

# Chapter 13. Preparing Graduate Students and Contingent Faculty for Online Writing Instruction: A Responsive and Strategic Approach to Designing Professional Development Opportunities

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**Abstract:** This chapter describes a responsive and strategic approach to the development of an asynchronous online mini-course in online writing instruction (OWI) for both graduate TAs and contingent faculty in the University of Louisville's Composition Program. Demonstrating the importance of responding to local contexts, the authors reflect on the conditions shaping their own course design and, based on their experience, provide suggestions for WPAs who are in similar positions. This reflection is organized around seven key questions for WPAs to consider as they design their own professional development in OWI.

**Keywords:** adjunct, contingent faculty, course design, graduate students, OWI, part-time faculty, professional development, teaching assistants, teacher training, writing program administration

Instructors are often assigned to teach online writing courses (OWC) with little to no preparation for teaching writing in an online environment (Borgman & McArdle, 2019; Bouelle, 2016; Cargile Cook, 2007; Grover et al., 2017). What's more, many writing programs prepare to increase OWC offerings without developing the necessary resources to make sure they are successful (Borgman, 2016). When our English Department moved to increase its OWC offerings, we (Claire, an assistant director of the Composition Program, and Andrea, the director of the Composition Program) wanted to avoid these pitfalls. We thus began developing online writing instruction (OWI) training for the composition instructors—both contingent faculty and graduate students—who would teach our OWCs.

Borgman and McArdle (2019) argue that designing professional development opportunities for online writing instructors is a necessary part of being a responsive administrator, and this includes evaluating what resources one's university already has and what resources the WPA will need to develop (pp. 63-

65). Moreover, they advise that WPAs be strategic in their development of these professional development resources in order to both replicate the quality of their face-to-face courses in an online environment and to support their instructors in adapting their teaching practices for OWCs (2019, pp. 81-82). In this chapter, we will describe how our own OWI professional development program at the University of Louisville was developed to be both responsive and strategic to our program's context and our instructors' needs.

Scholarship on OWI has provided a number of models for instructor preparation, including mentoring programs (Jaramillo-Santoy & Cano-Monreal, 2013), graduate seminars or graduate seminars with in-service mentoring and workshops (e.g., Bourelle, 2016; Cargile Cook, 2007; Grover et al., 2017), the requirement to teach "master courses" for those new to online teaching (Rodrigo & Ramirez, 2017), and communities of practice (Cohn et al., 2016; Melonçon, 2017; Melonçon & Arduser, 2013; Stewart et al., 2016). In the Composition Program at the University of Louisville, the constraints of our graduate curriculum prevented us from creating a new graduate course, but we also realized it was important to ensure that our part-time faculty could access the training, as we recognized that they should not be expected to devote significant time to developing online courses on their own (Babb, 2016). While Bourelle (2016) suggests the development of OWI workshops when graduate seminars are not a feasible option, we also felt it was necessary to offer more than a handful of isolated workshops, yet we had limited resources to support instructors to lead mentoring groups for new OWC instructors. Therefore, we decided to offer a six-week, non-credit-bearing mini-course which we officially piloted in the spring of 2020.

We offer this overview to explain how the choices we made in the development of the course were both strategic and responsive approaches to the OWI training given our institutional context and the needs of our instructors. In narrating our course design process, we hope to provide WPAs guidance for designing OWI professional development on their own campuses.

## Institutional Context

University of Louisville (UofL) is a public R1 university with around 22,000 students, of whom over 16,000 are undergraduates (University of Louisville, n.d.). It offers over 40 fully online programs—including 12 bachelor's degrees—and many more online courses within departments. Departments at UofL were incentivized to add distance education courses because they received 45% of the income from student tuition, which is more than they received for face-to-face classes.<sup>1</sup> The English Department, under which the Composition Program falls, offered its first online course over ten years ago and recently began expanding its selec-

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1. This budget model changed in Fall 2020: departments now receive equal amounts back from distance education and face-to-face courses.

tion beyond a few each semester. Over Fall 2019 and Spring 2020, English offered its highest number yet, at 31 online courses: 10 of the 188 first-year composition courses (5.3%), nine of the 23 upper-level composition courses (39%), and 11 of the 93 literature, creative writing, and linguistics courses (11.8%). These courses were taught by instructors of all ranks: four Ph.D. students, seven non-tenure-track faculty, and seven tenured or tenure-track faculty.

