

ONLINE LEARNING AT WKU

WKU ONLINE | WKU ON DEMAND



Providing flexible learning opportunities, pathways to degree attainment, and nationally recognized student support for adult learners across the globe

Sheena Phelps, pictured above, is a 2016 graduate of WKU. She earned her B.S. in Organizational Leadership while living in Hawaii

SUMMER 2017 EDITION

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

Creative Ideas for Teaching Online

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

One Student's Journey

WHAT'S NEW

- Departmental Changes
 - Advisor Resources
 - Online Colonnade
 - Student Support
-

A YEAR IN REVIEW

See What We've Been Working On In FY 2017

MEET OUR STAFF

Faculty Spotlight: Creating A Sense Of Community In An Online Program With Dr. Jane Olmsted

I recently spoke with Dr. Jane Olmsted, Department Head, Diversity and Community Studies, and Coordinator of the M.A. in Social Responsibility & Sustainable Communities, about one of the strategies she uses to create a sense of community in her web classes and online program: Blackboard Collaborate. "I have used Voice Thread in the past, as a way for students to connect with one another. While they didn't get to see each other's faces, they were able to hear each other's voices. Blackboard Collaborate is an expansion of that idea, because it allows students the opportunity to put a human face with the names they see in the online classroom. This helps bridge the gap between face-to-face classes and web classes. And, since my courses are discussion-heavy, it gives students a break from all the typing, and lets them talk with one another in real time. It's also easy to use and works well for small group discussion. I will use it again.



Dr. Jane Olmsted

Overall, students found it very valuable...." said Dr. Olmsted.

She also spoke of the challenges of synchronous discussion.. "It can be difficult to find meeting times across time zones, and work schedules. In my class, I broke students up into groups of 3-4, assigned a leader for each group who coordinated meeting times, and collected topics for discussion that were submitted to the group members and to me ahead of time. This provided structure for their meetings, and gave them talking points to start the discussion. I also thought it was important to encourage free interaction during this time, so I wasn't present during their Collaborate meetings. Instead, I had them record the meetings. I watched at a later time, and recorded my reaction to their discussion through MediaSite, which gave them feedback."

On things she would recommend to those considering Blackboard Collaborate, Dr. Olmsted says:

- Setting up a practice room that everyone can access is important. It allows students to become comfortable with Collaborate before the meeting, and serves as a back-up room, just in case there are any technical issues with their assigned room on the day of their meeting.
- High-speed internet and a computer is also important. We found that accessing Collaborate on phones didn't work well, and kept freezing or losing connection. There is a feature in Collaborate that allows voice only, if needed, but that can "take away one of the advantages of Collaborate." *(continued on page 3)*

Creating A Sense of Community In An Online Program: Blackboard Collaborate From A Student Perspective



Megan Maddern, pictured above, is a 2015 graduate of WKU, and is currently pursuing a Master of Arts in Social Responsibility and Sustainable Communities, and graduate certificate in Gender & Women's Studies.

Dr. Olmsted then introduced me to Megan Maddern, a graduate student in the social responsibility and sustainable communities program, and a teaching assistant in the department.

Megan was also enrolled in Dr. Olmsted's online class where Blackboard Collaborate was used.

I asked Megan to tell me, from a student perspective, about her experience with Blackboard Collaborate.

Megan replied, "Using Collaborate reminded me of what I miss about the feeling of being in a face-to-face class - it added the elements of live interaction with classmates to the convenience of studying online.

The live discussions allow the opportunity to engage with fellow students and get their interpretations of readings. They also allow you to connect with your cohort, and your professors, and create a sense of community. I imagine for those students who live away from here, it provides a connection to campus, as well. I loved the live discussion...it feels more authentic, because a live environment doesn't allow extra time to think about what you will say or how you will respond. It's also a break from all the typing on discussion boards...and it's really easy to use."

Megan added that one thing that made it work well was Dr. Olmsted's approach, "Dr. O had us email ideas for the discussion in advance. This helped us stay focused, and gave the discussion structure."

Student Spotlight

Meet Jessie Key, Online Learner, Musician, and 2017 WKU Graduate

When Jessie Key arrived on WKU's campus in Fall of 2013 as a Biology major, she was considering a career that would allow her to work with wildlife. Already a talented singer/songwriter, she chose not to major in music. "My advice is to major in something that will allow you to do what you love. I would love to work with animals and with animal rehabilitation at some point in the future." Fate had different plans for Jessie and she moved to Nashville after her freshman year to pursue her music career. Prominent record producer, Rob Galbraith, met and signed Jessie to an independent music publishing company, Wrensong, and she performs regularly in Nashville and on tour with her band.

