

Program Development Process Online and Continuing Education

The development of new programs for OCE is a comprehensive process. In addition to supporting the mission of Linfield College, the programs must serve the needs of an online, primarily adult population. As adult learners, online students typically have different educational needs than the 18-22 year old residential college students. Adult learners need:

- meaningful and relevant information.
- to clearly understand what is expected of them.
- opportunities to relate new learning with past experiences.
- to feel that their past experiences are respected.
- to receive information in a variety of ways.
- to be actively involved in the learning process.
- clear feedback about their performance.
- opportunities to apply new knowledge and skills.

A. Needs Assessment – It is important to have a clear understanding about the need for the program. Just because something sounds “cool” or “interesting” doesn’t mean it will do well. The OCE office can provide assistance with this research.

1. Why develop this program? What will students’ know or be able to do as a result of completing this program? What are the student learning outcomes?
2. How does the program fit with the mission of Linfield College? With other programs?
3. Are there other similar programs in Oregon/ Washington? What modality?
4. How is this proposed program different from these?

5. Who is the target audience? What jobs/careers are students prepared to enter if they complete the program? How many new jobs are being projected?
 - The program should meet regional labor market needs. You can demonstrate the need for the program by including data from a variety of sources, such as:
 - <https://oregonemployment.blogspot.com>
 - <https://www.bls.gov/home.htm>
 - <https://www.qualityinfo.org>
 - <https://fortress.wa.gov/esd/employmentdata/>
 - Employer surveys/industry studies
 - Regional, state, or national economic studies
 - Minutes of industry advisory committee meetings.
 - Studies or data from licensing agencies or professional associations.
6. Are there professional guidelines established by professional organizations, government agencies, etc.?
7. Do other colleges/universities in the region have this or similar program?

B. Program Structure – When designing the program it is important to adhere to the following requirements.

1. Each certificate program consists of a minimum of 16 credits.
 - Certificates must be at least 16 credits in order for students enrolled in them to be eligible for federal financial aid.
2. It is strongly recommended that certificates be structured with student financial aid needs in mind. Students must be enrolled in a minimum of 6 credits required by their program in order to be eligible for federal financial aid. So, it is very important that at least 6 credits are offered in the fall and spring (and summer if that term is necessary).
3. No more than 25 percent of the total credits required for a certificate, excluding prerequisites, can be earned through course work transferred from other institutions or can be earned through credit for prior learning.

C. Program Approval – Certificates follow the same guidelines as majors for approval.

1. Certificate programs are composed of courses developed by faculty.
2. If new courses are required for the program, the appropriate department(s), Curriculum Committee, and Faculty Assembly must approve each course. Forms are available on the Curriculum Committee website.
3. All certificate programs, including the requirements, are subject to approval by the OCE Director, appropriate department(s), Curriculum Committee, and Faculty Assembly.
4. Once approved by the college, the program is submitted to the Department of Education for approval. This is necessary to ensure that the program is eligible for federal financial aid.

D. Academic Oversight/ Quality Control

1. OCE courses are taught by Linfield faculty members and adjunct faculty.
 - If it is necessary to hire an adjunct faculty member to develop the course and/or teach the course, the OCE Hiring Process will be followed.
 - The required qualifications identified by the academic department and the OCE director OCE are communicated to Human Resources for posting.
 - The OCE director screens the applications and forwards only those that meet the requirements to the department liaison or designee.
 - The department liaison or designee and the OCE director identify 2-3 applicants for phone interviews.
 - The department liaison or designee and the OCE director do phone interviews. A decision is made about

who to hire, with the final decision being made by the department liaison.

2. All faculty hired to teach OCE courses work with the Instructional Designer to build the course in Blackboard to ensure that Linfield College's Best Practices for Online Pedagogy are followed.
3. Teaching will be evaluated according to college policies to ensure that the courses meet the expectations and needs of students, faculty, and the goals of Linfield College.
4. Students are evaluated on the same criteria that are used in evaluating the course work of degree students.