Composition courses are taught by approximately 28 non-tenure-track instructors (most of whom are part-time instructors who may teach up to four classes per semester), approximately 23 M.A. and Ph.D. students, and a handful of tenured and tenure-track faculty. Our first-year composition courses (English 101, 102, and 105) have specific learning outcomes, but instructors do not have to follow set curricula (with the exception of M.A. and Ph.D. students in their first year of teaching here, who follow a common syllabus). In general, instructors have a great deal of flexibility in what and how they teach as long as they adhere to those learning outcomes.

Prior to our development of the OWI mini-course that we will describe, composition instructors who wished to teach online were required to complete a short course in online teaching offered by our university's Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL). This course was primarily focused on acquainting instructors from across campus with the learning management software, a common approach of much training for teaching online (Borgman, 2017; Cargile Cook, 2005), and thus provided no instruction in the specifics of teaching *writing* online (Hewett & Ehmann, 2004). Since our department sought to increase the number of OWCs offered, as WPAs we knew we needed a different strategy to prepare our instructors for OWI.

## Guiding Questions for Professional Development Design

Because the specific details of our course were responsive to the needs of our instructors and our institutional context, in addition to providing an outline of our OWI course, we have identified the following questions that WPAs should consider as they design responsive and strategic professional development opportunities on their own campuses.

### What Should the Curriculum Cover?

The majority of our conversations centered around what we wanted our participants to know about OWI and be able to do in their OWCs. While we envisioned this course as replacing the CTL's option for instructors in the Composition Program, our responsive and strategic design included recognizing the value of the resources already available (Borgman & McArdle, 2019). Claire thus met with a representative from the CTL and the WPA who preceded Andrea to make decisions about what content from the CTL course on online pedagogy to borrow

(something that the CTL rep was encouraging). While Claire had felt like the course was mostly just an overview of how to use Blackboard (our LMS) and provided her few resources to think about the specifics of OWI, we recognized that instructors can benefit from instruction in the specific technology they will be teaching with (Hewett & Ehmann, 2004) and that some of that material would still be necessary. We therefore borrowed several modules from our CTL which focused on how to use the LMS or use other technologies, such as VoiceThread, and integrate them into the LMS. Borrowing some of this content saved us additional labor and prevented us from reinventing material we already had access to.

Having decided the length of our course would be six weeks, we sketched the following outline for the course (see Appendix for each week's plan of work and corresponding reading assignments):

Week	Topic	Writing assignments
1	Online Teaching Best Practices	Discussion board posts reflecting on teaching philosophy and teacherly ethos
2	Blackboard Basics	Welcome video; prompt for a major assignment that integrates a digital tool (excluding discussion boards)
3	Developing and Scaffolding Writing Assignments	Mini-unit to provide scaffolding for the major assignment prompt from Week 2
4	Online Discussions	Discussion board guidelines and a discussion prompt
5	Response to Writing	Peer review of syllabus draft; collaborative wiki with peers about benefits and drawbacks of your peer review modality
6	Accessibility in Online Writing Courses	Discussion board post about how the mini-course could be more accessible; exercise to make a Word document accessible; revised syllabus; VoiceThread walkthrough of how you adapted it for the online context; end-of-course survey

We saw a clear order to the content of weeks one through five. We knew we needed to cover accessibility, as it is the overarching principle of OWI (CCCC OWI Committee, 2013) and a necessary piece of OWI training (Breuch, 2015), hence its focus in Week 6. Weeks 1–5 were meant to work through the necessary information instructors needed to design an OWC in order before we addressed this concern. After participants engaged with some theories about OWI and learned the specifics of our LMS in Weeks 1 and 2, Weeks 3 and 4 gave them practice participating in and facilitating online discussions, as well as developing writing assignments specifically for online students, which are skills that are not intuitive and require practice (Bourelle, 2016; Breuch, 2015; Warnock, 2009).

