



Office of  
the Chief  
Information  
Officer

DR 3620-001

## **USDA eLearning Services, Courseware And Content**

# USDA eLearning Services, Courseware and Content

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Table of Contents</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>1 Purpose</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2 Policy</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>3 Approval Requirements</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>4 Background</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>5 Definitions</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>6 Authorities and References</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>7 USDA’s Enterprise-wide Approach to eLearning</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>8 Course Content</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>9 Employee Training Records</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>10 Roles and Responsibilities</b>	<b>5</b>

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Washington, D.C.

<b>DEPARTMENTAL REGULATION</b>		<b>NUMBER:</b> 3620-001
<b>SUBJECT: USDA eLearning Services, Courseware and Content</b>	<b>DATE:</b> October 29, 2004	
	<b>OPI:</b> Office of the Chief Information Officer & Office of Human Resources Management	

**1 PURPOSE**

The USDA Electronic Learning (eLearning) Initiative is a strategic component of USDA’s eGovernment vision and USDA’s Enterprise Architecture to provide a common learning management system and related services. This Departmental Regulation documents USDA’s eLearning policy, framework, roles and responsibilities. Policies in this Departmental Regulation are defined around USDA’s enterprise architecture and investment strategies.

**2 POLICY**

USDA’s enterprise Agriculture Learning (AgLearn) service was established for use by all USDA agencies to manage and deliver training for employees, partners and customers. USDA agencies shall use AgLearn to the maximum extent possible to deliver online training, manage training and maintain training records for USDA employees, partners, and customers. Use of this enterprise service will streamline government-wide operations and eliminate redundancy in accordance with the eGovernment Act of 2002.

USDA agencies shall migrate existing agency learning management systems and training systems to AgLearn. Investments in duplicative eLearning services are permitted only with the written approval of USDA’s Chief Information Officer through the capital planning and information technology waiver processes.

USDA agencies must ensure any custom online content they have developed complies with the AgLearn Content Integration Guide. The AgLearn Content Integration Guide is available at [www.egov.usda.gov](http://www.egov.usda.gov).

### **3 APPROVAL REQUIREMENTS.**

USDA has entered into an interagency agreement with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to acquire online courseware libraries. The agreement specifies that the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) will serve as USDA's exclusive ordering agent for online courseware libraries available from OPM. The following policies and procedures apply to the purchase of online training and related services:

- a Agencies and Departmental Staff Offices will establish a point of contact for their eLearning initiatives. This point of contact will be the liaison to OHRM and Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) for the purchase of courseware libraries through OPM.
- b Requests for purchase of courseware libraries are to be sent to the OHRM. OHRM will supply detailed procedures to agency Personnel Officers, Training Officers, and agency eLearning points of contact.
- c All agencies must purchase general business and Information Technology courseware libraries through OPM, unless required courses are not available through OPM. Purchase of online courseware libraries from other sources may be made only with the written approval of the Director, OHRM and the Chief Information Officer (CIO). Such approval may be granted only in those instances where courses desired by agencies are not available through OPM.
- d Procurement offices shall not process requests or actions for online courseware or Learning Management System or Services (LMS) unless the action is accompanied by written approval from the Director, OHRM and the CIO. Agency heads are responsible to ensure that this process is followed.

### **4 BACKGROUND**

A key goal of the President's Management Agenda for expanding electronic government is to simplify and unify government-wide operations and leverage investments to eliminate unnecessary redundancy and duplication. The President's E-Training Initiative provides all government agencies with a consolidated source for online courseware and learning management services at reduced overall costs. In partnership with the President's E-Training Initiative,

the USDA eLearning Initiative provides USDA agencies with a consolidated, cost effective enterprise-wide learning service for employees, business partners and customers. This service, known as AgLearn, consolidates existing USDA agency learning needs and eliminates duplicative learning services. AgLearn provides USDA agencies and their customers with one stop access to training products and services at reduced overall costs.

## 5 DEFINITIONS

**Airline Industry Computer Based Training Committee (AICC):** an international association of technology-based training professionals that develop guidelines for the development, delivery, and evaluation of computer-based training (CBT) and related training technologies.