She was most recently seen at the 2017 CMA Fest. After she decided to make the move to Nashville, Jessie temporarily considered leaving the University. However, she found that she was able to seamlessly continue her academic career as an online student by taking online classes with WKU On Demand and WKU Online. Jessie took twelve WKU On Demand classes and found that the self-paced aspect of the courses worked best for her. She appreciated that the instructors used videotaped lectures, notes, and discussion groups in their online Blackboard courses. "The best courses made me feel connected to the professors and to the other students. They let me feel like I was still really a part of WKU."

As a 'Summa Cum Laude' graduate in May 2017, Jessie claims that the discipline she developed from taking online and On Demand courses has helped her in other aspects of her life. She also really learned how to prioritize. She advises other students to treat online classes as you would face-to-face classes. "Look at your calendar, and commit to working on the class regularly. You can't let deadlines sneak up on you."





SUPPORTING STUDENT SUCCESS THROUGH COACHING

We are committed to providing flexible pathways for degree attainment + the tools needed for success! As part of this, Online Program Services (WKU Online & WKU On Demand) work with prospective students to help them find pathways that fit their goals and lifestyle. We work closely with academic departments to identify online degree and certificate opportunities, and raise awareness through targeted marketing and recruitment efforts. We also work with the department to ensure we are providing correct and complete information to prospects, but our role doesn't stop there. In fact, it's just beginning! At the inquiry stage, we provide one-on-one entrance counseling that considers all possibilities. For example, a student with previous hours earned may have more online choices than other students. **Each situation is unique.** Once an online student is officially admitted they receive a phone call from a success coach, we connect them with an orientation, specific to the needs of an online learner, and provide support throughout their time here at WKU to help them get where they're going. One way we do this is through Coaching for Academic Readiness and Excellence (CARE).

CARE was created because we believe students should be able to get the support they need, when they need it. Life happens when we least expect it, and having someone to talk with can make the difference in a student finishing their degree or dropping out of school.

We take referrals!

Whether you're working with an at-risk online student or an online learner who needs extra direction, please refer them to us for short-term or long-term assistance.

Together the Coach and student will discuss personal and professional goals, develop a personalized learning plan built around the student's goals, strengths, challenges, and their unique circumstances. The goal is to make sure everyone has the confidence to finish their degree by achieving academic success. No one should have to feel alone while learning, so a Coach is only a phone call, email, text, or Skype away.

For more information visit:

<http://wku.edu/lp/online-coach.php> or contact Holly Young at learn.online@wku.edu

Contact Us

Academic Outreach

Call: 270-745-3026

Visit: wku.edu/ao

Center for Innovative Learning and Teaching

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Instructional Design Services

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Online Program Development

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Testing Center

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WKU Online

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WKU On Demand

Call: 270-745-4158

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Visit: wku.edu/ondemand

RECENT CHANGES

The Division of Extended Learning & Outreach (DELO) is made up of units that take the educational resources of the University to the citizens of Kentucky and around the world. We are the outreach arm of the university, offering both credit and non-credit programs to students of all ages and interests. We partner with faculty and departments to offer convenient and flexible learning opportunities to students. We also work with businesses and organizations to provide customized training, plan special events, and develop degree programs that meet their specific needs.

This year, DELO reorganized to sharpen its focus on online learning and strengthen our support of students and faculty. The responsibilities of the Office of Distance Learning were distributed and combined with the Center for Faculty Development to create the new **Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning (CITL)**. CITL now includes instructional design and instructional technology, and will work to support excellence and incorporate emerging technologies in faculty teaching and student learning across delivery formats.

The Office of **Online Program Development (OPD)**, also new this year, is housed in Academic Outreach. OPD, led by Tanja Bibbs, will be responsible for administrative functions related to our institution's online learning such as compliance with state and federal regulations, reporting, and survey submissions. Additionally, OPD will support faculty in launching new online programs and conducting targeted marketing campaigns for online programs.

The Office of **Online Program Services (OPS)** now includes WKU Online & WKU On Demand. This joint effort in supporting online learners will allow a greater focus on student success and retention initiatives, as well as recruitment of new students. This area, led by Cindy Troutman, and Tanya Vincent, also develops new student support services through in-house efforts, and partnerships across campus.

Online Program Development and Online Program Services are part of the Academic Outreach unit within DELO, which is led by Laura Ricke.