We realized after the pilot, through feedback from the participants, that they wished issues of accessibility had come first, so the accessible principles we dis-

cussed could inform their assignment design. As we read this feedback, we recognized the importance of this suggestion, as beginning with accessibility would allow it to be the foundation of the work participants do in designing their course, while saving it for the end made it appear as something extra or optional (see also Coombs, 2010; Oswal, 2015). We advise WPAs to not follow our mistake and either begin with accessibility or weave it into the content throughout.

Because many instructors are skeptical of, or even resistant to, online courses, a key element to the design of our course was working with instructors to recognize their core values as writing teachers and consider how those values could work within, or even be enhanced by, an OWC, as suggested by Breuch's (2015) training exercise on migration (pp. 356-357), which we adapted for Week 1 of the course (see also Warnock, 2009). Not only was this approach necessary for highlighting that OWI does not require "starting from scratch" (Breuch, 2015, p. 353), but it was also responsive to our institutional context in which instructors have a large amount of freedom within the classroom. That is, as mentioned above, instructors are not following a unified curriculum, but are encouraged to develop their own approaches to meeting our student learning outcomes.

It was also important to us that participants have tangible take-aways from the course; thus, assignments typically asked instructors to create their own assignment prompts or discussion board guidelines. The final assignment included a syllabus for an online course with an audio walk-through using VoiceThread ([voicethread.com](http://voicethread.com)) of how their decisions were informed by the theories and principles of OWI we had been discussing (Grover et al., 2017). We felt the audio walk-through was a better option than a traditional written rationale so participants could experience using sound to connect with their audience (Breuch, 2015). We also adapted Breuch's (2015) training exercise on modalities and media (pp. 375-376) for Week 5. In this exercise, participants engaged in a peer review of one another's syllabi using a variety of modes and media. While participants' time constrained the possibilities of the assignment and we could only ask each pair to engage in one type of peer review—ideally, we would have asked each pair to experiment with multiple modes and media—they then engaged in subsequent collaborative writing about the benefits and constraints of each. This allowed them to reflect on uses of different modes and media for peer review, which, Breuch (2015) argues, is more important than the peer review activity itself.

### Who Is the Intended Audience?

While this mini-course did develop out of conversations about the need to add OWI preparation to our graduate curriculum (Bourelle, 2016), we also wanted to be responsive to the needs of our part-time faculty (Babb, 2016), as mentioned above. As we will describe below, these different audiences significantly influenced the format of the course. However, the mini-course still primarily appealed to graduate students. Of the 13 people who enrolled in the course in spring 2020, six were Ph.D.

students, three were M.A. students, and four were part-time faculty. Two of these part-time faculty members decided within the first couple of weeks they were too busy to complete the course at this time, and another expressed that the amount of reading required was difficult for her to keep up with. This breakdown suggests to us that we still designed the course with graduate student needs in mind and that inclusion of part-time faculty requires a deeper consideration of the amount of content to include, not just the format of the professional development.

### Who Should Design It?

Ideally, the person responsible for designing the professional development would be an expert in OWI (Borgman, 2017). When Claire, an Assistant Director of Composition (ADC), was assigned the task of developing this course, she had had no online teaching experience, but she had recently taken our CTL's online pedagogy course as she planned to teach online in Fall 2019, the semester before she would facilitate the mini-course. Andrea was not yet WPA but had recently taught online for the first time and provided Claire with resources on OWI.

We recognize that having an ADC support the WPA in the design of this course is a benefit of our program structure, as many WPAs do not have an assistant or associate director to collaborate with. However, even if WPAs have no other choice but to design the course themselves, we suggest they consider instructors they know who have online pedagogy experience and ways they can consult with (and compensate) these people.

Perhaps the biggest sacrifice we made in our attempts to be responsive to the time constraints of our instructors was the small amount of interaction they had within the course. While they were asked to respond to each other's work a few times throughout the six weeks, they did not engage in the regular discussions we would expect in an online FYW course. Because students may struggle with the high literacy load of online courses (Griffin & Minter, 2013; Warnock, 2009)—which Cargile Cook (2007) noted the instructors in her OWI training also felt—it may have been beneficial for participants to experience this. In reviewing the participants' discussion board guidelines, which was one of the homework assignments, Claire became concerned that many participants had developed discussion board requirements asking for much longer posts than she would ask of FYW students, and she wonders how that might have changed if participants in the mini-course had experienced the high literacy load of weekly discussions.

