Instructional methods have changed markedly over the last ten years to incorporate technological aids in teaching. There are numerous methods for engaging students in an online environment that were not available just a few years ago. In keeping with emerging methods of content delivery, the Online Education Council (OEC) surveyed academic deans and unit heads to help determine where GVSU curriculum should be positioned in the face of these changes. Based on this survey and review of peer institutions, OEC approved changes to the university definitions of delivery method of courses. Below are the revised policies and procedures governing the delivery of distance education courses. The definition changes will go into effect for the 2016-17 academic year.

These changes to the definition of delivery methods will ensure that students will have a clear understanding of expectations of meeting times at the time of registration, more accurately reflect current delivery practices, and offer increased professional development of online teaching methodologies to reinforce quality of instruction in all distance delivery courses and programs.

These revisions will mean that some courses that are currently categorized as “traditional” may change to “hybrid”. This will entail both that instructors may need to seek approval for courses to be scheduled as a hybrid course, and/or instructors will need to take part in Foundations of Online/Hybrid Course Development. Information on this course and how to sign up for it can be found via the Faculty Resources for Online Education webpage. Again, these changes will go into effect for the 2016-17 academic year.

Over the 2014-15 academic year, instructional designers, Library faculty and staff, and FTLC personnel have worked in collaboration to develop increased professional development opportunities for individual faculty and departments. The Online Learning Support Faculty Support Team is prepared to work especially with departments who wish to increase their knowledge of online pedagogy and tools. If departments wish to schedule with the Online Learning Support Faculty Support Team, please contact FTLC.

The Online Learning Support Faculty Support Team has also revised the current Foundations course to reflect new information and technological tools, and in response to feedback from faculty who have taken the course. The revised course emphasizes increased practical application, still using Quality Matters© as the basic building block of online and hybrid courses to ensure consistency and rigor in our distance delivered curriculum. Registration for the course can be found on the Faculty Resources for Online Education webpage.

Additional professional development opportunities beyond Foundations can be found on Faculty Resources for Online Education webpage.