
CLEAR SERVICES OVERVIEW

CENTER FOR LEARNING ENHANCEMENT, ASSESSMENT, AND REDESIGN (CLEAR)

The **Center for Learning Enhancement, Assessment, and Redesign (CLEAR)** provides instructional design and course development assistance from initial concept to final evaluation for both hybrid (blended) and fully online courses. We are here to listen to your ideas and help you explore the many possibilities for innovative and effective teaching through technology.

Faculty who intend to use the Center’s services should become familiar with the types of assistance CLEAR offers along with the faculty members’ responsibilities in creating technology-enhanced courses. This guide provides an overview of CLEAR services and faculty responsibilities.

CONTENTS

Types of Assistance	2
Course Design and Course Development.....	2
Content Placement	3
Programming.....	3
Multimedia.....	4
Timelines for Course Design and Development Work	5
CLEAR Course Management System Training and Support.....	7
Training.....	8
course evaluation.....	8
Blackboard Vista Support.....	9
Faculty Support.....	9
Student Support.....	10
CLEAR SERVICES AGREEMENT	11

TYPES OF ASSISTANCE

COURSE DESIGN AND COURSE DEVELOPMENT

CLEAR's instructional consultants provide course design assistance for faculty who are developing courses.

CLEAR provides:

- Training through the online course *Designing Instruction for Online Courses*. This course provides an orientation to the online learning environment and advice on instructional design and strategies.
- Private online course design consultation with our instructional consultant, instructional programmer, and multimedia specialist.

Faculty members will:

- Complete the training provided.
- Develop the course design based on knowledge and abilities gained from training and consultation.

Course development involves the creation of a course space, the placement of content the faculty member has provided, as well as the creation of graphics, video, audio and programming of instructional objects.

CONTENT PLACEMENT

CLEAR places content (course lesson text and graphics) in a course site within Blackboard Vista.

CLEAR will:

- Provide faculty member with instructional design document formatting style guide.
- Format and place content provided by faculty in Blackboard Vista course space.

Faculty members will:

- Provide CLEAR with instructional design documents. All content CLEAR is asked to place should be formatted using the *Instructional Design Document Formatting Guide*.
- Ensure that any copyrighted material used in the course has copyright holder permission or meets Fair Use, or TEACH Act guidelines. (See <http://copyright.unt.edu>.)

PROGRAMMING

CLEAR will develop learning objects (usually programmed in Flash or Flex) for online and blended courses.

CLEAR provides:

- Consultation with faculty member on animation, interaction, or other programming needs.
- A storyboard template that the faculty member will use to visually map out the interaction or animation.
- Original artwork for the interaction or animation.
- Custom programming.

Faculty members will:

- Provide CLEAR with storyboards for interactions and animations along with long textual descriptions needed for accessibility compliance.

MULTIMEDIA

CLEAR provides graphic design, illustration as well as video and audio recording. It also provides the processing needed to prepare the media for placement in the course or on the media server.

CLEAR will:

- Create custom graphics for course banners and icons.
- Create custom artwork to illustrate concepts related to course content.
- Provide subject release form for video and audio recordings.
- Shoot video to be used in an online course as content.
- Caption video if script or transcript is provided. (CLEAR does not provide transcription services or lecture capture.)
- Edit, encode and upload video to the appropriate server location.

Faculty members will:

- Contact subjects they would like to record and make all necessary arrangements with them (location, meeting time, script, cue cards, etc.)
- Obtain a signed release form from anyone who will be recorded or photographed.
- Secure copyright clearance on any copyright-protected materials that the faculty member would like to use. Alternatively, the faculty member should make sure media (images, audio or video) used in course can be used within the guidelines set forth in the Fair Use or TEACH Act. CLEAR reserves the right to refuse duplication of material that it deems in violation of the items copyright agreement.
- Provide scripts for all video and audio segments or engage the services of someone who will transcribe the segments after the fact. CLEAR will not place video or audio in a course that does not meet ADA guidelines.

TIMELINES FOR COURSE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT WORK

The Center for Learning Enhancement, Assessment, and Redesign's Production Unit manages course development for multiple clients each week and, therefore, operates on a tight schedule. For this reason requests for content placement, programming, or multimedia work submitted must be made well in advance of the date by which the finished product is needed. The following general guidelines will help faculty members allow adequate time for CLEAR to complete production work.

Note that although the production unit carries out the work in this section, faculty members should coordinate **all** tasks through the **instructional consultant** assigned to work with them. The instructional consultant functions as the project manager and will create tasks and make appointments as needed for all work the faculty member requests of CLEAR. CLEAR requests that faculty members do not contact the production unit members directly as this causes confusion and interruption in the workflow.