### Who Should Facilitate It? What Should Facilitation Look Like?

While we originally envisioned our course being facilitated or co-facilitated by Andrea, the WPA, we eventually decided Claire, the ADC, should facilitate the course, both so she could benefit from her work developing the course and receive the teaching experience, but also so Andrea could devote more time to other demands

as the new WPA. Because the ADC roles are meant to provide graduate students with professional development and administrative experience, we decided that each spring the course would be offered by an ADC, who has already taken the course and taught online at least once, as part of their job duties (which they receive a course release for). Again, we recognize the ability to have this course facilitated by a graduate student is a benefit not all WPAs will have. We also recognize, however, that WPAs, among their many competing concerns, may not be the people on their campus with the most knowledge about OWI. WPAs might consider advocating for faculty with significant OWI experience to lead the course, thus drawing on the strengths of mentorship models (Jaramillo-Santoy & Cano-Monreal, 2013).

While it definitely increases the labor of the facilitator, running the course involves a lot more than just posting content and commenting on written assignments, but also having a social presence in an OWC in order to make the course feel like a community (Borgman & McArdle, 2019; Breuch, 2015; Warnock, 2009). In many ways, having Claire facilitate the course helped significantly, as she knew the majority of the participants well and often engaged in informal discussions about pedagogy with them in their shared office. Borgman and McArdle (2019) encourage instructors to create a responsive strategy for how and when they'll respond to the students in their courses; for Claire, this involved responding to the weekly work participants had done (e.g., discussion board prompts, blog posts) each Friday and sending out a weekly announcement on Friday as well. Major assignments were typically due Sunday nights, and Claire would devote Mondays to reading and responding to them before attending to other tasks in order to provide participants with written feedback quickly.

Claire's prompt responses and dedicated times set aside for the course created a consistent social presence in the course (Breuch, 2015), and, while we recognize the increasing demands on the time of WPAs, we believe such reliable presence is necessary. This may require instituting a limit on how many instructors can take the course at any given time. We did not create a course cap for our pilot, but when 13 instructors enrolled—making the course almost as large as one of our online FYW courses, which are capped at 15—Claire was concerned about how much time facilitation would take. We therefore recommend an enrollment cap be added in the future.

### How Long Should It Last? When Should It Be Offered?

While seemingly a simple question, we feel this is an important consideration when designing professional development that is not a graduate seminar. The professional development needs to balance providing a necessary amount of content for instructors to be prepared for OWI while also not overwhelming their already busy schedules.

Our CTL's online pedagogy course lasts eight weeks, but we decided early on that our course should last six weeks based on an estimate about the appropriate

length of a one-credit course, which we initially considered as a model (see below). We planned to offer it in the middle of the spring semester so participants did not have to begin the work until after they had settled into the rhythm of the semester but would be finished before the busy-ness of the end of the semester. The timing of the spring semester was also important, as it allowed first-year TAs to take the course after their required writing pedagogy course in the fall. Some participants expressed that they would have preferred to take the course in the summer, when they would have more fluid schedules, but we questioned if it was ethical to ask contingent faculty to participate in work over the summer, when most are not teaching (especially if this is the only OWI training we provide), and, at the moment, summer course releases for ADCs are on hold.

While the six-week time-frame seemed to be appropriate for us, we suggest WPAs consider the following: Where might this fit into the existing curriculum (e.g., after the required pedagogy course? At the same time?); How much content can you ask them to engage with in a given week? How much time is necessary for them to experience the online environment (Cargile Cook, 2007)? What competing demands will they be responsible for during the time(s) it is offered?

### What Could Incentivize Instructors to Take It?

The primary way we encouraged participation in the course was telling instructors it was a requirement if they desired to teach online but had not yet taken the CTL's course or lacked OWI experience.<sup>2</sup> This requirement was easy for us to make, as we had formerly required either the CTL course or OWI experience for instructors who wished to teach online; however, WPAs in programs that do not have such a requirement may face more pushback for instituting such a requirement. We did, however, advertise the course to all composition instructors as useful professional development focused on teaching writing online, as opposed to the more general online pedagogy course our CTL offered. Presumably as a result of this advertising, some instructors who were not expecting to teach online for us in the future (e.g., second-year M.A. students who were graduating) signed up for the course.

