

# Online Teaching Best Practices Checklist

“... the online course must have a considerable amount of instructor involvement ... The instructor should introduce himself or herself, distribute periodic and regular organizational e-mails, personally contact individual students, make postings to threaded discussion, participate in chats, both spoken and typed, and make short and on-target presentations—single concept lectures.”

- From [Designing the “Perfect” Online Course](#) by Michael Simonson (pg. 6)

Before the Semester Begins	Each Week	Additional Tasks	Near Semester End
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete eLearn Essential training if you're new to online teaching.</li> <li>• Add content to course from the master course or approved shell.</li> <li>• Review all course materials and links from a student view. Fix or remove broken links.</li> <li>• Update and post your accessible syllabus. Submit copy to department admin.</li> <li>• Add your contact info and personalize your course.</li> <li>• Add/update course announcements.</li> <li>• Check (and update if necessary) all open, close, and due dates.</li> <li>• Familiarize yourself with the weekly routine and major assignments.</li> <li>• Check the grade book. Ensure all assignments are listed and organized.</li> <li>• Compare your eLearn Classlist to Banner. Notify <a href="mailto:eLearn@volstate.edu">eLearn@volstate.edu</a> of discrepancies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Login to the class at least 5 days each week.</li> <li>• Communicate (via email, announcements, and/or discussions) to students an overview for the week.</li> <li>• Post and hold online office hours using video conferencing.</li> <li>• Respond to ALL email (course mail and VSCC email) within 24 to 48 hours (or sooner).</li> <li>• Grade assignments promptly and provide useful feedback.</li> <li>• Create and post mini-lectures (text or video based) to reinforce difficult course concepts.</li> <li>• Facilitate discussion boards:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Respond to some posts</li> <li>○ Correct misconceptions</li> <li>○ Ask probing questions</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Use the Class Engagement tool to monitor student activity. Send individual emails regularly to offer help or kudos as needed.</li> <li>• Make notes about course updates that you've made or should make next semester. Send critical updates to the course developer immediately.</li> </ul>	<p>Week 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Send a welcome email to students. Explain how to get started.</li> <li>• Notify students of any exam proctoring requirements.</li> <li>• Set final grade calculation to be visible (<a href="#">release final grades</a>).</li> </ul> <p>Week 2 &amp; 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch for late-adds. Forward important emails to them.</li> <li>• Submit Banner attendance reporting.</li> <li>• Create Early Alerts for students who have not engaged in the class.</li> </ul> <p>Week 7</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submit student alerts.</li> <li>• Remind students of mid-term exam parameters.</li> </ul> <p>Week 9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate with at-risk students about withdrawal deadline.</li> </ul> <p>Week 12</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remind students to complete course evaluations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remind students of final exam parameters, such as proctoring and important dates.</li> <li>• Send encouraging emails.</li> <li>• Send a farewell email. Wish students well in their future endeavors.</li> <li>• Refer to your weekly notes; notify the course developer of any changes or updates that you think would benefit the course.</li> <li>• Post final grades in Banner by due date.</li> <li>• If you are the course developer, update the master course using the instructor suggestions as a guide.</li> </ul>