

ONLINE COURSE DEVELOPMENT GUIDE



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Introduction

Welcome to the course design process! This guide is intended to provide you with basic information about the process of developing a fully online course with the support of an instructional designer. The primary mission of the Learning Innovation team at Peabody is to promote and support learning innovation by helping our students to learn more efficiently and effectively; providing faculty support and development opportunities; and helping Peabody to reach a wider learner community. This guide shares the process of building online courses. Let's get started.

What to Expect

Throughout the process we will plan, design, develop, and implement the course, and construct a teaching plan for the course that incorporates strategies that address our diverse student population and learner variability. The online course development process is a six-month cycle that includes four phases:

1. Planning
2. Content Development
3. Quality Review
4. Launch

These phases are detailed later in this document. Some of the key experiences you'll encounter as part of this process:

- Backwards design that starts with learning objectives and an assessment plan
- Technology integration and how to improve the student experience
- Identification of pedagogical best practices for teaching methods
- Opportunities for professional development relative to online course development, online teaching best practices, and universal design for learning

Roles and Responsibilities

The course development team includes the faculty course developer, the instructional designer, the instructional technologist, the librarian, and the multimedia specialist. Several members of leadership, including the department chair and the leader of Learning Innovation, also participate in the course development process to ensure the completed course meets academic and institutional standards.

Faculty Course Developer

The Faculty Course Developer collaborates with the development team to identify pedagogical approaches appropriate to the learning outcomes and the delivery modality for the course. To build a course with the most potential for success, we will help you develop a course roadmap that includes the following:

- Assessment strategies that align with objectives
- Content architecture plan
- Objective mappings to pull it all together

Based on a strategy and schedule we will develop together, you will produce a collection of deliverables, including but not limited to interactive digital lessons, formative practice opportunities, course policies, discussion prompts, and instructions for activities, and summative assignments.

Instructional Designer

The Instructional Designer (ID) serves as the project manager and the main point of contact for the development of the course. Feel free to reach out at any time with questions or requests. The ID is responsible for the following tasks:

- Serves as the project manager for the course
- Consults with you on how to best organize your materials pedagogically
- Collaborate with you to build the course itself
- Advise on and facilitate production of multimedia materials

Instructional Technologist

The Instructional Technologist (IT) provides input on instructional technologies, then tests and implements selected options. In addition, the technologist will coordinate building the course within the learning management system and any other tools. The technologist prepares instructional materials and trains faculty and any course teaching assistants on new technologies in the course. If applicable, custom e-textbook integration is also managed by the instructional technologist.

Librarian

The Librarian supports tasks related to research, reference, and collection development in online education. Uniquely qualified to teach information and digital literacy and source evaluation, the Librarian can improve academic performance in online research and enhance the online learning experience. The Librarian also provides options for dynamic content, open educational resources, and avoiding copyright issues. Research courses may feature an online library guide of custom resources for your class and research projects.

Multimedia Specialist

Digital content development requires high-quality video and audio recording. The Multimedia Specialist supports the recording and post-production editing to deliver branded assets that engage learners with the content. The Multimedia Specialist provides audio recording equipment for high-quality remote recordings and manages the onsite studio process. Additional services may include digital animation, concert hall recordings, and other items as appropriate for your course.

Leadership

Each online course has multiple key stakeholders. The Department Chair joins the course development meetings on a regular basis, generally once a month. This touch point fosters transparency in the process and ensure final courses meets department expectations.

Various areas including Institute Studies, Academic Affairs, and Learning Innovation all oversee the academic course development. The Learning Innovation team ensures best practices are executed for excellent student experience.

Timeline

Here is a summary of the course development stages. The course design process is six months in length. The timeline and deadlines are based on the contractual terms, not when students have access to the course. In some cases, a course may be developed more than a semester before they it is available to students.



Because many resources collaborate to build a new online course, the timeline as a whole is not flexible. Within the six-month cycle, some flexibility is available to meet the specific needs of your course. Planning generally takes about 4 weeks, while the bulk of the time is spent in content and assignment development. About 6 weeks is reserved for quality control and review of the course in preparation for student access. The next section provides more details about what you can expect during each phase.

Time Commitments and Deadlines

Many things that can be done spontaneously in a traditional face-to-face course must be planned and organized ahead of time in an online environment. The online course development process is challenging and rewarding, but it is also time-consuming for you as the instructor (and also for your instructional design team!). Please stay on track in meeting your deadlines; this will ensure an on-schedule delivery of a high-quality final course.

We suggest that the Faculty Course Developer set aside about 5–10 hours per week for a three-credit academic course to prepare the content and materials throughout this process. This time commitment varies based on phase of development as follows:

- Plan 10 hours per week during planning phase (and potentially shared collaboration time with the instructional designer)
- Plan approximately 5–10 hours per week during development phase
- Plan approximately 1–2 hours per week during course review phase
- Expect weekly recurring meetings until the course review phase is complete

Faculty engaging in the process for the first time are often surprised by these estimates. But experience tells us that the most effective courses require this investment.

Resources can be dedicated to your course only during the planned development cycle. Please remember that your course may be completely developed well in advance of its delivery. Not only do we need to have time to coordinate, brainstorm, build materials online, and ensure that they work as intended, but we also have a limited capacity for course development per year.

The table below illustrates the 3 development cycles.

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
	Cycle 1										
					Cycle 2						
Cycle 3									Cycle 3		

Proposal Process

Proposals to develop an online course are accepted on a rolling basis. Proposals are accepted based on institutional needs. Priority is awarded to proposals for courses that support multiple programs of study, generate strong student interest, and support the strategic priorities of the Peabody Institute.

A committee consisting of senior leadership, select staff, and faculty will review the submissions. The committee meets approximately six weeks before the beginning of each development cycle. Faculty contracts for course development are signed one month prior to the start of the course

development – on January 1, May 1, and September 1. Any stipends and other terms will be included in a faculty’s online course development contract.

If a selected course is new to Peabody, the course will then be processed through the Curriculum Committee. The Online Course Coordinator will notify the chosen developers at least two weeks prior to the contract deadline and six weeks prior to the start of development.

For More Information

Reach out to your instructional designer if you require clarification about terminology or dates.