Because of our inability to develop a full graduate seminar—our M.A. and Ph.D. program curricula do not have room for another annual pedagogy seminar—we first began envisioning this course as a one-credit course for graduate students because we wanted to ensure they would receive formal recognition for taking the course. However, at the time, our university's budget model prevented graduate students from receiving tuition remission for online courses, and we knew it was necessary to offer the course online to simulate the experiences of a student in an online course (Cargile Cook, 2007). Moreover, we knew even a one-credit course would be inaccessible to the part-time faculty we were trying to be responsive to: they would have to pay for it or, if they qualified for tuition

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2. We waived this requirement during the COVID-19 pandemic.

remission, would have to go through an arduous bureaucratic process. We settled on a no-credit course that offered participants a certificate in OWI for completion of the course so their professional development could still be formally recognized and something they could include on a CV (Borgman & McArdle, 2019). In the future, we would like to offer each person a detailed congratulatory letter that they can include in their teaching portfolios (Paull & Snart, 2016). While these may not be the only options to provide formal recognition, we do suggest WPAs provide some such formal acknowledgement of the professional development to further incentivize instructors to take the course.

### Should It Be Synchronous, Asynchronous, or Hybrid?

Our discussions of the mode for the course primarily focused on the time constraints of our instructors, and we settled on an asynchronous model because Claire, as a graduate student herself, was worried about the extra demands a synchronous course would place on our already overworked graduate students and contingent faculty. While this rationale was certainly responsive to the constraints on our instructors, we believe a more strategic decision-making process would have started with considering the OWI experiences we wanted our instructors to experience and why. That is, we realize that an asynchronous course was the best decision for our instructors because at the time all OWCs were offered in an asynchronous mode and we wanted instructors to experience what their students would experience (Cargile Cook, 2007). Therefore, we recommend that WPAs structure such professional development opportunities to mimic the types of OWCs they currently offer, which might involve moving between different modes so participants can experience the range of OWC experiences on campus, something we are considering if the synchronous and hybrid courses our department added for Fall 2020 in response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic remain after the pandemic ends and university life resumes normal operation.

## COVID-19 and the Future of Our OWI Professional Development

Before the pandemic began, we had planned to revise and facilitate the mini-course annually. We saw a continued audience for the course because each year always brings at least 10 new M.A. students and a few new Ph.D. students who will be teaching our composition courses for the first time. In addition, although our part-time faculty are a relatively stable group and we do not do much hiring, not all of them participated in the pilot nor had online teaching experience. However, our program's collective OWI experience—like that of all educators around the world—has skyrocketed in a very short time since March 2020.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit and our university moved to “remote”

instruction, Claire created a copy of the mini-course's Blackboard shell without the instructors' work (e.g., discussion board posts) so that other English faculty and composition instructors could poke around the modules at their own pace (Andrea has also given some colleagues in other departments access to these modules, which fill a need because our CTL's programming has not focused on writing in online courses.) Offering not just a facilitated asynchronous course but also, when the pandemic hit, access to the asynchronous modules (sans certificate) has thus allowed us to be more responsive to instructors' needs for immediate help. Claire and some other instructors with OWI experience also offered to work one-on-one with instructors as they moved their courses online. Over the summer, even more instructors asked for access to the modules, which they could then consult as needed as they prepared for their online courses in Fall 2020.

As we write this in August 2020, Andrea and the new ADCs are incorporating the mini-course into our new GTA orientation, which we have expanded to two weeks in order to make room for OWI preparation. We have selected readings and activities from the units on online teaching best practices, accessibility, Blackboard Basics, and online discussions and have made the rest of the weeks' content available as reference material. In addition, during our program-wide orientation before classes start, we will poll our instructors to find out what kind of OWI professional development they would like in the 2020–2021 academic year to further develop their practice. We envision several different possibilities, including a mini-course 2.0 in spring 2021 that assumes previous experience with online teaching, synchronous teaching circles, and peer-to-peer OWC observations. While COVID-19 and our university's changing plans have made it difficult to pinpoint exactly what form our OWI mini-course will take, they have underscored the importance of being strategic in our design as we work to develop resources that are responsive to the specific needs of our instructors.

