

eCore Faculty Training & Certification

All current and new eCore Faculty complete a two-week initial eCore certification course offered online. The course is offered each term for potential new eCore faculty. During FY 2011, 39 instructors successfully completed the eCore Online Faculty Certification course. In addition to the one-time online certification course, eCore faculty are required to attend the eCore Annual Meeting by either attending the day-long face-to-face workshop conducted at the University of West Georgia or participating in the online workshop via Wimba Classroom.

Online Course Content for Faculty Certification Program:

Module 1: eCore Philosophy and Expectations. Readings, Discussion Postings, One Live Wimba Meeting, Quiz. 3 days.

Module 2: Student Retention and You. Readings, Exercises, Discussion Board Q/A, Quiz. 3 days

Module 3: Assessments/Exams. Readings, Discussion Posting, Quiz. 2 days

Module 4: Online Teaching Strategies. Readings, Discussion Posting, Quiz. 4 days

Module 5: Course Maintenance and Management. Readings, Journal Submission. 2 days

Number of Faculty Certified for FY2011 Academic Term	
Summer 2010	8
Fall 2010	16
Spring 2011	15

The Curriculum & Instruction Director emails teaching tips and eCore course protocol to instructors routinely. A GeorgiaView Vista course called the "Garden of eCore: Faculty Community" is also available as a tool for mentoring and sharing of experiences and information. The eCore Annual Meeting is held during May of each year for faculty. This year's eCore Annual Meeting included informational sessions presented by both eCore administrative staff and eCore faculty members. Webinars are conducted periodically for eCore faculty for technical training purposes and professional development.

Things are Growing in The Garden of eCore!

During FY 2011, the Garden of eCore continued to serve as the online community for eCore faculty and administrators. It is designed as a course that is populated along with instructors' regular eCore course list during each term. eCore faculty are able to visit subject-based and general education sections within the course and benefit from the information and opportunities for collaboration or sharing.

Half Moon Discussions: The eCore administration provided thoughtful blog postings in the Blog section titled Half Moon Discussions. This section of the Garden is generally used to prompt eCore faculty and administrator conversation regarding best practices. Topics included:

- Is Teaching Online as Much Fun?
- Are eTextbooks the Answer?
- How Do We Handle Disruptive Students?
- Do We Ever Stereotype Our Online Students?
- Should We be Facebook Friends with Our Students?
- eCore Retention at a Record High: Wow!
- Grading Discussions Fairly and Diet COLA (Course Outcome Learning Assessments)
- Are You Funny?
- Distressed Students
- The Adult Learner
- Key Instructor Behaviors (Building a Community)

Subject Nest: The Subject Nest is an area where faculty can find subject-specific information shared by their colleagues. Many of the faculty who are new to eCore use this area to ask questions of their colleagues. This serves them much better than asking eCore administrators directly, who may not have the subject expertise needed to answer specific questions.

Secret Hedge: The Secret Hedge dominated the Garden of eCore with high activity in FY 2011. Instructors were eager to use this anonymous forum to ask and address sensitive and/or important topics. Some of the most popular topics prompted were:

- Final Averages and Grades
- Late Designation and Essay Submissions
- COLA (Course Outcome Learning Assessment) Question
- Posting Midterm Averages – Yea or Nay?
- Could This Really Happen? (Regarding Retention)
- Protest Against Youtubing Faculty
- Students and Vacations During a Semester?

Seminar Yard: The Seminar Yard is an area where faculty can access live and archived Wimba Sessions geared toward best practices, demonstrations, tutorials, and virtual meetings as necessary with eCore Administrators for live one-on-one training or discussion. Sessions/Rooms included:

- Ad Hoc Appeal Committee
- Best Practices in the Online Classroom
- Diet COLA (Course Outcome Learning Assessments) Webinar
- Final Grades Entry
- INGRESS Training Room
- Open Textbooks Marie Lasseter
- Tablet Practice
- Wimba and Web Tools Webinar

A formal mentorship program was implemented in the Spring of 2010. During FY 2011, eCore faculty selected for mentorship were offered a stipend to guide newly certified faculty through their first term with eCore. Mentors submit progress on their Mentees via survey to the eCore Director of Curriculum and Instruction for review.