

Children's Alliance Online Course Hosting Preparing Your Course for Posting

Introduction

Children's Alliance offers all key components of presenting an online course, from the administrative first steps through student interaction, course completion and e mailing of certificates. Students complete their own registration "paperwork" online, which includes creating their login name and password for the online course. Although CA courses are free to students, a payment module can be included in a custom hosting package for your organization.

Our hosting program is designed so that you don't have to become a web programming expert. We provide the formatting and technical components. All you need to provide is the content.

This worksheet covers the items you should consider for your online course materials. For reading-oriented courses, any commonly used document preparation format may be used, but a text editor, including Microsoft Word, is preferred. If you have graphic course materials, you may also use PowerPoint. Other media, including video, can be utilized.

Worksheet and Checklist Basic Course Information

Course Title _____

Course Abbreviation _____ [2 -3 characters plus numbers, 101, 201, etc]
[Unifies course components, allowing for series within the same topic.]

Number of Unit/CEU's _____ Through: _____

Instructor(s): _____

Start date: _____/_____/_____ End date: _____/_____/_____

Face-to-Face meeting date(s), if any: _____/_____/_____

Course short description, for the course catalog:

Complete description, so potential students can learn the whole scope of the class, posted on the introductory web page:

Course Component Checklist

Content and Assignments

Navigation Materials

- Syllabus – Outline of the course, with numbered Sessions and assignments. (S1, etc.)
- Agenda – Expanded outline, adding details of assignments.

Work areas

- Online Assignments , Tests and Quizzes (O1, etc)– Any assignment where submissions are made that will be scored and tracked for completion.
- Forum Assignments (F1) – Discussion area, where specific topics are discussed among students with instructor feedback.
- Readings (R1) – Written materials set up as separate web pages.
- Videos (V1)– Brief introduction to video, plus links to any worksheet needed.
- Handouts(H1)– Any helpful charts, tables, articles, supplementary readings.

Class Information

- Description – Outlines the whole scope of the class, so students will be prepared for what will be covered.
- Calendar – Days when each session should be completed, deadlines for key assignments. TIP: Organize due dates so they fall on the same days each week, preferably no more than 3 days. This allows for a more readable printed calendar.
- Checklist – A concise list of assignments to be submitted. Students can check them off when completed.

Library – Easy access to lists of printable materials

- Reading List – All readings for the course, in printable list for review.
- Video List – Any videos and worksheets included. Single list for easy access.
- Handout List – List of supplementary printed materials, including charts, tables, articles.

Notes on online assignments and completion certificates: We are enhancing the test / grade book area. The next version will allow the instructor to list all assignments, whether online or offline, and check off when assignments have been satisfactorily completed. Instructors will also be able to control when certificates of completion are awarded.

Forums: Instructors have hands-on control of this area. A practice forum is available to post potential discussion questions and experiment with responses. Contact us if you have a course you would like to set up in test mode.

Other Materials

[] Instructor bio and photo – The bio should be composed of a short, one or two paragraph biography, including background related to the course, and any personal information you wish to share that might help prepare the way for the subject matter. A small photo will help personalize the course and give the students a feeling of knowing who is facilitating their learning process.

[] Instructor welcome video – A brief, minute long video introducing the course can do wonders. In addition, it has the practical benefit of giving the students a quick opportunity to confirm that their technology will handle any other videos to come. We can schedule a session to film your video if you wish.

[] Colors – A frame is placed around each web page. You may think it is to distinguish it from other courses, or to simply be “decorative”, but it has a practical goal, of organizing pages for easy on-screen reading. You may request a particular color preference, or we will use a default set from our library. In addition to the online view of readings, we provide a printable view, formatted for letter sized paper.

[] Print version of all course written materials – When your course is stable, not likely to change from session to session, consider creating a printable version of all written content in a single document. It does take a few hours to compile, so weigh the value of offering this feature to your students.

[] Video preparation, conversion services - Our elearning hosts, Primordial Muse Inc., offers many technical services to make it easier for instructors to do the important job of mentoring students. If you want to show a video as part of your course, we can convert it to the most effective format to make it easy for your students to focus on the information it provides rather than the technology to play it. Sounds, slides, videos, or other media, anything that can be put on a CD or DVD, can be included in your course*.

Videos should be only a few minutes long. Longer films can be accommodated but at an extra cost to arrange for the needed “streaming” service.

VIDEO TIPS:

The most common posting format for shorter videos is mpg, which is a 2-step conversion from standard DVD format. Conversion takes 2-3 hours per typical video. The recent influence of youtube has resulted in many videos coming in Flash format, which is fast becoming a standard available to most students. Contact us to discuss conversion needs.

To accommodate students with vision and/or hearing limitations, a text rendition of the video action and conversation is valuable. Voice content all by itself may be missing a vital part of what takes place on the video. Taking the time to create a text version allows use of standard text to audio conversion software to make the whole video story accessible to those with limited vision. Of course, providing text translation also makes the audio accessible to hearing impaired. We can do this for you, if you wish.

** You will be responsible for all copyright clearances.*