## Final Thoughts and Application

Because our chapter has centered on the need to design professional development opportunities that are responsive to specific institutional contexts, we resist offering prescriptive suggestions to WPAs as we close this chapter. However, we do encourage WPAs to consider the guiding questions we have used to frame our reflection on the development of our OWI mini-course. In summary, these questions are:

- What should the curriculum cover?
- Who is the intended audience?
- Who should design it?
- Who should facilitate it? What should facilitation look like?
- How long should it last? When should it be offered?
- What could incentivize instructors to take it?
- Should it be synchronous, asynchronous, or hybrid?

By starting with these questions and strategically drawing on the resources at their disposal, WPAs can be responsive to the unique needs of their instructors and students.

Lastly, as the “A” in PARS stands for “accessible,” we also stress the importance of ensuring OWI professional development begins with attention to accessibility and weaves issues of accessibility throughout the curriculum. Such an approach avoids our mistake of seemingly tacking this vital consideration onto the end of the course and recognizes that accessibility is the overarching principle of OWI (CCCC OWI Committee, 2013).

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## Appendix: Mini-Course Weekly Curriculum

Below are weekly plans (inspired by Warnock, 2009) for the mini-course. As mentioned above, the following topics were covered:

- Week 1: Online Teaching Best Practices
- Week 2: Blackboard Basics
- Week 3: Developing and Scaffolding Writing Assignments
- Week 4: Online Discussions
- Week 5: Response to Writing
- Week 6: Accessibility in Online Writing Courses

### Week 1: February 10 to February 16, 2020

Welcome to the UofL Composition Program's modules for Online Writing Instruction! This first week we will be thinking about best practices in online writ-

ing instruction and developing your teacher persona in an online class. It’s a little bit of a heavy week, as we are frontloading a fair amount of material here, but you should have a bit of a break next week!

One thing you’ll be reviewing this week, included in the list of readings, is the Quality Matters standards for Online Education. While we won’t be explicitly working with these standards much in the course, Quality matters is a nationally-recognized organization whose goal is to ensure the quality of online courses, so it’s important for you to be aware of their standards as well as the CCCC principles for teaching writing online.

While it’s not in the plan below, please keep in mind your final assignment for this course will be to create a syllabus for an online course and, using VoiceThread, walk us all through your syllabus. Be thinking about this assignment as we progress through the course!

<b>What do I do?</b>	<b>What are the specific instructions? Where do I find the work or the assignment?</b>	<b>When is it due? (Eastern Standard Time)</b>
<b>Watch</b>	Watch the example welcome videos from instructors, found below, and pay attention to the differences in their approach and the way they develop their persona	You’ll want to watch these videos by Thursday morning so you can get started on the discussion board requirements.
<b>Write</b>	Before you get started working through the readings, respond to both of this week’s discussion board prompts*** These prompts can be found on the discussion board.	Please make these posts by Thursday night.
<b>Read</b>	Read the following texts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CCCC Position statement on OWI</li> <li>• The Quality Matters Standards for online courses</li> <li>• Warnock, Scott. “Teaching the OWI Course.” Foundational Practices of Online Writing Instruction. Eds. Beth L. Hewett, and Kevin Eric DePew. Fort Collins, Colorado; Anderson, South Carolina: The WAC Clearinghouse; Parlor Press, 2015. 151-81</li> <li>• Warnock Chapter 5, “The Writing Course Syllabus: What’s Different in Online Instruction”</li> </ul>	You’ll want to have read by Sunday morning so you can complete the next discussion board activity.
<b>Write</b>	Drawing on the readings above, reply to your earlier discussion post about your teaching philosophy. Once again, the prompt can be found on the discussion board.	Post your responses to yourself by Sunday night

\*\*\* The first prompt asked participants to reflect on their process creating welcome videos. The second, in which we adapted Breuch’s (2015) activity described above, asked the following:

*Before completing this week’s readings, write a brief 200-word statement in which you articulate guiding principles that are critical to your writing pedagogy in onsite, face-to-face classrooms.*

*Examples might include such principles as “student-centered writing pedagogy is critical to the success of a writing class” or “writing process is foregrounded in every assignment.”*

*Instead of replying to this post, please create a new thread in this forum for your post.*

