

Department of Social Sciences

Mark Kavanaugh, Department Chair

Online Instructor Job Description

Online Instructor Job Description

Under the coordination of the Assistant Academic Dean and the Department Chair, the instructor is responsible for the success of students taking an online course under their supervision, according to program objectives and course syllabi. Each online instructor should be highly knowledgeable about the subject matter for the specific course that they are assigned to teach, and maintain expertise in the subject area. The instructor will support student success by all means that are necessary, appropriate, and available. The instructor will respond to student questions within one business day and provide feedback on assignments within two business days of receipt. The instructor will actively monitor and track individual student progress and provide mediation and direction as needed.

Specific Duties Include:

- Teaching material from approved curriculum in accordance with assigned course schedule.
- Motivating students to actively participate in all aspects of the educational process, including but not limited to threaded class discussions, outside assignments/projects, research, enrichment activities, etc.
- Maintaining online asynchronous communication with students (and synchronous if appropriate) in online discussions, to assist them in achieving completion objectives.
- Responding in a clear and well-expressed manner to student questions and KVCC and its partners, inquiries within one to two business days.
- Providing regular, accurate, and timely student-specific assistance, feedback and support to students relative to their performance.
- Keeping archives of student work and correspondence (if necessary), and maintaining and reporting student participation, evaluations/grades as appropriate.
- Communicating with students and KVCC staff by email and telephone as needed.
- Openly communicating with KVCC staff regarding course and student-related problems and concerns.
- Being knowledgeable about the job requirements by reading, and abiding by the online instructor's orientation manual.

Special Conditions of Employment:

- Teachers must provide their own hardware (PC or Mac Computer), software

(including email), and Internet service. KVCC is not responsible for the purchase, upgrade, or maintenance of online instructor's telephone, computer and Internet service.

Minimum Qualifications:

- Previous or current classroom teaching experience (or equivalent)
- Certification or a Masters or Terminal degree within the content area preferred
- Subject matter competency.
- Excellent written and communication skills.
- Command of theoretical knowledge of human behavior and learning including motivation, reinforcement, evaluation and feedback techniques.
- Ability to perform moderate computer functions. Proficient in using email, managing files, recording and reporting grades electronically, and using computer applications including word processors, spreadsheets, Internet browsers, and web search engines.
- Certification in on-line teaching, or previous experience in teaching online helpful, but not required.
- College teaching experience is helpful, but not required.

Qualifications and Characteristics of an Online Instructor

Online instructors, as traditional instructors, need to carry academic credentials suitable to teaching the content of their course. For many disciplines this entails a Masters degree or higher in the specific field of study.

Qualifications that would make for an excellent online instructor are a bit more nebulous. It would be ideal if the individual had personal prior experience in teaching and/or learning online. In addition, the individual could present specific credentials related to trainings and certificates related to course development, instructional design, and information technology.

According to the Illinois Online Network

(<http://www.ion.uillinois.edu/resources/tutorials/pedagogy/instructorProfile.asp>)

successful online facilitators should:

- Have a broad base of life experience in addition to academic credentials
- Possess the personality that characterizes openness, concern, flexibility, and sincerity
- Feel comfortable communicating in writing
- Be able to accept the value of facilitated learning as equal to the traditional model
- Recognize the value of introducing critical thinking into the learning process
- Possess the appropriate credentials to teach the subject matter
- Possess experience and training in online learning (and teaching)

According to Spector (2007) the base competencies that an online instructor should possess include the following:

- Professional Foundation
 - Effective communicator
 - Regularly updates professional knowledge and skills
 - Complies with established ethical and legal standards
 - Establishes and maintains professional credibility
- Planning and Preparation
 - Possesses the ability to plan and implement instructional methods and materials
 - Prepares adequately for instruction
- Instructional Methods and Strategies
 - Able to stimulate and sustain learner motivation and engagement
 - Demonstrates effective presentation skills
 - Demonstrates effective facilitation skills
 - Demonstrates effective questioning skills
 - Provides clarification and feedback
 - Promotes retention of knowledge and skills
 - Promotes transfer of knowledge and skills
- Assessment and Evaluation
 - Demonstrates the ability to assess learning and student performance
 - Demonstrates the ability to assess instructional effectiveness
- Management
 - Capability to manage an environment that fosters learning and performance
 - Manages the instructional process through the appropriate use of technology

References

Spector, J. M. (2007). Chapter 1: Competencies for online teachers. In J. M. Spector (Ed.), *Finding your online voice: Stories told by experienced online educators*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.