**AICC Standard:** standard for developing CBT training that has been expanded for use by all industries for promoting interoperability and data exchange between standard online courseware and learning management systems and players.

**Online Courseware:** commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) courses that are taken by computer and are available from vendors without customization or changes.

**Learning Content:** electronic content that is instructional and/or educational in nature, such as presentations, job aids, online courses, electronic books, and reference guides.

**Learning Management Services or Systems (LMS):** information technology hardware, software and services that will be used to provide online training and/or manage the functions of a training program such as scheduling classroom training, tracking student training records, issuing training certificates, assessing competencies and planning career development.

**Shareable Content Object Reference Model (SCORM):** standard for developing online content developed by Advanced Distributed Learning (ADL) co-labs and built upon the work of the AICC and other standards as a way to make electronic learning content interchangeable with learning delivery systems. The SCORM standard focuses on content aggregation and reusability and includes aspects that pertain to learning management systems, content authoring tools, instructional designers, content developers, and training providers.

## **6 AUTHORITIES AND REFERENCES**

The E-Government Act of 2002

The Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA)

The Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act of 1994 (FASA)

The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA)

The Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996 (CCA)

The Government Paperwork Elimination Act of 1998 (GPEA)

USDA Strategic Plan

USDA eGovernment Strategic Plan and Agency eGovernment Tactical Plans

## **7 USDA'S ENTERPRISE-WIDE APPROACH TO eLEARNING**

All USDA agencies have access to AgLearn, an enterprise-wide learning delivery and management service. AgLearn is a key component of USDA's Enterprise Architecture. AgLearn provides the mechanism to deliver, track, and record training, exams, and surveys completed by USDA employees, partners and customers. Available through the internet and fully integrated with USDA eAuthentication Service, it is a secure service that is accessible in and outside of USDA 24 hours each day.

Learning content available through AgLearn can be made available to all users of AgLearn, including the public or restricted to specific groups of employees or customers. Access decisions are made by the owner of the learning activity.

## **8 COURSE CONTENT**

As an official USDA corporate system, any course content on AgLearn should be training that is appropriate to be recorded as part of an individual's USDA training record. Training content can include online training, exams, surveys, handbooks, and video clips. Custom developed courses or COTS courseware must meet certain industry standards to work properly on AgLearn. These are AICC or SCORM standards. Consult the AgLearn Content Integration Guide for details about how deploying content on AgLearn at [www.egov.usda.gov](http://www.egov.usda.gov).

## 9 EMPLOYEE TRAINING RECORDS

AgLearn is the official USDA system of record for training and will contain the training history available for USDA employees from existing systems. As training histories are moved to AgLearn from other agency learning and training systems, these existing agency systems will be retired.

## 10 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- a **Chief Information Officer (CIO), Deputy CIO, and Associate CIOs** will provide leadership for the implementation, enhancement, and maintenance of the AgLearn Service.
- b **Human Resource Management Director and Chief Human Capital Executive.** USDA's Human Resource Management Director and Chief Human Capital Executive will provide leadership for incorporating USDA eLearning services into the training and human resource operations at USDA agencies. Specific areas may include developing and issuing guidance about the use of AgLearn for training requests, Individual Development Plans, training records and competency assessments.
- c **Chief Acquisition Officer and Heads of the Contracting Activities.** USDA's Procurement Executive and Agency Procurement Officials and Contracting Specialists ensure that information technology procurements adhere to information technology investments policy. Agencies must get written approval from the Chief Information Officer and Director, OHRM to use a source other than the President's E-Training Initiative. See Agriculture Acquisition Regulation (AGAR) Advisory on eLearning. AGAR Advisories are available at <http://www.usda.gov/procurement/policy/advisories.html>.
- d **Agency and Staff Office Executives, Program Managers, and CIOs.** USDA agencies are responsible for supporting USDA's eLearning Initiative through the use of the AgLearn service for delivery of online training as well as administrative support and recording of training.

End