*After you have completed this week’s readings, please write another 200-word statement articulating how teaching writing online can enhance or mesh with your principles. For example, in terms of student-centered writing pedagogy, you might consider ways online technologies could help foster the goal, such as “students can easily share their writing with one another through electronic means on discussion boards or shared websites.” Please refer to the readings as you articulate these beliefs. We will be returning to these posts later in the course.*

## Week 2: February 17 to February 23, 2020

Congratulations on making it through the first week! For this second week, we’ll be thinking about the different ways you can use tools in Blackboard for your online course. I know when I taught face-to-face classes, I only used Blackboard minimally, but since it’s where almost all of the interactions in your online courses will happen, it’s important to be familiar with what it can do beyond the basics you might have already used. As mentioned last week, I think this will be a lighter week, as you won’t have any heavy readings—just a few modules to work through and a couple assignments to practice using some of those tools.

<b>What do I do?</b>	<b>What are the specific instructions? Where do I find the work or the assignment?</b>	<b>When is it due? (Eastern Standard Time)</b>
<b>Complete Modules</b>	Complete the modules from Delphi U found below, each addressing a different part of how to use Blackboard in an online course.	No deadline on these modules this week, but you’ll want to finish them before the assignments below.
<b>Create Video</b>	Create a video introducing yourself as a student in this online course. This might be a good opportunity for you to practice using the One Button Studio in the DMS to make a video, or using any other video-making tools you might use in your own online courses. Either upload the video into the Panopto folder or post a link in the thread in the Discussion Board. Be thinking about the persona you said you wanted to portray last week.	Please upload your videos by Sunday night.
<b>Write Assignment</b>	Write a prompt for a major assignment for an online writing course that makes use of one of the tools covered in this module (excluding Discussion Boards). The integration of your digital tool should be clear and purposeful. You’ll be asked to develop some smaller assignments that scaffold to this assignment next week, so don’t worry too much about the scaffolding right now.	Upload your assignment prompt using the assignment tab by Sunday night.

### Week 3: February 24 to March 1, 2020

Week 3 is all about developing effective assignments for online writing courses! You'll start with the assignment you developed this past week and think about how you can scaffold it for students, as this will often look different than it would in an in-person class.

What do I do?	What are the specific instructions? Where do I find the work or the assignment?	When is it due? (Eastern Standard Time)
<b>Read</b>	Read the following texts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harris, Melonçon, Hewett, Mechenbier, and Martinez, "A Call for Purposeful Pedagogy-driven Course Design in OWI"</li> <li>• Warnock, Chapter 9 "Assignments: Online, Student Texts Drive Them"</li> <li>• Warnock, Chapter 10 "Peer Review"</li> <li>• Hewett, Chapter 14 Writing Readable OWI Assignments</li> </ul>	You'll want to have read by Friday morning so you can complete the blog activity.
<b>Watch</b>	Watch the video from Delphi U and the UofL libraries on how the library can provide research assistance for your online courses.	You'll want to have watched this video by Friday morning so you can complete the blog activity.
<b>Write Blog Post</b>	Drawing on the qualities of effective online assignments outlined in the readings above, develop a small unit (3–5 assignments) to provide scaffolding for the major assignment you developed in Week 2. You may also want to revise the assignment prompt from Week 2 in light of the readings above.	Post your mini-units by Friday night.
<b>Provide Feedback</b>	Provide one of your colleagues with brief feedback on their unit, focusing on its appropriateness and effectiveness for an online writing course.	Post this feedback by Sunday night.

### Week 4: March 2 to March 15, 2020 (includes Spring Break)

Now that we've developed some assignments, we'll start thinking about discussions. This is, I think, one of the most difficult, but also most rewarding, parts of online courses. We have a few different readings to think about how to use discussions well and the benefits of online discussions, and I've posted the discussion guidelines I currently use in 101. Your main goal this week is to think about how you will utilize discussions in your online courses.