RESOURCES FOR WORKING WITH ONLINE STUDENTS

for WKU faculty, staff, and advisors

WKU ONLINE | WKU ON DEMAND

Checkout our resource website, and downloadable tools created specifically for those working with online learners by clicking here or visiting www.wku.edu/online/advising

Nationally, "more than one in four students (28%) now take at least one distance education course (a total of 5,828,826 students, an increase of 217,275)" from year-to-year (2015 Online Report Card).

This increased demand for flexibility is also reflected at WKU in the number of students taking at least one online class. In **Fall 2016** more than 2,400 students studied exclusively online.

There are several reasons a student may choose to study online: A change in life circumstances may require a student to leave the area (much like it required Jessie Key, in the Student Spotlight piece), a change in employment, military service, family obligations, a combination of all of the above or simply a preference to study online. Regardless of each unique situation, **there is one common thread** - students who study primarily online are adult learners. They are post-traditional by age or other factor, and need the flexibility afforded by online classes to achieve their goal of earning a degree. With this in mind, WKU provides online pathways to more than **100 degrees and certificates**, including 18 associate and bachelor degrees + nationally recognized student support for online learners.

That means you're working with online learners more than ever before! And, we want to make that as easy as possible by providing you with the resources you need!

While degree seeking students are required to follow the same admission processes, and meet the same academic requirements to earn a degree, there are also differences that may impact the information provided to students. Recent conversations led us to develop a one-stop reference tool that works to keep you informed of the latest news, resources, and course schedules for online students, including a guide that will take you through a guaranteed pathway for online completion of the Colonnade program, a cheat sheet for tuition and billing of online courses, FAQs, and more.

Conversations this summer led to the development of a **Reference Guide for WKU Faculty, Staff, and Advisors** who work with online learners.

Our Goal Is Simple:

To provide a trusted tool that will help you access the latest information as you work with students who need extra flexibility or plan to earn their entire degree online. This is a dynamic tool that will grow and change, and will work best with your input!

Some of what you'll find:

- Completing Colonnade requirements online, and the guaranteed pathway that exists for most majors
- The basics of financial aid for online courses
- Online degree and certificate options
- Differences in registration and billing processes for online courses

Have we missed anything?

Let us know what you'd like to see added or changed. Send your ideas to cindy.hawks@wku.edu.

Access the reference guide at www.wku.edu/online/advising.

Guaranteed Online Pathway for Completion of Colonnade

Online Colonnade options, and course availability has been of special concern for all who work with students pursuing online degree options. Just as with face-to-face courses, certain classes fill up quickly, which can leave few choices available.

To help address this concern, WKU On Demand has worked with faculty across campus to develop an online pathway for Colonnade completion. With no enrollment caps, and year-around registration, it's sure to help students finish their degree on time.

WKU ON DEMAND



See How Students Can Complete Colonnade 100% Online

Click here to download the Online Guide for Colonnade and see how students can complete Colonnade through taking a combination of WKU Online and WKU On Demand courses (listed by term). The Fall 2017 Guide is available now.

Extra flexibility needed? Or maybe several courses are full? On Demand always has a seat reserved! **Click here** to download the On Demand Guide for Colonnade.

WKU ONLINE



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IDEAS FOR EXPANDING COMMUNICATION TO INCREASE

RECRUITMENT & SUPPORT

FY 2017 BROUGHT RESULTS



FY 2017 brought with it the expansion of recruitment and support efforts. WKU Online & WKU On Demand increased military enrollment by 70%, increased prospective student inquiries to over 4,000 (a 54% increase), doubled our conversion rate (the percentage of prospects who go on to apply for admission), increased community outreach efforts, and expanded success coaching - all through implementation of best practices. Here are a few things we found most effective. Learn more at wku.edu/online/advising.

PERSONALIZE IT!



Students are used to tailored communication that speaks to their individual likes, interests, and goals. Without algorithms and teams dedicated to customizing the user experience, what can we do? We can implement simple strategies, even with limited tools: Track student inquiries, and area of interest, then follow-up with relevant articles related to their field, job outlook or related WKU news.

DIGITAL COMMUNICATION



6% of millennials used a smartphone to search for and apply to U.S. colleges or universities. That means your website content, and mobile-friendly design is increasingly important. And, your audience will be seeking digital communications. Good news! There are more free digital outlets than ever before, making it easy to share reasons to go back to school, stories from graduates, and faculty achievements that spell quality programs. Encourage prospects to inquire online. OU Campus has a form builder that makes it easy!

