



RUONLINE

RUOnline is Roosevelt University's fully online learning program. Join students around the globe in engaging, interactive, and enriching learning experiences.

Welcome

Welcome to the Spring 2012 semester! The start of a new term always brings much anticipation and excitement to both students and faculty alike. Whether this is your first experience with online learning or you're a seasoned veteran, we want you to know we are glad you are here. We have over 1,360 students enrolled in 103 online sections and we are looking forward to a great semester.

Students, there are a few things we would like to share with you at the beginning of this term. Active participation is a must! Use your discussion boards, as they are beneficial to collaborative learning. Next, review the section on "Study Tips", as these have been recommended by some of our outstanding, highly successful, online teachers. These tips, when incorporated into your online learning, will help contribute to a successful semester.

Our online team is committed to your success. If you have questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact us. We are only an email away.

The RUOnline Team

Trends in Online!

Online education has made dramatic increases in popularity in the past ten years, but experts predict the demand will increase exponentially in the next decade and will have a profound influence on all education. This includes K-12, on the job training, and every educational institution in existence.

Dr. Jim Hundrieser is associate vice president at Noel-Levitz and has more than 20 years experience in higher education. He asks "Are you ready for the freshmen of 2015?" and

continues to explain the current situation of most institutions of higher education. "Far too many non-profit campuses continue to lag behind for-profit institutions in considering how to integrate online learning into their long-term enrollment planning strategies. Today's high school students at the top 100 high schools are actively engaged in online learning. More schools are also providing students with the tools they need to take advantage of online offerings. For instance, district 219 outside of Chicago has

given every freshman a laptop computer and will move to a fully integrated online learning support system by 2013".

It is easy to say that in the future we need to add more online options for students to remain marketable and to meet their demands, but the truth is that the future is today. We need to project what it is that students want and need to best prepare them to be competitive in the job market.

In 2006, Michigan was the first state to pass a

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Important dates:

Summer registration in progress

Summer online classes start May 14, 2012

Spring Break: March 10-16, 2012

Last Day to Withdraw (for a W-Grade) March 3, 2012

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What's New in Blackboard?

Roosevelt started the Spring term with its upgrade to Blackboard 9.1. Blackboard was given a complete makeover with its new and attractive interface offering plenty of new features while improving functionality. So, what is new to Blackboard?

The **Course Layout** offering drag and drop functionality for the new course menu, home page and control panel which all offer great new features:

Course Menu - usually customized to suit each instructor's needs.

-  Dotted squares indicate no content inside and are hidden from students.
-  Slashed-through boxes indicate that it is hidden from students.

Control Panel – now build into the course and located just below the main course menu, eliminating the need for instructors to go to a separate page. It's divided into 8 sections so be sure to click the down-arrow to expand the Control Panel to see all the available options.



Home Page – offers your course at a glance allowing you to also customize announcements, events, tasks and more.

Course Files – a central storage area for all documents used in the course. Uploaded files are automatically place here.

Action Bar, the new toolbar which allow instructors easy use to build content such as creating folders, adding items, tests, textbooks and interactive tools while providing a much clearer and obvious layout. Blackboard has even integrated its own student interactive tools which include **Blogs, Journals** (personal reflection) and **Wikis**. Going one step further, Blackboard has partnered with Flickr, SlideShare, and YouTube to



make it easier to share photos, presentations and videos in your course!

Digital Dropbox – while the digital dropbox is no longer available, Blackboard has enhanced its much favour **Assignment** tool now allowing for multiple attempts and notification of late submissions.

While the **Discussion Board** still remains in this version, its grading functionality and statistics tracking has drastically improved offering grading with feedback.

There are various changes made to the way **Groups** can be set up. Groups now allow self-enrollment or you can even allow students to set up their own groups.

To learn more about the Blackboard upgrade, visit the RUOnline Homepage (<http://www.roosevelt.edu/ruonline>). Tutorials and videos are also available for both faculty and students.

References

- http://online.fiu.edu/files/blackboardlearn/blackboard_learn_brochure.pdf
- http://performingarts.uncg.edu/sites/default/files/new_in_9-1.pdf
- https://tit.stonybrook.edu/FacultyServices/Software/BlackboardLMS/Documents/whats_new91.pdf

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Screen to login into Blackboard

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requirement that all high school students have an online learning experience before graduating to prepare them for online courses at the college level and because most jobs today require some kind of online training.

