

# Organizing Your Online Course

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## Introduction

Have you ever been asked to find something in your teenagers' room? As soon as you entered it, you realized you would never be able to find anything in the room!



The organization of your online course can make or break an online learning experience for your students. The third installment of ACUE's six-part **Effective Online Instruction webinar series**, presented in collaboration with the **American Council on Education (ACE)**, the **Association of Public & Land-Grant Universities (APLU)**, the **American Association of State Colleges and**

**Universities (AASCU)**, the **Council of Independent Colleges (CIC)**, and the **National Association of System Heads (NASH)**, focused on Organizing Your Online Course. Snowe, April Mondy of Delta State University, and Michael Wesch of Kansas State University discussed how to plan your courses from a student's perspective.

## ACUE Webinar Recording

Watch the ACUE webinar which highlights some important strategies for organizing your online course.

[ACUE Organizing Your Online Course Webinar Segment](#)

## Strategies for Organizing Your Online Course

There are several strategies to ensure your course organization promotes student success.

### *Chunk Your Content*

As you develop your course, make sure you present content in learning units of some sort. Depending on your curriculum, you may organize the content into weekly folders, modules that last for 1 to 3 weeks, or by subject. The Bb Course Shell at Central Carolina Community College suggests using Module Folders, but you can name your content folders using any convention that is clearly explained to your students.

### *Use a Repetitive, Consistent Structure*

Providing a consistent structure in your learning units will help students stay on task. The Bb Course Shell at CCCC suggests providing a module overview, module objectives, a list of learning resources and practice activities, and then a list of what is graded. You may choose to use another organizational

structure. As long as you use a repetitive structure in each unit, limit the number of folders within folders, and have assignments due at the same time and day of the week, students will know what to expect which allows them to manage their time wisely.

### *Provide Clear Explanations*

For each item you place in a learning unit, provide explanations of its purpose or directions for submitting work. But be careful to not be too wordy. It is helpful to create a general statement and copy and paste it as the description for common assignment types. For example, you use this set of instructions for written assignments: “Please download and complete this worksheet. When you are done, save it as a pdf, docx, or doc file and attach it to this assignment link.” Or you may set up a generic rubric for grading discussion forums in Bb and use this statement in the discussion directions: “Please refer to the discussion forum grading rubric posted in the gradebook for details on how your participation will be graded.” These types of statements clearly remind students of the expectations and help students stay focused on completing those expectations.