

POLICY AND GUIDE TO ONLINE TEACHING

Program in Professional Writing

Last Updated: August 2020

To be eligible to teach online classes, an instructor should have completed at least 1 year (2 semesters) teaching in the program. However, extenuating circumstances and department need may result in program leaders forgoing this requirement. When teaching online, the program will help provide resources, but instructors should expect to create their own syllabus and policies. While the level of synchronous vs. asynchronous teaching is largely up to the individual instructor, online synchronous class time should be used to at least check in with students and answer questions.

When MCG course design is required

As of May 2020, the [B-W Foundations](#) course design or “trace” is the default course design for online BTW 250 courses. The first time an instructor teaches an online course, they should teach from the B-W course design, or “trace.”

If an instructor’s first course in the program is online, such as in the case of extenuating circumstances or department need, they must teach from the B-W trace.

Exceptions can be made in response to extenuating circumstances for instructors who meet the DIY eligibility criteria listed below.

Teaching a DIY course design

To be eligible to design their own DIY course design for an online BTW course, the instructor would need to meet the following criteria for eligibility:

1. Can be either graduate student or SF
2. Taught in the program for at least 2 years (4 semesters)
3. In the case of BTW250, taught either the MCG or B-W Foundations course designs at least once.

To maintain a consistent level of quality instruction, DIY course designs should meet the following guidance:

1. Instructors who have not *designed* a course for online teaching before should 'take' the entire [Illinois Online Course-in-a-Box](#).
2. All DIY instructors should complete both the [legal](#) and [accessibility](#) modules of the Course-in-a-Box training.

3. When considering an instructor for a DIY course design, the program will look at how well the course meets the CITL [Full Course Compliance](#) checklist for online courses.
4. Include at least 3 points of contact per week with your students and their work. A point of contact can include a range of options such as: live Zoom meetings, video instruction, formative assessment and feedback, one-on-one meetings, journal entries, discussion forums, or other minor, asynchronous activities.
5. Incorporate BTW [core content](#). In the case of BTW 250, that includes at least components of presentation, communication, collaborative writing, and longer form documents such as reports or proposals.
6. Meet [advanced composition requirements](#).

To pursue a DIY online course design, please notify Kay Emmert at akemmert@illinois.edu of your intention so the program can coordinate with you on meeting the above guidance.