<b>What do I do?</b>	<b>What are the specific instructions? Where do I find the work or the assignment?</b>	<b>When is it due? (Eastern Standard Time)</b>
<b>Read</b>	Read the following texts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seward, “Conversation Starters: Orchestrating Asynchronous Discussion to Build Academic Community among First-Year Writers”</li> <li>• Boyd, “Analyzing Students’ Perceptions of Their Learning in Online and Hybrid First-Year Composition Courses”</li> <li>• Salisbury, “Enriching Online Discussions with VoiceThread”</li> <li>• Claire’s Discussion Board guidelines (borrowed heavily from Scott Warnock)</li> </ul>	You’ll want to have read by Friday morning so you can complete the discussion board activity.
<b>Read and Write</b>	Develop discussion guidelines for your own online writing class and at least one discussion prompt (if you included a discussion prompt in your scaffolding plans last week, you can use and refine that one) and post those to the discussion board. Respond to your colleague’s posts. A more detailed prompt can be found on the discussion board.	You should post your discussion guidelines/ prompt by Friday night. Post your response to your peers by Sunday night.
<b>Write</b>	Don’t forget your final assignment in this course will be to walk us through a syllabus for an online course! If you have time this week, you might want to do some work on this syllabus.	End of the course, this is just a reminder :)

### Week 5: March 16 to March 23, 2020

This week’s focus is on feedback! You have a couple of readings that, you may notice, don’t always agree on the best practices for feedback in online classes, so you’ll always engage in some practice with feedback yourselves. This week will end with a collaborative writing activity reflecting on the feedback process.

<b>What do I do?</b>	<b>What are the specific instructions? Where do I find the work or the assignment?</b>	<b>When is it due? (Eastern Standard Time)</b>
<b>Read</b>	Read the following texts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cox, “Promoting Teacher Presence: Strategies for Effective and Efficient Feedback to Student Writing Online.”</li> <li>• Hewett, “Providing Readable Instructional Feedback Online”</li> <li>• Alvarez et al., “The Value of Feedback in Improving Collaborative Writing Assignments in An Online Learning Environment”</li> <li>• The intro to this WPA CompPile Research Bibliography on Audio Response</li> </ul>	You’ll want to have read by Friday morning so you can complete the peer review activity

What do I do?	What are the specific instructions? Where do I find the work or the assignment?	When is it due? (Eastern Standard Time)
<b>Read and Write</b>	In assigned pairs, engage in online peer review using a draft (however complete) of your syllabus for an online course. Each pair will engage in peer review and be assigned one of the following modalities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audio-only peer review</li> <li>• Video-conference peer review</li> <li>• Screencast video peer review</li> </ul> Specific instructions will be sent to each pair.	Complete the peer review activity by Friday night.
<b>Write Collaboratively</b>	When you have finished the peer review activity above, work with our entire class to create a wiki reflecting on the affordances and constraints of each feedback modality. A more detailed prompt can be found on the wiki.	The wiki should be completed by Sunday night.
<b>Complete Modules</b>	When you have time during the week, you may want to complete the module on the virtual writing center below.	No specific deadline for these modules.

### Week 6: March 23 to March 29, 2020

Congratulations on making it to the final week! We're focused on accessibility this week, and despite the fact that we're getting to accessibility last, you should keep in mind that, as you learned in week 1, CCCC's first grounding principle for OWI is inclusivity and accessibility. With that spirit in mind, I'm hoping you can help us think through how to make this course more accessible.

What do I do?	What are the specific instructions? Where do I find the work or the assignment?	When is it due? (Eastern Standard Time)
<b>Read</b>	Read the following texts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oswal, "Physical and Learning Disabilities in OWI"</li> <li>• Miller-Cochran, "Multilingual Writers and OWI"</li> <li>• Gos, "Nontraditional Student Access to OWI"</li> </ul>	You'll want to have read by Friday morning so you can complete the discussion board activity.
<b>Complete Modules</b>	Complete the modules from Delphi U on accessibility	You'll want to complete these modules by Friday morning so you can complete the discussion board activity.

<b>Write</b>	Please post a response to the discussion board question for this week. While responses to your colleagues are not required, feel free to respond to them as well!	Post your discussion board question by Friday night.
<b>Complete Assignment</b>	Complete the accessibility assignment, in which you reformat a Word Document to meet accessibility guidelines (found below) and upload in the Assignments tab.	This assignment should be uploaded by Sunday night.
<b>Final Assignment</b>	Using VoiceThread (a link is posted below), upload a walk-through of your syllabus for an online course, explaining how this syllabus has been adapted for the online context.	This assignment should be uploaded by Sunday night.