



Online Teaching Guide



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Welcome to Teaching Online at Fresno Pacific University!

This Online Teaching Guide is designed to provide faculty with information and expectations for teaching online at Fresno Pacific University. The university follows an online ‘Master Course’ development and teaching model. This means that faculty can expect to teach an online course that has been developed by another faculty member or online course developer – in which case the online course will be fully developed and many of the course elements will already be in place. This guide outlines the steps faculty should follow prior, during, and after teaching their online course.

Thank you for being part of high quality online programming at Fresno Pacific University.

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A. Preparing Your Course

A well-prepared online course makes for an enriching learning experience for your students. Prior to opening your course to students, prepare your course for teaching. The course preparation includes a Moodle course transfer from the 'Master Course' on the Moodle Development site to the Moodle Production site, updating the syllabus, and setting up/updating the Moodle course shell.

1. Request Course Transfer

Many programs have an approved online 'Master Course' that serves as the master content from which the respective online course sections receive their content. Request a course transfer from the 'Master Course' to your course by contacting the Center for Online Learning at <http://col.fresno.edu>. *[NOTE: In some cases, the course transfer will be requested by your program director. Consult your program director to confirm 'Master Course' content is available for your course.]*

2. Update Syllabus

Update the 'Master Course' syllabus – current semester, contact information, due dates, etc. *[NOTE: much of the information will be in place if coming from a 'Master Course']*

3. Set up your Course in Moodle

If you are teaching a course that has been transferred from a 'Master Course', most elements will already be set up – such as content, assignments, gradebook, etc. Please do not change the content of the course or add activities that will adversely affect the gradebook - unless instructions to do so have been provided by the course developer.

Any updates/changes to the course should be made in the '**Master Course**' on the *Moodle Development* site at <http://moodledev.fresno.edu> so that future course transfers include the necessary changes.

Moodle Course Setup Checklist

Use the following checklist to setup your course in Moodle:

Syllabus

- Upload an updated current syllabus in **pdf file** to the course header section

Instructor Profile Block

- Update the instructor profile block to include a current photo and contact information? [use professional-looking photo – no avatars please].

Module Dates

- Enter the module start/end date in the header section of each module (e.g. 1/9 – 1/5; or January 9 – 15)

Assignment Due Dates

- Set the due dates for assignments, using the information from the course calendar in the syllabus.

- Assignment Availability Settings**
 - Set assignments to be available on the course launch date - **For Module 1 Only.** (*This allows students to view the course during 'Preview Week' but not submit assignments prior to course launch date – which could affect their online attendance*).
- Signature Assignment/TaskStream**
 - If your course has a Signature Assignment, set up the assignment with the appropriate Taskstream link [*for instructions see the Moodle Faculty Guide*].
- External Tools and eBooks**
 - If your course uses external tools and ebooks, such as Turnitin, ETS Criterion, Pearson MyMathLab, VoiceThread, and other similar tools, set up the tools using the appropriate Moodle link and student instructions [*for instructions see the Moodle Faculty Guide*].

Use the continued checklist to review the settings of your course in Moodle:
 [NOTE: These items should be in place if you are teaching a course that was transferred from a 'Master Course'].

- Course Overview Video**
 - Does the course have an Introductory Video posted providing students with an overview of the course?
- Introductions**
 - Does the course have an 'Introduce Yourself' Forum, giving students an opportunity to introduce themselves and get acquainted with the instructor and other students?
- Resources**
 - Are relevant course resources (text book info, handouts, etc.) posted in the course header section?
- Weekly Modules**
 - a. Module Title: Do all module headers have a title matching the topics in the syllabus course calendar?
 - b. Module Header: Do all modules have a topic-relevant image?
 - c. Module Overview: Do all modules include a 'Module Overview' providing students with an overview of the content and activities they will be expected to complete that week?
 - d. Content Resources & Readings:
 - Are all content resources – readings, videos, lectures, websites - appropriately titled so students have context prior to clicking on the link? (*e.g. resource links should include key words of the resource - Lecture 1, Video 2, etc. do not provide students with sufficient context*).

