Pre-Semester Procedures
Preparing for your online course.

Prior to the course start date

- Plan your course
  GSE ONLINE offers a variety of opportunities to support your course development and online teaching. Please view our [professional development site](#) for more information. Here you will find professional development opportunities offered through GSE ONLINE, The Center For Educational Innovation (CEI), and Open SUNY.

- Enable your course on UBlearns
  All courses must be enabled before they can be accessed by the instructor or students. GSE ONLINE has requested that all upcoming online courses be enabled. If you do not see your course in your UBlearns course list, though, you may need to manually enable the course. [Directions for enabling your UBlearns course](#)

- Set the enrollment date
  By default students will be added to an enabled course on the official course start date. It is recommended that you allow students to access your course 28 days in advance of the start-date so that they may obtain important course information (syllabus, textbook, etc.). [Directions for modifying the enrollment date](#)

- Order your textbooks
  Ensure that your textbooks are available at the campus bookstore. [Online adoption form to order course materials](#)

- Utilize Library Resources (optional)
  - Place any necessary textbooks or other course materials on Course Reserve: [http://library.buffalo.edu.gate.lib.buffalo.edu/forms/reserve.html](http://library.buffalo.edu.gate.lib.buffalo.edu/forms/reserve.html)
  - Consult GSE's subject librarian, [Chris Hollister](#) if you need any assistance with choosing materials. Also, “Ask a Librarian” is available via Chat, Text, Email, Phone and in person [http://library.buffalo.edu.gate.lib.buffalo.edu/askalibrarian/](http://library.buffalo.edu.gate.lib.buffalo.edu/askalibrarian/)

- Consider enhancing your course with multimedia components (optional)
  - Contact an Instructional Designer for more information (see contact information below)
  - Arrange for synchronous (real-time) lectures, meetings, office hours, presentations, etc. using GSE’s web-conferencing tool, Blackboard Collaborate.
  - Schedule a time to record lecture-capture videos
  - Arrange for videos to be hosted online

- Load course materials into UBlearns
  - If you are copying a previous course into a new course shell you will need to update all dates to reflect current semester. [UBIT directions on performing a course copy](#)
If you are teaching a course for the first time you will copy the course template into your new course shell. This template provides you with a framework for organizing your online course, including weekly Unit folders, Syllabus and Course Schedule templates, a sample Welcome Announcement, etc. If you are scheduled to teach online in an upcoming semester you will see a course template in your UBlearns course list. If you do not have access to the template please contact Anne Reed.

Directions to copy the course template into a course

By the enrollment date
- It is critical that your course contains basic course information by this point, as your students will now be able to access your course.
  Suggested items:
  - Welcome Announcement
  - Syllabus and Course Schedule
  - Getting Started folder items (Introductions discussion forum, icebreaker activities)
  - The textbook information needs to be explicitly stated so that students have time to purchase textbooks in advance of the course start date.

By the first day of class
- Send a welcome email
  Log-in to UBlearns and click on the “Email” link to email the whole class. Introduce yourself to the class; provide basic course policy information, etc.

- Complete course set-up
  Make sure that all unit folders contain the appropriate readings materials, assignments, and other learning objects.

- Get ready for a great semester!

Support/ Resources
Contact an Instructional Designer if you need any assistance with instructional design:
Anne Reed: 716-645-1357/ annereed@buffalo.edu

Contact the UBlearns administrative team for technical assistance in using UBlearns: 716-645-6188