

# Flexibility in Flight

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# SPRING ARBOR UNIVERSITY

## Faculty Expectations for Online Teaching

George E. Griffin, Ed.D.

School of Graduate and Professional Studies

Assistant Professor

Director, External Business Programs - July 29, 2009

## Online Instruction

- Online Classroom Characteristics
  - In 2001 89% of four-year institutions offered some form of distance education (Tallent-Runnels, Thomas, Lan, Cooper, Ahern, Shaw, Liu, 2009).
  - Online delivery and instruction are here to stay.
  - What faculty "do" has not changed in over 30 years (Hitch and Hirsch, 2001).
  - Educators are more interested in educating each other than educating young people (Hitch and Hirsch).
  - The online course often mimics f to f (Hitch and Hirsch).

## Faculty Expectations

- "The most important factor for successful distance learning is a caring, concerned teacher who is confident, experienced, at ease with the equipment,....." (Hitch and Hirsch).
- The key to the efficacy of an online course is the way it is facilitated (Hitch and Hirsch).
- Web course development is time consuming (Eastmond, Nickel, Plessis, and Smith, 2000).
- A review of the literature did not find a common method of faculty training for online instruction (Mupinga and Maughan, 2008).

## Current Conditions

- Faculty Engagement Aspects
  - Online teaching requires more teaching time (Mupinga and Maughan, 2008).
  - Current class size average-32, suggested-9 (Mupinga and Maughan, 2008).
  - Greatest barrier for teachers getting involved with online teaching-lack of adequate training (Lee and Busch, 2005).
  - Teacher load online was twice as much as f to f (Visser, 2000).

## What do we do?

- Importance of *Effective Online Teaching*.
  - No significant difference in delivery methods (Donovant, 2009).
  - In Donovan's study, students felt that online delivery was appropriate for professional development.
  - A comparison study of online grades to f to f grades showed no significant differences (Tallent-Runnels et al.).
  - One study (Maki, Maki, Paterson, & Whitaker, 2000) showed that online instruction could be more effective than traditional instruction.

## Proposed Process for Faculty Online Training

- Peer-to-Peer training
  - Provide connection between instructor and teacher (Brown and Hammond, 2008).
  - Provide paid training in online course format (Mupinga and Maughan, 2008).
  - (Bower, 2001) stated that 40% of universities do not compensate faculty for taking online training.
  - Define course load for online teaching.
  - Model (Eastmond, Nickel, Plessis, & Smith, 2000)  
Awareness, Faculty support, Faculty skills, and Department effort.

## Proposed Process for Faculty Online Training (continued)

- Create Institutional or Departmental Guidelines for developing an online syllabus.
- Make distinction between online and f to f teaching methods.
  - The Discussion Board is where online learning is optimized.
  - Faculty interaction is important for student learning and satisfaction.
  - Faculty need support when designing online courses (Presby, 2001).

# SAU MAE online guidelines

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Guidelines for Developing and Teaching Courses in the MAE-O</b>                      School of Education Spring Arbor University</p>	
	<p><b>Course development and design expectations</b></p> <p>1. Before developing a new on-line course, the instructor will meet with the IT designers and the Director of SOE Graduate Programs to understand the development process and expectations.</p>
	<p>2. Next, the instructor will review the on-line shells for the previous course where possible to get a sense of the structure and logic of the on-line MAE format.</p>
	<p>3. During course design, objectives, assignments, and assessments will be clearly connected; a course analysis grid will be prepared and later shared in a monthly grad committee meeting. The graduate director will assist in beginning this grid during the first on-line content planning session. The instructor is expected to complete the grid as plans for the course are finalized.</p>
	<p>4. The syllabus will contain detailed descriptions of assignments, with clear instructions for content and format, as well as an explanation of how grades will be determined (rubric, checklist with points, etc.). Deadline will accompany each assignment description. These deadlines should be in the form of "Tuesday of Week 3" (for example).</p>
	<p>5. Connections between course material, information and the grad students' professional responsibilities will be clearly articulated; assignments help students apply their learning to their professional roles.</p>
	<p>6. Each week's instructions follow the format designed for the MAE-O; each course reflects common design features to add to feelings of continuity and student comfort; The IT course designer will assist with these elements.</p>
	<p>7. Descriptions and assessment guidelines for all assignments are clear and available to students from the beginning of the course. In other words, these must be complete and included in the Blackboard course prior to the first day of class.</p>
	<p>8. Prior to final course approval, the designer/instructor will walk through each week and element of the on-line course with the Director of Graduate Programs, where together we will check for <u>completeness, clarity, and coherence with other courses</u>. <u>This can be done in person or over the phone.</u></p>
	<p>9. Prior to the students starting a given week, the instructor should once again go through the various instructions and materials for that week very carefully to try to spot and fix any problems students may encounter before beginning that week with students.</p>
	<p>10. At the conclusion of an on-line course, the professor will submit a report containing his or her reflections on the course, recommendations for course revisions, the grade</p>

*Kathryn Bell, Ph.D. Director of Graduate Programs kbell@springarbor.edu  
 Spring Arbor University MAE-O  
 June 2008*

## Spring Arbor University MOD Online Faculty Code of Conduct

Experience has shown that teaching an online class requires different expectations than teaching in the face-to-face environment. As a result, MODO instructors need to adhere to a set of expectations that provide a rich learning environment for both the student and the instructor. The following guidelines are to be considered as **MINIMUM** expectations for the instructor and the student.

- Instructors:**
- Let us affirm from the outset that the Spirit of God which knows no boundaries of time or distance can keep us bound together into this unique and meaningful community of Christian discipleship and learning. (Retrieved from MSFL faculty).
  - One week before class starting, instructor will review course materials and fix errors and set up pertinent information.
  - Instructor will post all materials and assignments for upcoming week by Sunday night at 9pm.
  - Instructor will respond to questions within 48 hours during Monday-Saturday work week.
  - Instructor will give advance notice of my being out of town.
  - Instructor will make my presence known in discussion threads and monitor team discussions. Post comments at least three times per week. Students are very aware of an instructor's presence.
  - Send feedback within one week on assignments and post to the grade book weekly.
  - Address student concerns quickly. If a student "drops out of sight", phone the student to discuss problem. Inform SAU personnel of the problem.
  - Pray for the class. Upon request, pray for individuals.
  - At the conclusion of the class, send comments and suggestions for improvement to SAU personnel.
- Students:**
- Actively participate in classroom discussions as a member of a vibrant learning community.
  - Keep track of your grades and invest 15-20 hours per week of study time.
  - Please keep all emails pertinent to class subject matter and in an appropriate forum.
  - Please let us if you have to leave the forum for a few days.
  - Late work will be downgraded according to guidelines in the syllabus.
  - As an SAU student, you are responsible for knowing the SAU plagiarism policy.
- Please note that these are **MINIMUM** expectations and we hope that everyone exceeds these guidelines.  
 George E. Griffin, Ed.D. – Spring Arbor University – School of Graduate and Professional Studies  
 December 2008

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# Questions?

Thank you for taking the time to discuss this topic with me.  
May God Bless all of you.