- **Content Placement** – CLEAR asks that faculty members submit content to their instructional consultant at least **two weeks** prior to the date on which it is needed. This gives the production unit time to incorporate the task into the production schedule without the need for staff overtime or delays in completing tasks for other faculty members. If the faculty member does not provide CLEAR with lesson content at least two weeks in advance of the date on which it is needed, the production unit cannot guarantee the lesson will be ready in time.

Note: If a faculty member submits **multiple** lessons, they may **not** all be ready within two week. He or she should identify which lessons that are needed first so that the work is prioritized. The production unit will determine estimated completion dates for each lesson or group of lessons, and an instructional consultant will communicate that information to the faculty member.

- **Graphic Design** – Generally, initial graphic design for course banners, lesson templates, and custom icon sets will take **three weeks**. Because graphic design revisions are time consuming, it is important that the designer have an accurate idea of what the faculty member would like before beginning work. CLEAR strongly encourages that the faculty member meet personally with the multimedia specialist in a production meeting before work on graphic design begins. The instructional consultant assigned to work with the faculty member will arrange this meeting. If the faculty member has specific ideas regarding the style or imagery to be used, he or she should provide visual examples to the multimedia specialist.

Note: In the event that major revisions to the design are requested, CLEAR

reserves the right to suspend work until the faculty member is able to meet with the designer again. A default banner and lesson template will be used in the meantime so that work on content development can continue.

- **Custom Programming** – Custom programming commonly includes Flash-based interactions or animations that provide students with visual demonstrations of a concept or opportunities for self-test, practice, or other types of interactive study. Custom programming may take anywhere from two weeks to several months to produce depending upon the complexity of the idea. It is important for faculty to identify any programming needs they anticipate at least **one semester** in advance of the date by which it is needed and to arrange a preliminary meeting with the programmer to discuss the idea and get it placed on the schedule. The instructional consultant assigned to the faculty member will arrange this meeting. Depending upon the outcome of the meeting, the faculty member may be required to submit additional information or examples. The programmer will communicate an anticipated completion date after he has all of the information needed to begin development.
- **Quiz Upload** – Fortunately, uploading quizzes is a task that can easily be completed by the faculty member using Blackboard Vista's interactive quiz creation tool or an external program such as *Respondus*. (Please contact your instructional consultant for instruction on using either of these methods.) If an instructor would like CLEAR to upload quiz questions, he or she should provide the quiz in electronic format at least **one week** prior to the date on which it is needed. For lengthy quizzes or exams (exceeding 50 questions), or for those that include images or embedded media files, CLEAR will need at least **two weeks** advance notice. (An instructional consultant will provide formatting requirements to the faculty member for any quiz or exam the faculty member would like CLEAR to upload.)
- **Audio/Video Work** – Faculty should contact their CLEAR instructional consultant at least **two weeks** in advance if they would like to schedule time for the multimedia specialist to record video or audio for a course development project. After the video or audio has been recorded, the multimedia specialist may take up to **three weeks** to edit the files and prepare them for upload to the media server.

Note: CLEAR also provides video and audio equipment checkout if a faculty member would like to make the recording on his or her own or if the multimedia specialist is unavailable on the date or time the recording is needed.

Note: Production time may vary depending upon the complexity of a project and existing CLEAR workload. CLEAR will make every effort to provide the faculty with a realistic timeline.

CLEAR COURSE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM TRAINING AND SUPPORT

Teaching online requires that instructors thoroughly understand how to use the tools within the course management system, perform certain course maintenance activities each semester, and be prepared to answer and troubleshoot basic technical questions students have. These activities may be carried out by the instructor or delegated to a teaching assistant.

CLEAR will:

- Provide the faculty member and his or her assistants with **training and support** on learning management system tools so that they may carry out the tasks associated with teaching during the semester.
- Assist faculty member with help setting up course grade books at the start of the semester.

Faculty members or their teaching assistants will:

- Set release dates for content, quizzes, assignments, and discussion topics.
- Upload syllabi and course calendar entries each semester. If the faculty member prefers to have CLEAR upload revised content, syllabi, calendar entries, he or she must submit a request and provide the content to a consultant **at least two weeks in advance of the semester**. (See general guidelines for content placement on page 5.)
- Respond to students who have course and technical questions.
- Reset quizzes.
- Reset assignments.
- Enter or import grades.
- Release grades to students.
- All other teaching activities that pertain to communicating with students or evaluating student work.

TRAINING

CLEAR's instructional consultants provide online Blackboard Vista training for students as well as both online and live Blackboard Vista training for faculty and teaching assistants:

- Ticket to Vista: Blackboard Vista Student Tutorial (self-paced online)
- Getting Started with Blackboard Vista (self-paced online)
- Teaching and Managing with Blackboard Vista (facilitated online)
- Live classroom training, one-on-one, and small group training is offered periodically throughout the year. Instructors can make requests for customized training classes for themselves, their departments, or their teaching assistants.

