WSU Online is a virtual branch campus of the University on the Internet. Students with Internet access are able to take online courses as well as use online support services. WSU Online makes it possible for students facing busy schedules, long commutes, or geographic distance to take advantage of the convenience of online courses with the support services that are essential to their success.

The goals of WSU Online are to offer Weber State University courses using a delivery model that will expand student access to WSU programs, courses, and services; to provide a high quality educational experience; and potentially to increase student enrollments. In the past we have focused on general education courses and those courses that have become "bottle necks" for enrollment, that is, courses for which we are unable to offer enough traditional sections to meet demand. This would also include courses that support several majors. We are now focusing on developing complete certificate and degree programs which can be offered effectively online.

WSU Online courses are conducted almost entirely online; all courses must begin with the start of a regular semester, though they are not necessarily tied to dates within the semester. Paced courses which require students to complete course requirements by certain dates throughout the semester allow more opportunities for interaction. Instructors should be explicit as to whether students will be held to specific deadlines or whether they may complete work at their own pace. Traditional courses that may make use of the web in some ancillary way without changing classroom meeting schedules are called “enhanced” and are not considered WSU Online courses.

**Development Time Line**
Faculty hoping to teach online should begin by discussing their plans with their department chair and colleagues. See the “Course review” section at the end of this document for explanation of the various steps. The WSU Online approval form, requiring signatures from instructor, department chair and dean, can be found online at http://wsuonline.weber.edu/faculty/ApprovalForm.htm. Each specific course offering must normally be completed at least one month before the semester starts. Enrollments will generally not be accepted in a course until development of the entire course is complete, including exams.

**Computer Knowledge and Equipment**
All WSU Online courses will use the campus standard course management system, currently WebCT Vista. Faculty will be required to have proficiency in WebCT tools and applications, as demonstrated by completion of appropriate training. The only pre-requisites for this training are a basic understanding of and comfort with the computer, especially word-processing, e-mail and the World Wide Web. However, an in-depth knowledge of any other particular software is not needed unless required for your specific course offering. Support for course development will include PC and Mac platforms.
Compensation for Teaching a WSU Online Course

WSU Online courses may be taught as part of a faculty member’s regular teaching load, subject to approval by department chair and dean. If the course is an overload or is taught by an adjunct, the pay for instruction will be $45.00 per SCH (per student, per semester credit hour). A department may also wish to use a master teacher/adjunct model under which compensation is divided between two individuals. The overload or adjunct amount will be paid on the basis of third week enrollment numbers. One PAR will be sent to payroll for the full amount. The WSU Payroll office will divide the amount across separate pay periods through the semester.

It is strongly suggested that the enrollment be limited to 15 students the first time an instructor teaches an online course. After that first offering, enrollment can be increased based on approval from the department chair and dean. Class size must be approved by the chair and dean each time a course is scheduled.

Expectations for Faculty Involvement

While the actual content and conduct of WSU Online courses are prerogatives of the instructor, the fact that many students take multiple online courses suggests that minimum standards be clearly stated. Instructors may update material or links in their courses at any time. A set of locally developed Standards of Good Practice may be found online at . . . . Standard look, feel and navigational strategies have been developed for WSU Online courses using WebCT Vista. A course template will be provided to serve as a model, and the minimal design standards for maintaining that look and feel will be explained. Within courses, however, faculty organize content as they see fit.

Internet users expect quick response times. Instructors should plan to log on to the course at least five days out of seven and to respond to questions and to student work in a timely manner. It is wise to spell this out in the course information, e.g.: "You can expect responses from me to most questions by the next working day and to written assignments within X days." The instructor will be responsible for maintaining course materials on the web: deleting or replacing links that are suddenly de-activated, stating the current term’s due dates, etc. To protect student privacy and to control use of any copyrighted materials, access to courses will be limited to students enrolled.

Course Development Assistance

WSU Online staff will meet with instructors to discuss course design options and applications for specific courses. Staff from WSU Online will be available to help faculty learn how to use various interaction tools and how to web-design their courses. WSU Online staff can do the actual web page development from material provided by the instructor, or the instructor may do his/her own. WSU Online has the tools required to stream audio and video as well as develop multimedia interactive activities.

Course approval, review and evaluation

There are four levels of course review.

1. The first is the approval process noted above, that authorizes an online teaching and/or development assignment, including participation in WebCT training.
2. Department review: New online course offerings should be reviewed by the department at some point between the end of course development and opening the course for enrollment. This step may occur in whatever manner the department establishes.

3. Peer review: This review ideally comes at the end of the development phase (and no later than before the second offering of the course). Instructors will be asked to assess their own courses against the WSU Online Standards of Good Practice, after which a three-member peer review panel will be assigned to review the course as developed.

4. End-of-Course Evaluation: A standard electronic course evaluation form is provided to all online students at the end of each semester. Evaluation results are provided to the instructors and, with instructor permission, to department chairs and deans. (See PPM 8-11).