

OMDE601 Foundations of Distance Education and E-Learning

Course Description

A study of the history and evolution of distance education. Social and political/economic factors, theories, learning and teaching models, technology and media innovations, institutions and systems, and major writers that have shaped the development of the field are critically examined. A variety of technologies are used to support the development of foundational skills that are integral to current practice.

Course Goals/Objectives

The goals of the course are to provide the student with a foundation of knowledge, skills and attitudes that are required by a competent practitioner of distance education.

Knowledge:

1. Identify the unique characteristics of distance education
2. Describe the major influences - social, economical, and political - in the evolution of distance education from its early beginnings to the current IT-based practices
3. Identify the key authors and theorists in distance education and analyze their contribution to the field
4. Describe how distance education methodologies have changed over time, in particular how the role of teacher and learner have evolved
5. Describe various types of distance education institutions and the relevance of a systems approach to teaching and learning
6. Analyze the impact of technological changes on the nature of teaching and learning in distance education

Specific Skills:

7. Navigate and use an online learning environment, shared virtual spaces, and social media for the purpose of learning, documenting learning, and creating content (e.g. Webtycho, maps, charts, wikis, Google docs, Weebly, Twitter, blogs, Diigo, Vimeo)
8. Master and apply research and writing skills for the purpose of critically analyzing issues and topics discussed in relevant literature, synthesizing findings, and communicating ideas and arguments with supporting evidence
9. Learn collaboratively by using social media and other shared virtual spaces to create content and successfully complete assigned team projects
10. Reflect on learning and articulate changes in thinking, feeling, behaviour

Faculty: Christine Walti, Lisa Marie Blaschke