CLEAR also offers a suite of online and face-to-face workshops that focus on strategies for meeting the challenges of teaching in the online learning environment. Get professional education credits for participating in these classes. (See course descriptions at <http://ecampusupport.unt.edu/go/training>.)

Faculty members are responsible for:

- Completing the training provided in advance of their first semester teaching and to take refresher classes as often as necessary.
- Arranging for teaching assistants to take training.

COURSE EVALUATION

CLEAR will:

- Provide the faculty member with a Continuous Improvement Consultation upon request. A CLEAR Instructional Consultant will observe the course for a set period of time to evaluate course design and facilitation strategies. At the end of the evaluation period, the consultant will meet with the instructor and provide feedback that includes recommendations for improvement. The feedback is confidential and will never be shared with anyone other than the instructor who makes the request.

Faculty members will:

- Develop and distribute student evaluations of instruction as required by their academic department.

BLACKBOARD VISTA SUPPORT

FACULTY SUPPORT

CLEAR provides faculty support on Blackboard Vista through the Vista Faculty Helpdesk in Chilton Hall, 112C. Faculty should contact the Vista Faculty Support desk when they need assistance with using the course management system or when they believe something is not working correctly. The Faculty Helpdesk will provide instructions for using the course management system and will investigate problems instructors report. When necessary, the helpdesk will escalate problems to Distributed Learning Support (Vista Administrators).

Vista Faculty Helpdesk contact information:

Location: Chilton Hall, Room 112C

Phone: 940-369-7394

Email: vistafac@unt.edu

The Vista Faculty Helpdesk hours are posted on the Faculty support pages at <http://courses.unt.edu/webct/vista/faculty/index.htm>.

After Hours Emergency Support

If a faculty member has one of these emergencies after hours, he or she should call 940-565-2324 and ask to have Faculty Support paged.

Emergencies are defined as:

- Situations involving a quiz or assignment deadline in which **multiple** students cannot upload, begin, or submit.
- Multiple students being unable to access the course.
- A Vista tool functioning incorrectly and causing inconvenience for students.

STUDENT Support

General Course Access and Browser Problems

General Blackboard Vista support for students is provided by the Computing and Information Technology Center (CITC) Helpdesk. The CITC Helpdesk provides basic troubleshooting support for students on Vista including:

- Login problems
- Browser or other software conflicts

Students who have technical problems logging in to a course or using Blackboard Vista should call the helpdesk at 940-565-2324. They can also visit the Helpdesk Web page (<http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk>) to report problems or send email to vista@unt.edu.

UNT Helpdesk Hours during the long semester are generally:

Monday-Thursday 8am-midnight
Friday 8am-8pm
Saturday 9am-5pm
Sunday 1pm-midnight

The CITC helpdesk will escalate all server-wide problems directly to CITC Distance Learning Support.

Problems *within* the Course

Course instructors act as the first point of contact for students who find a problem **within a course**. Instructors should have basic skills using Blackboard Vista tools from the designer/instructor view so that they can troubleshoot problems with settings.

If an instructor is unable to determine the cause of a problem, he or she should contact the Vista Faculty Helpdesk by email at vistafac@unt.edu or by calling **940-369-7394**.

CLEAR SERVICES AGREEMENT

The **Center for Learning Enhancement, Assessment, and Redesign (CLEAR)** provides instructional design and course development assistance from initial concept to final evaluation for both hybrid (blended) and fully online courses.

As a faculty member who engages in the services offered by CLEAR in the development of a hybrid (blended) or online course, I agree to the following:

- I have read the **CLEAR Services Overview** and understand the scope of services offered by CLEAR.
- I am aware of the general timelines I should allow for the placement of content, programming, graphic design, or video work. I understand that if I do not allow the minimum amount of time indicated, CLEAR may not be able to complete my request. I have the right to expect that my consultant will communicate an anticipated completion date for any project along with regular updates during production.
- I understand it is my responsibility to ensure that any copyright protected material used in the course has copyright holder permission or meets either Fair Use or TEACH Act guidelines. (See <http://copyright.unt.edu>.)
- I understand that learning management system semester-specific activities such as uploading a syllabus, setting course due dates, posting calendar entries, posting discussion questions, setting up grade books, or communicating with students are the responsibility of the course instructor and that CLEAR will not accept these tasks.
- I understand that it is my responsibility to be aware of any technical issues that affect availability of the course or bugs in the system and I agree to subscribe to the Vistanews-L listserv.
- I understand that the UNT Helpdesk will assist students with login problems as well as technical issues relating to the system or a student's computer settings. However, I understand that I am responsible for ensuring that content within my course is up-to-date and functions correctly. I will follow basic troubleshooting procedures to help my students in the event they have problems accessing my content and will contact the Vista Faculty Support desk if I cannot resolve the issue myself.

Signature _____ Date: _____