High School Distance Learning: Online/Technology Enhanced Course or Experience Guidance

Technology Initiatives and Curriculum and Instruction
Alabama Department of Education
Web-Conferencing Hints

Agenda
- Guidance in identifying and creating an online learning experience
- Resources
- Q & A

Presenters

Guidance Document
- [www.alsde.edu > Sections > Technology Initiatives > Publications > Other](http://www.alsde.edu > Sections > Technology Initiatives > Publications > Other)
- Or [www.alsde.edu > Sections > Technology Initiatives > Publications > Distance Learning](http://www.alsde.edu > Sections > Technology Initiatives > Publications > Distance Learning)
- Or [www.alsde.edu > Sections > Curriculum and Instruction > Publications > Other](http://www.alsde.edu > Sections > Curriculum and Instruction > Publications > Other)
Distance Learning: Effective for students entering the ninth grade in the 2009–2010 school year, Alabama students will be required to complete one online/technology enhanced course or experience prior to graduation. Exceptions through Individualized Education Plans will be allowed.
An online experience for this purpose is defined as a structured learning environment that utilizes technology—consistently and regularly—with Intranet/Internet-based tools and resources as the delivery method for instruction, research, assessment, and communication.
A student may satisfy the online requirement for graduation through one or more of the following options:

- Take an online course.
- Participate in online experiences incorporated into courses used to fulfill requirements for graduation.
Online Learning Delivery Formats – Teacher Led

- **Web-Based Instruction**
  - Teacher led through a virtual environment.

- **Blended Enhanced Online Instruction**
  - Teacher led through both face-to-face and a virtual environment.
  - A traditional online course is aligned with the Alabama Course of Study and managed through a virtual environment (course/learning management system) to provide a flexible, interactive platform for the teacher to communicate, assign, and distribute materials.
  - The delivery of the synchronous instruction may involve a teacher in the classroom or a teacher via interactive videoconferencing (IVC).
Essential Characteristics of Quality Online Learning Experiences:

- Participants engage in collaborative online learning projects, discussions, and assessments beyond the traditional classroom that are goal oriented, focused, project-based, and inquiry-oriented.
- An online course/learning management system should be utilized to support global learning opportunities and to facilitate management of online experiences.
- The online experience must be consistent and regular, lasting 20 hours or more.
To incorporate the online experience into the required computer applications course, it must meet both of the following:

- Be included in a full credit course that also includes all criteria for the online experience
- Be taken in Grades 9 – 12
An online experience must involve collaboration among students in content-related projects that integrate a variety of media, thus a computer-assisted software program does not meet the definition of an online experience.
Guidelines for Online Experience Teachers

- The online teacher must hold a valid Alabama Teaching Certificate in the area of the online course content.
- The online teacher should also successfully meet one of the following requirements in order to teach an online experience:
  - ACCESS Distance Learning Training for Online Teachers
  - Alabama eLearning for Educators Course Instructor*
  - Alabama eLearning for Educators Online Facilitation (Instructor)
  - Intel Master Teacher for Essentials Online
  - LEA approved
This ten-week online course will be offered free to any public high school teacher starting in the summer of 2009. Fifty-five hours of professional development will be awarded upon successful completion of the course. To register: Go to https://pdweb.alsde.edu; search for PD Title #: EDU6611.
Q & A

- Are all high school students required to participate in an online course or experience? Yes, beginning with 2009–2010 ninth-grade class.

- Will a student fail to graduate if he does not participate in an online course or experience? Yes, unless an exception is made through an Individualized Education Plan.

- How many credits does a student earn for an online experience? The online experience is to be documented. Credit is earned for a course that is taken online or a course that incorporates an online experience.
Will the distance learning requirement be recorded as a class on the student’s permanent record? The LEA should develop policies to address the tracking and recording on permanent records of the distance learning requirement.

If a student writes a research paper for a required course using the Internet, will this activity qualify as an online experience? No, there must be collaboration involved using a variety of media and managed through a virtual environment.

If a student participates in an online course with ACCESS, does the ACCESS course satisfy the online requirement? Yes.
If a student took an online course earning dual credit at a participating university or college, will that experience while the student is in high school qualify as an online experience? Yes, if it meets the definitions in this document.

Can the online technology experience be distributed over several courses with each teacher teaching only parts of the experience? No, as there are not course of study standards tied to the online experience that can be distributed over several courses; the online experience is a method of instructional delivery and student collaboration.

If a teacher uses blogging or STI assessments in a course, does that qualify as an online experience for the student? No, not by itself.
Q & A

- Can a student earn credit for an online experience without a teacher?
  No.

- Is there an exit exam for the online experience?
  No.

- Other Questions??
Contact Information

Melinda Maddox
- Director, Technology Initiatives
- 334–242–9594
- mmaddox@alsde.edu

Cynthia Brown
- Director, Curriculum and Instruction
- 334–242–9743
- cbrown@alsde.edu