

## ***Expectations for Online Instructors***

### **Demonstrate an expertise in both course content and online instruction skills.**

In order to become familiar with the content, assignments, and pacing of a course, PLS 3rd Learning online instructors must successfully complete the course as a participant with an experienced course trainer. Instructor candidates also complete the five-week ***Developing Online Facilitation Skills*** (DFS) course, which includes online communication, collaboration, and community-building skills development, Sakai training, and assessment techniques.

### **Communicate effectively through writing.**

Course interactions occur exclusively online, and instructors must demonstrate excellent writing skills. Online instructors carefully craft comments, considering the tone as well as the content of all communication.

### **Establish a positive online learning environment that fosters mutual respect.**

PLS 3rd Learning instructors set the right tone in their courses through their example. The use of excellent verbal skills models openness, caring, flexibility and sincerity.

### **Provide individual help and support.**

Instructors log into their course daily to check for questions that may be posted in the Questions topic in Forums or through Messages.

### **Provide basic technical assistance.**

An instructor is the first person participants will turn to if they have a problem; therefore PLS 3rd Learning instructors must be very comfortable with the Sakai Learning Management System. Instructors are expected to have intermediate computer skills and to be proficient with email, sending and receiving attachments, and basic Internet navigation. Instructors must be familiar with the type of information available through the Help link, which is part of every course. PLS 3rd Learning instructors are expected to encourage critical thinking by asking questions, offering alternate perspectives, and providing additional information to encourage participants to expand their thinking about a topic.

**Maintain a daily presence in the class:**

- Log into the class daily.
- Guide and monitor class discussions daily.
- Check messages through Sakai and reply within 24 hours.
- Notify participants if unable to access the class or respond to students for more than 24 hours.
- Contact supervisor if unable to respond to students or access the class for more than 48 hours. The instructor supervisor will be able to check in on the class or assign another instructor to cover the class during longer absences.

**Respond to participants in a timely manner, providing support and feedback:**

- Post grades and specific feedback for all assignments within 48 hours of due date.
- Contact (by phone, message, or email) any participant who has not completed an assignment within 48 hours after assignment due date.