- Does each module include a lecture(s) or professional talk [either instructor generated or existing on the web] that emphasizes major concepts of the topic for that week?
 - Are all assigned readings appropriately listed, linked to, or uploaded to the course?
 - Do resources include specific instructions for how students should engage with the resource – what they should read, watch, or listen to and why?
- e. Activities/Assignments
- Are all graded activities numbered to reflect the module/assignment sequence (e.g., 1.1 Reflection, 1.2 Research Paper, 2.1 Technology Tool Quiz, 2.2 Blog Analysis, etc.)?
 - Do all activities include an appropriate title that matches the assignments listed in the syllabus so students have context about the type of assignments? (e.g., Assignment 1 vs. Research Paper Outline).
 - Do all activities and assignments include clear prompts – specific directions for how and when students should complete and submit the assignment?
 - Have all graded activities been assigned a point value that matches the grading information in the syllabus?
 - Is there variety in the types of activities students are asked to complete – such as text, audio, visual, video, graphical, etc.? *[assignments should not just be text-based].*

Grade Book

- Do all graded assignments appear in the Moodle grade book in a numbered sequence? (e.g., 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2. etc.)? *[This helps students more easily track their completed assignments].*

Signature Assignment & TaskStream

- Does your course have a Signature Assignment listed in the syllabus? If so, verify that your course is properly connected to Taskstream. This is a step prior to setting up your Signature Assignment. *[for instructions see the Moodle Faculty Guide – logging into your Taskstream account may not give you this information]. Consult your program director regarding Signature Assignment requirements for your course.*

B. Opening Your Course to Students – ‘Preview Week’ (1 week prior to course launch)

One week prior to the course start date make your course available and communicate with your students. This will ensure a smooth course launch – giving students a chance to purchase their text books, resolve Moodle login issues, etc. - allowing them to be ready for the first week of class.

1. Open Your Course

- Make your course available to students one week prior to the course launch date and allow students to login and view the course. The course header section and Module 1 should be visible to students during ‘Preview Week’.
- Keep remaining modules hidden during ‘Preview Week’.
 - *While some students prefer to see the entire course, others find it overwhelming. To keep a consistent experience for students across courses and helping them stay focused, we encourage the opening of Module 1 only during ‘Preview Week’.*
 - *Students should not be able to submit any work during the ‘Preview Week’ except for Self-Introductions if desired, because this can affect their online attendance records – see “Assignment Availability Settings” in part A.*
- Open additional modules one week at a time – suggested day is Friday each week so students have the weekend to ‘look ahead’ to the next module while finishing the current one.

2. Send Welcome Email to Students

Send a Welcome Email to students **1 week prior** to the course launch date, introducing yourself and reminding them to purchase the required text books and begin reviewing the syllabus. This will give students a ‘head start’ and allow them to have required reading materials in hand by the first week of class. Here is an example Welcome Email you may adapt:

Example Welcome Email

Greetings!

I will be your instructor for [course title] starting on [date].

This course will prepare you for successful navigation in our learning management system, access to online programs, and introduce you to research tools recommended for program coursework. Also, you will be developing a professional portfolio of what you are learning in this course for future use in your career.

Below are a few steps to complete as we begin the course in a short week.

- Please work through the syllabus as you prepare for a smooth start. We have our first major assignment for [date] where we will discuss the portfolio project.
- Be sure to purchase your textbooks at the FPU online bookstore at: <http://www.bkstr.com/fresnopacificstore/home>
- Take a moment to review the major assignments – some require planning ahead and making appointments with individuals and sites outside of this class.

Please feel free to use the ‘Question and Answer Forum’ in the course when you have questions, or email/call me directly.

I am looking forward to working with you in the program! Thank you!

Looking forward to a great class!
[Professor Name]

C. Teaching Your Course

Quality online teaching is based on establishing an online teaching presence. This is achieved through the facilitation of online discourse and well-focused direct instruction so that it contributes to online students' sense of learning and perception of community. Instructor presence also helps set the pace for the course and direction for the online learning experience. Here are some guidelines to help you establish an online teaching presence with your students.

1. Post Weekly Course Announcements

At the beginning of each new week post an announcement using the course **News and Announcements** Forum in the header section of your Moodle course. Use the weekly announcement to introduce the upcoming week and give overall feedback on students' work from the previous week, encouraging them along the way. Include a brief overview of what students will be doing in the upcoming module or week. Report on student progress with assignments and grading. Here are some example Weekly Announcements you may adapt.

Example Weekly Announcement #1:

Greetings!

