Principles of Effective Online Teaching

The Innovative Digital Education Alliance (IDEA) values, and strives to provide, the highest quality in distance education. These guiding principles are meant to assist IDEA faculty in developing exceptional pedagogy and curriculum for online courses.

Adopted by the Human Sciences Board of Directors on October 25, 2016.

Principle 1: Student-Faculty Contact
Clear guidelines and policies regarding communication, regular communication with students throughout the course, and using proactive course management strategies enhances student-faculty interaction.

Principle 2: Cooperation Among Students
Student engagement in the course, and with each other, is increased when instructors design coursework which facilitates cooperative "meaning-making" among students.

Principle 3: Active Learning
Student-to-student sharing of completed coursework provides motivation and encourages peer discussion.

Principle 4: Prompt and Meaningful Feedback
Students benefit when instructors provide two types of feedback: information feedback and acknowledgment feedback.

Principle 5: Deadlines and Consistent Patterns of Course Activities
Clear deadlines and consistent patterns of course activities help students manage busy schedules and encourage regular communication.

Principle 6: High Expectations
High expectations are established through challenging assignments, discussions, and examples of good work.

Principle 7: Diverse Talents and Ways of Learning
Making courses and documents accessible, allowing students to choose project format and project topics, and integrating student-led discussions helps incorporate diverse views into online courses and accommodates all students.

Principle 8: Course Quality
Online courses are best when instructors continually monitor and improve the quality of their online courses.

References
The Advisory Board Company. (2010). *Engaging faculty in online education: Rightsizing incentives and optimizing support*. Washington, DC. 91-92.

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