

Alabama High School Online Experience Graduation Requirement

Introduction

Effective for all Alabama students entering the ninth grade in the 2009-2010 school year, students will be required to complete one online/technology enhanced course or experience prior to graduation. Exceptions through individualized Education Plans will be allowed. If a school system selects to incorporate the online experience into the required computer applications course, the course must meet both of the following:

- Be included in a full credit course that also included all criteria for the online experience
- Be taken in Grades 9-12

A traditional online course, such as those delivered as a part of ACCESS, is aligned with the Alabama Course of Study and managed through a virtual environment (course/learning management system) to provide a flexible, interactive platform for the teacher to communicate, assign, and distribute materials. The delivery of the synchronous instruction may involve a teacher in the classroom or a teacher via interactive videoconferencing (IVC).

For the 2009-2010 school year, Mountain Brook Schools will offer Health in a blended format that is teacher led through both face-to-face instruction and through a virtual environment. It is our vision, that within the next 3 to 5 years, as we continue to provide professional development and resources for our secondary teachers, at a minimum; all secondary core courses will incorporate various aspects of an online experience. We are studying methods to indicate courses or the teachers delivering the courses that are “blended” with a distinctive code such as “OLE.” or some other approved code to simplify documentation.

Alabama High School Graduation Requirements

A student may satisfy the online requirement for graduation through one or more of the following options:

1. Take an online course.
2. Participate in online experiences incorporated into courses used to fulfill requirements for graduation.

Essential Characteristics of Quality Online Learning Experiences

An online experience can be defined as a structured learning environment that utilizes technology-consistently and regularly (lasting 20 hours or more).

1. An online experience involves the use of Intranet and Internet based tools and resources as delivery methods for the following:
 - instruction,
 - research,
 - assessment, and
 - communication.
2. An online experience must involve collaboration among students in content-related projects that integrate a variety of media.
3. Participants should engage in collaborative online learning projects, discussions, and assessments that are goal oriented, focused, project-based, and inquiry-oriented.
4. An online course/learning management system (such as Moodle) should be utilized to support global learning opportunities and to facilitate management of online experiences.

Currently Approved Teacher Led Online Learning Delivery Formats

1. Web-Based Instruction : Teacher led through a virtual environment
2. Blended Enhanced Online Instruction: Teacher led through both face-to-face and a virtual environment.

Guidelines for Online Experience Teachers:

1. The online teacher must hold a valid Alabama Teaching Certificate in the area of the online course
2. The online teacher should also successfully meet one of the following requirements in order to teach an online experience:
 - ACCESS Distance Learning Training for Online Teachers
 - Alabama eLearning for Educators Course Instructor*
 - Alabama eLearning for Educators Online Facilitation (Instructor)
 - Intel Master Teacher for Essentials Online
 - LEA approved training