Analyzing trends in online courses, we cannot help but look at the growth. The current growth trends are astonishing. David Nagel's article titled "Most Colleges Students to Take Classes Online by 2014", (10-28-09) highlights the trend toward online classes. "Nearly 12 million post-secondary students in the United States take some or all of their classes online right now. But this number will skyrocket to more than 22 million in the next five years according to data released recently by research firm [Ambient Insight](#). Chief Research officer Sam Adkins reports that already some 1.25 million students in higher education programs take all of their classes online,

while another 10.65 take some of their classes online. "The two groups are still outnumbered by students who take all of their courses in physical classrooms, which [Ambient Insight](#) reckoned at 15.14 million as of 2009".

But this situation will change drastically by 2014, at which time, Adkins forecasts only 5.114 million students will take all of their courses in a physical classroom, while 3.55 million will take all of their classes online, and 18.65 million will take some of their classes online". Students are finding that learning online is not only more accessible, it is also as valuable as learning in a classroom. They quickly discover that online classes require thought, research and attention to detail at a high level. Online learning-related chats and discussions engage people from around the world, minimizing the geographical and cultural

distances between them, making the online class community strong. As we learn the best and most efficient ways to use new technologies, particularly mobile devices, we will be able to add value to our online courses. We must adapt quickly to keep up with the times as technology continues to change our lives.

However, controversy remains regarding the credibility of online classes and will continue to be a source of contention in the next decade. While increasingly more students show that online students out perform the face-to-face students, other studies show that results are at least equal to online. What we do know is that online learning is here to stay and that the demand will force each of us to ask how we can understand, accept and ultimately embrace this different style of learning.

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Guidelines for Online Instructors

Teaching online takes planning, preparation, and hard work. With a couple of guidelines to follow, you will be on your way to providing your online course a learner-centered environment and students a successful learning experience.

UPDATE ALL DATES IN ONLINE COURSE & REMOVE OUTDATED CONTENT

As course content is copied from a previous semester, it is important to update all dates that are congruent with the current semester. All content and web links should be updated.

CREATE ICEBREAKER/ QUESTIONS FORUM

By offering an "Icebreaker" forum (optional), students are able to get to know each other personally and intellectually while learning about their other classmates' interests. Creating a "Questions"



It is important to update dates in online course and remove outdated content.

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forum give students the opportunity to ask questions (possibly anonymously) about items that may be unclear in the online classroom. Perhaps in the middle of the semester, ask students how the semester is going and what can be changed.

GRADE AND REPLY BACK TO STUDENTS IN A TIMELY MANNER WITH CLEAR GUIDELINES

Students rely on the instructor's feedback to move forward with their online learning. Make sure your grade center is set up in Blackboard so students

can follow their grades. Please do not wait until the very end of the semester to assign grades in the grade center.

BE PRESENT

Actively interact and engage students in an ongoing discussion several times a week or daily.

INSTRUCTOR ABSENCE:

If you will be absent from a course due to an illness or other issue, please let your department and RUOnline know immediately so that your online course can continue to move forward with proper facilitating.

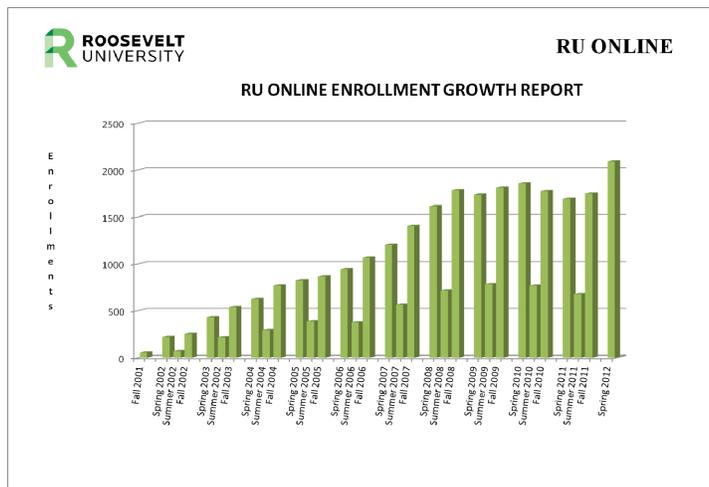


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RUOnline History



RUOnline started in fall of 2001 with a total of 53 students, 7 courses and 7 sections.

As of spring 2012, RUOnline has 1,360 students, 91 courses and 102 sections.

Online Study Tips

- Be open minded about sharing life, work, and educational experiences as part of the learning process.
- Be able to communicate through writing.
- Be self-motivated and self-disciplined.
- Be willing to "speak up" if problems arise.
- Be willing and able to commit to 4 to 15 hours per week per course.
- Be able to think ideas through before responding.

Reference: [Illinois Online Network](#)

Following these tips will help keep you on a path to success this semester!

Visit our web site at:

<http://www.roosevelt.edu/ruonline>

