ONLINE COURSES

DESCRIPTION
An online course is composed entirely of instructional and course materials delivered online with no requirements for regular physical attendance. Synchronous and asynchronous communication tools play an important role in online courses. Tools such as Skype, D2L discussion boards, and email allow students to interact with each other from long distances. You may think only courses that are primarily reading and writing focused can be done online, but actually a variety of courses can be taught in this format. STEM, architecture, and even labs can be taught using virtual reality simulations, remote labs, or specialized software.

WHY
- Students don’t have to travel to campus for class.
- All course information is available at any time.
- Students complete assignments and readings at their own pace.
- Students can review lectures, course notes, and other materials on their own time.
- Facilitates the “Respect Diverse Learning Styles” principle by permitting auditory, visual, tactile content.
- Additionally, shy and second language students often fare better in online discussion forums than face-to-face discussions.

BEST PRACTICES TO CONSIDER
- Pre-record a video introduction.
- Provide an introductory discussion board for students to share their interests, personalities, hobbies, and other important information. Include an off-topic discussion board for informal discussion throughout the semester.
- Use videos and screen-capture software to teach and reinforce course content. This practice enriches a student’s learning experience.
- Use the Chat or Pager tools to instantly communicate with a student and help resolve immediate issues.
- Facilitate virtual groups where students help each other complete projects.

MORE INFORMATION
Evaluation of Evidence-Based Practices in Online Learning: A Meta-Analysis and Review of Online Learning Studies
- This link explains how the department of education underwent systematic and structural analysis of online learning. This was done in order to answer questions about the effectiveness of online learning compared to traditional learning, the effectiveness of supplementing traditional learning with online content, and which conditions and practices are associated with effective online learning.
Professors and Online Learning
• This article discusses the existence of fear and negative perceptions about online learning among faculty and attempts to provide reasons for these faculty members to rethink their reservations and consider teaching online courses.
• URL: http://www.insidehighered.com/views/2012/07/10/professors-shouldnt-be-afraid-online-learning-essay

An absolutely riveting online course: Nine principles for excellence in web-based teaching
• This link presents 9 principles for leading an excellent web-based course. For example, four of the principles are:
  ▪ The online world is a medium unto itself
  ▪ Sense of community and social presence are essential to online excellence
  ▪ In the online world, content is a verb
  ▪ Great online courses are defined by teaching, not technology
• URL: http://cjlt.csj.ualberta.ca/index.php/cjlt/article/view/179/177

Engineering Cultures Online vs In-Class
• This link compares the effectiveness of a course taught in both an online and traditional classroom setting. The same course titled Engineering Cultures was taught in a classroom at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and online at the Colorado School of Mines Online. The results revealed that the online students performed better than the students in the traditional classroom. Learn why here.
• URL: http://jolt.merlot.org/vol4no4/moskal_1208.htm

A Predictive Study of Student Satisfaction in Online Education Programs
• This link identifies how research analyzed how interaction and other variables affect student satisfaction in online learning settings.
• URL: http://www.irrodl.org/index.php/irrodl/article/view/1338

CONTACT US
DISTANCE LEARNING CENTER – KENNESAW
3203 CAMPUS LOOP ROAD, MD 5800
KENNESAW, GA 30144
470-578-7550
DISTANCELEARNING@KENNESAW.EDU

DISTANCE LEARNING CENTER – MARIETTA
LIBRARY ANNEX, ROOM C-133, MD 9021
MARIETTA, GA 30060
678-915-3200
DISTANCELEARNING@KENNESAW.EDU