CUSTOMER SERVICE



In a study done by World Education News & Reviews, 42% of students cited a university network (faculty, admissions officers, students and alumni) as being the most influential in their decision of where to apply. Whether we are talking with a prospect by phone, email or in person, we should strive to provide accessible, accurate, and complete information. We may even be having a conversation with a prospect, and not realize it!
We are all recruiters!

WHAT WILL IT DO FOR ME?



Education is an investment! Before investing time, energy, and money, students want to understand what college will do for them. We often hear, especially from adult learners, questions such as "What is the job outlook?" "What are alumni doing now?" Providing testimonials from alumni is one way your program can sell help itself. Nothing can replace the value of hearing about positive experiences from graduates.



Online Learning

WKU Online | WKU On Demand



WKU ONLINE LEARNING | TUITION CHEAT SHEET

FULL-TIME UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Fully Online Students (Web and/or on demand)

- No full-time rate for online learners
- Charged applicable tuition rate (on demand or Web) for all hours taken
- Web = DL Rate
- On Demand (OD) = Current **In-State** Per Credit Hour Rate

Web + Face-to-Face (F2F):

- Full-time undergraduate students who enroll in a combination of face-to-face classes + Web will be charged the applicable in-state or out-of-state tuition rate + an additional per credit hour fee for the Web class.

PART-TIME UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Part-time undergrad students enrolling in a combination of delivery modes are charged the per credit hour rate for each course, based on course type.

- **On Demand Courses:** The per credit hour rate for in-state undergrad students is always charged, regardless of location (no out of state tuition is ever charged).
- **Web Courses:** The per credit hour Web course rate is always charged, regardless of location (no out of state tuition is ever charged).
- **Face-to-Face Courses:** The applicable in-state/out-of-state per credit hour rate is charged.

On Demand + F2F and/or Web (*see examples):

- **FT undergrad students enrolled in 12 credit hours:** Those who enroll in a combination of on demand + face-to-face and/or Web classes are charged per credit hour, based on class type (face-to-face, Web or on demand) for all hours taken **up to 12 credit hours**.
- **FT undergrad students enrolled in more than 12 credit hours of F2F or Web + an on demand class(es)** are charged the applicable full-time tuition rate + the established per-credit-hour Web course fee for all "Web" sections + per credit hour rate for the additional on demand class(es).

****Examples of On Demand + F2F and/or Web:***

- **Scenario A:** Student enrolls in 9 F2F hours + 3 on demand.
Tuition = the per credit hour rate for every class. The F2F tuition charge is based on in-state or out-of-state status. The OD per credit hour rate is always the in-state rate.
- **Scenario B:** Student enrolls in 6 F2F credit hours + 6 Web.
Tuition = the full-time in-state/out-of-state rate + the per credit fee for Web sections.
- **Scenario C:** Student enrolls in 6 F2F credit hours + 6 Web credit hours + 3 on demand credit hours.
Tuition = FT in-state/out-of-state tuition + the per credit hour fee for 6 hours of Web classes + per credit hour tuition for on demand.

On Demand: 270-745-4158 | ondemand@wku.edu
Online: 270-745-4087 | learn.online@wku.edu

Compare Options!

WKU Online

WKU On Demand

Financial Aid Eligible



No Out-of-State Tuition Charged



Follows Term-based Calendar



Start Class Any Day

Students can finish in as little as 7 weeks or take up to 9 months



Self-paced Courses

Allows students to set their own due dates



Complete Anywhere

All students need is an internet connection



Special Tuition Rate for Active Duty Service Members



Tuition-Free Classes for Senior Citizens



Nationally Recognized Student Support Services Available



Student Success Coaching Available

Designed to keep students on track and connect them with needed resources



**Students who qualify may use Financial Aid to pay for On Demand courses. An On Demand agreement is required, which can be found under the Financial Aid tab on TopNet. Those paying with financial aid must complete the course within the semester.*

*** On Demand tuition is always billed at the in-state/Kentucky resident rate, regardless of location; Web courses, which follow a term-based calendar, are always billed at the in-state tuition rate + the Web course fee. Please see opposite side for more detailed tuition information.*

Who can take Web-based courses through WKU Online and WKU On Demand?

The short answer is: *Anyone!*

- Casual, non-degree seeking students
- Students who want to complete requirements for graduation and cannot fit a face-to-face class into their schedule
- Students who need flexibility in their schedules or want to earn a degree 100% online
- Military students who can use their benefits and continue their education while deployed
- Senior Citizen Kentucky residents (over the age of 65) who can take advantage of tuition-free classes
- WKU Employees who want to take advantage of their tuition benefit in order to continue their education

Addressing Financial Barriers



Quick Facts

1

WKU Online & On Demand Courses Are Financial Aid Eligible

Financial aid awards are based on individual student eligibility and need, just as with face-to-face courses. Students using financial aid for WKU On Demand must have an FA agreement on file, and complete the course within the term of registration. All financial aid awards begin with completion of a FAFSA.