We are on our way! We have reviewed philosophies of learning, taken a look at theories and approaches to learning, considered what we believe about schooling practices, and now we are embarking on broadening our perspective! With our textbook assignments, as each of you "travels" (armchair!) to countries of your choice you will be discovering how schooling is done in new places. Are you finding that the ideology and the political economy of other places also interact with schooling practices there? Does that lead you to some reflection?

If your textbook is the 2004 edition, remember to click on the "2010 Updates" in the Welcome part of the course outline - for each country you chose this gives the most recent research information. The 2010 editions have that update info included in your text.

A reminder again, as you are ready to visit your countries read the assignment carefully. I suggest reading the assignment for each country before you read the text, and when you are ready to respond, reread the assignment directions.

We travel fast! Next week is the third and last reading assignment from the text. Next week we also take some time to reflect on the "Idea" of Fresno Pacific University. I encourage you to give thought to this reading, take time to reflect on it's significance, do you think it's important? Noting the rubric for this assignment will be helpful.

One more thing! As you have carefully read through the syllabus, noting the included rubrics, **you will have noticed that the rubric for the PowerPoint presentation in module 5, in its' last part, "Presentation Delivery", in parenthesis, states "Voice-enhanced PowerPoint", with point value attached.** Many of you may already be doing this type of presentations for your classes, and that is great. Should some of you not be familiar with this use of technology now, before

we get to module 5, is the time to learn the "how to", to get help. Take a little time now to get help; then play a bit with your new-found skill, and you will be ready to enjoy giving your wonderful presentation!

Have a good week!
[Professor Name]

Example Weekly Announcement #2:

Wow, it's week 8 already. Thanks for working on the video recording assignment and posting in the forums. I've replied to the posts made recently so you can look at those and respond if needed. I also took a look at the recording assignment and made some notes in the feedback section. If you view the grades or view assignments from the activities link, you should see the feedback.

This week we are on the topic of editing. I believe you have a little experience with editing but this week we'll take a look at the work of Ken Burns, have a little discussion about what types of effects you like when watching a video/tv show, and you will need to produce a short video using the pan and zoom effects that have come to be known as the Ken Burns Effect. Should be fun!

FYI, next week is spring semester break so there are no assignments scheduled. You can use next week to catch up on things if you need to, take a break or work ahead. Last week I introduced the storyboard project. You may want to take a look at that, or maybe look back at the introduction of the concept paper back in week 3 to get a jump start on that project.

Thanks, and keep up the good work!
[Professor Name]

Example Weekly Announcement #3:

Greetings!
Welcome to Week 5.

I have enjoyed reading your discussions and providing feedback and grades. I have been really impressed with the types of resources you identified in the curation activity. Please be sure to check out your classmate's leadership resources - you may want to bookmark them if you have not already done so. You all have done great work on assembling a wonderful collection.

This week's focus is on leadership. There are two video lectures on leadership introducing this week's activities. You will also have an opportunity to examine your own leadership visioning ability. In addition to the textbook readings, you will focus on leadership areas discussed in a series of articles. Now, before you get too overwhelmed by the article readings, focus on the main topics discussed in each article. You may want to make a list or diagram - these notes will be useful as you complete the article synthesis activity.

Also, keep in mind that the readings you engage in this week are designed to help you write and integrate literature resources into your final case study - please make notes of what you plan to integrate.

The class is moving along quickly - you are almost there. Next week we will be finishing up the class with the Case Study writing.

Wishing you a great week!

2. Maintain Weekly Presence

Maintain a weekly presence in your course by logging in 3-5 times a week – at the beginning, middle, and end of each week. Read what students have posted – are they on the right track? Do you need to re-direct the discussion? Do they need a reminder to participate? It is not necessary that you reply to every post – but a comment to a select number of students' posts, or a summary post will go a long way to letting students know **you 'are there' and present** in the course. Also, consider alternate formats for maintaining a presence - by posting audio, video, or visual comments.

3. Integrate Faith into Your Course

As an institution *Founded on Christ*, Fresno Pacific University invites students to consider issues of faith as part of their academic learning experience and interaction with others in the class and society at large.

