the class.
- Enhanced discussion; in writing and posting comments online, students are better able to thoughtfully consider and clarify their concepts and ideas before voicing them. Online discussions often are taken to a deeper level.
- Opportunity for collaboration with group members and team projects, including virtual teams, which are skills that students will need after matriculation.
- Students can come from a wide range of backgrounds and locations, which can make online classroom learning more diverse.

Instructional design team

Online Education offers a full-service instructional design team, available to assist you with developing a quality online learning experience for students in your virtual classroom. Instructors are the content experts; instructional designers are the virtual classroom presentation experts. Instructional designers will meet with you to discuss your unique course needs, including structure and strategy, and work with you to develop solutions that result in a high-quality online learning experience for your students. In addition, the instructional design team offers:

- Customized tutorials and instructional videos.
- Recording of instructors and guest lecturers for use in online curriculum.
- Student technical help, including answering questions about Blackboard Vista, submitting assignments, etc., so instructors can focus on teaching.
- Review of your online course after it's complete and suggestions for enhancing the online learning experience.
- Research, procurement, and training on new technology and tools that are needed to enhance your online course.

E-teaching endorsement

The e-Teaching Endorsement Program is currently available to faculty who are interested in teaching **fully online** or **hybrid** courses (up to 25% face to face, 75% online) and have the support of their academic chair.

The program consists of seven sessions with various presenters in areas covering:

- Instructional design basics
- Best practices for e-learning
- Concept mapping to plan and design courses
- Hands-on training in Blackboard Vista

Each session will address specific topics including examples of usage in Blackboard Vista. Faculty will participate in online activities within a Blackboard Vista 'course shell.' This allows faculty to become familiar with the resources available in Blackboard Vista as well as provide a student's view of the course platform.

E-Teaching Endorsement sessions are available fall and spring semesters and summer sessions. Contact Andrea Beach at (269) 387-4196.

Teach your course online: 3 steps to success

Step 1: You're interested in finding out more

- Check out online.wmich.edu for more information for faculty interested in teaching online.
- Obtain approval from your department chair.
- Contact the Director of Online Education at (269) 387-2847 for general information and/or questions.

Step 2: Take your course online

- Enroll in the e-Teaching Endorsement Program.
- Work with instructional designers to develop your online course.
- Adapt your course for online delivery.

Step 3: Teach your course

- Earn a \$1,000 e-Teaching stipend for the first 3 times the course is offered.
- EUP revenue share model applies for each course taught online.
- Course promotion/marketing assistance on EUP website, printed schedule book, and targeted online and direct mail.



“When I initially moved my favorite face-to-face graduate class to an online format, I was worried about how to duplicate all those “ah hah” moments that occur with students. What I discovered is that there are actually more of those moments, and a much greater depth of learning was possible. In an online format, everyone must “speak,” which means they really need to have read the materials. Overall, online teaching has opened up a new world for my graduate students and myself... I truly believe the learning is richer and deeper.”

**Louann Bierlein Palmer,
Associate Professor,
Department of Educational Leadership,
Research and Technology**