Faculty at FPU use a variety of ways for integrating faith into their courses. Here are some options for you to adapt as you integrate relevant issues of faith into your course:

Faith Integration Options:

- Begin each new week/module with a bible verse
- Set up a Forum for Prayer Requests
- Begin the week with an online devotional (or ask students to contribute a reflection/encouragement for the week) <http://www.crosswalk.com/devotionals/>
- Post a 'Manna Moments' video devotional from FPU Pastor Angulus Wilson into your course (look for the Manna Moments video series here: <http://vimeo.com/88114325>)
- Integrate a biblical passage – event, story, person, principle, etc. - into a lesson or activity (Example: examine leadership traits discussed in class in leaders of the bible – Moses? David? Esther? – Read 2nd Samuel)
- Use an accompanying text along with assigned readings (Example: Digital Disciple by Adam Thomas)
- Consider your own

4. Complete Weekly Grading

Grading assignments **weekly and regularly** in the Moodle grade book is an essential part of quality online teaching as it helps students monitor their progress. It also allows you to quickly identify students who fall behind and who may need additional help or intervention.

Grade each week's assignments **within 7 days** of the assignment's due date. For time-sensitive assignments (where students need feedback from you before they can proceed with an assignment) you may need to provide feedback within 2-4 days. This will allow students to adapt accordingly as they move into the next week or module.

When grading assignments, in addition to assigning points, provide constructive feedback by adding a comment about what the student has done well and what areas need improvement or were missing from the assignment. Be candid in your feedback about the student's performance while at the same time being encouraging. If the assignment does not merit the maximum points possible, then it should not be given the maximum point value. At the same time, students want to know why they did not receive full points – letting them know why they received fewer points will help them improve in future assignments. Always be clear about your expectations for the assignment – this will help with establishing clear grading criteria.

In case of Forum posts, again - it is not necessary to post a feedback comment to every post – in most cases, a general feedback post with general observations to all posts for that assignment will serve as constructive feedback.

D. Ending Your Course:

Students end the course by submitting feedback on their learning experience in three separate areas: IDEA Course Evaluation, TaskStream (for Signature Assignment), and the End-Of-Course Evaluation (not all courses may have all three feedback options). The instructor facilitates the completion of these evaluations by reminding students to submit work/surveys in the appropriate areas.

1. Remind Students to Complete IDEA Course Evaluation

The IDEA course evaluation gathers student data about effectiveness of the instructor and the course. Your students will receive an automated email (sent by the FPU Office of Institutional Effectiveness) including a link to the **IDEA Course Evaluation survey** when the course is approximately two-thirds complete. The survey is time sensitive and will close at the stated date in the students' email. Please encourage all students to complete the survey in your weekly announcements. Students will need their student ID number to complete the online survey.

Currently, instructors are not automatically notified when the surveys are sent out. However, you will be sent an email asking you to identify IDEA Survey objectives. When you do, please **contact your program director to request the objectives** sent to you for your course – as IDEA course evaluation objectives may have already been selected for your course and will ensure that the same objectives are selected every time the course is evaluated.

You should receive your course **IDEA survey results** through campus or regular mail approximately 3-4 weeks after the close of the semester.

2. Grade Signature Assignment in TaskStream (if applicable)

It is important that the Signature Assignment be **graded in TaskStream** and a grade sent back to Moodle. This requires proper setup of the Taskstream assignment in Moodle and

ensures that the Signature Assignment rubric score value is representative (matches in value) of the grade for this assignment in the Moodle grade book [*for instructions consult the Moodle Faculty Guide*].

3. Submit Final Grades

Submit final grades directly from your Moodle course [no longer from CampusCruiser] [*for instructions consult the Moodle Faculty Guide*].

4. Provide Course Feedback

You have just finished teaching your course. Your program director and especially the course developers and instructional designers (if you taught a course with content from a 'Master Course') want to know what worked and what didn't. Share your feedback about how the course can be improved. Here are a few questions to consider:

- Were students able to easily navigate the course?
- Did students ask questions about where to find course information?
- Were there areas where students were confused about instructions?
- How did the gradebook work for you?
- Was the grading criteria clear to you as the instructor?
- Were the assignment points set up correctly?
- Did you find any missing or broken links in the course?
- Which resources did you and students find difficult to open?
- What additional suggestions do you have to improve the course design?

We encourage you to share your feedback with your program director and the Center for Online Learning so that needed changes to the 'Master Course' can be made prior to the next course transfer.