2

Scholarships For Online Learners

Online students at WKU are encouraged to apply for scholarships. Many scholarships do not restrict location of attendance, including the DELO Non-traditional Student Scholarship, and Summer Scholarship. Students can apply online through TopDollar at wku.edu/topdollar.

3

Grants

Grant eligibility is limited, and often depends how early a student submits a FAFSA. In addition to federal grants, which are need-based, there are often community based grants available, as well as grants for adult learners. Visit wku.edu/online/financial-aid.php for tips on overcoming financial barriers through combining resources.

4

Credit by Exam

Credit by exam through the College Level Examination Program (CLEP) is both cost-effective and time-efficient. Study guides are available for \$25 and has prep materials for all CLEP exams given at WKU. [Click here to learn more.](#)

5

Financial Success Counseling

WKU's Financial Success Center provides financial counseling to WKU students in an effort to help them learn more about wise financial planning. [Click here to learn more.](#)

HIGHLIGHTS

2017

WKU ONLINE &
WKU ON DEMAND

2016-17 was an exciting year filled with new projects, partnerships, recruitment strategies, and success stories.

Here are a few highlights from the past year.

The full impact report can be found at wku.edu/online.

6 AREAS OF IMPACT

MILITARY ENROLLMENT

WKU On Demand increased military enrollment by 70%. This was accomplished through increased communication, outreach, targeted marketing efforts.

ORIENTATION FOR ONLINE LEARNERS

DL TOP, the first officially recognized orientation for online learners, was a collaborative effort among Online Learning, Admissions, IT, and several advisors across campus. The past year, the orientation served 1,049 degree-seeking online students last FY. Its counter-part, an open orientation for non-degree seekers, has served 1,740 students, including Dual Credit students.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT

WKU Online received 4075 unique inquiries with 12% of prospects applying for admission. This conversion rate is 5% over the national average. The number of inquiries reflects an increase of 54%

STUDENT SUCCESS COACHING

Coaching for Academic Readiness & Excellence (CARE) launched in Fall 2016, and continues to grow through engagement and support of online learners. This fall brings new tools, and new partnerships!

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The increase in community outreach (WKU Community, and the region), added up this year! With more than 40 visits to regional campuses, information fairs, and special events

RECOGNITIONS

For the third consecutive year, WKU was named in the top 5 in U.S. News & World Report rankings of online bachelor's degrees. This is one of many recognitions received in 2016-2017 as a direct result of dedicated faculty and staff across campus who are committed to the delivery of quality instruction and support services.

SUPPORTING FACULTY,
STAFF AND STUDENTS

our team

*click here to access full DELO
Organizational Chart*



As Director of Academic Outreach, **Laura Ricke** leads University initiatives for Online Program Services (WKU Online), Online Program Development, WKU On Demand, Summer and Winter Sessions, DL Testing Center, Dual Credit, and Cohort Programs.



As Program Manager for Online Program Development, **Tanja Bibbs** focuses on program development and marketing for online degrees, course development contracts, and state authorization compliance. Tanja is pursuing her Ph.D. at University of Kentucky.



As Program Manager for Online Program Services, **Cindy Troutman** leads student recruitment, success, and retention initiatives, including development of student support services for WKU Online & WKU On Demand. Cindy is pursuing her Ed.D. at University of Kentucky.



As Program Coordinator, **Tanya Vincent** oversees day-to-day operations of WKU On Demand. She is the primary contact for On Demand faculty, works closely with other WKU offices to improve and maintain On Demand procedures, and analyzes various On Demand reports and trends.



As WKU On Demand Specialist, **Donna Kasznel** provides direct support for WKU On Demand students. She's also involved in outreach efforts throughout the region, and manages social media for WKU Online and WKU On Demand.



As WKU Online Specialist, **Nikki Roof** provides direct support to prospective online learners, manages the CRM recruitment process, and tracks ROI for marketing efforts. Nikki is pursuing an MA in organizational leadership.



As WKU Online Specialist, **Holly Young** provides Success Coaching for online learners. Holly also assists with events, orientation processes, and recruitment. She is currently pursuing an MA in organizational leadership.



As a student worker in WKU Online & WKU On Demand, **Morgan Skaggs** assists with supporting prospective students, and provides general office support. Morgan is sophomore at WKU. This past fall and spring, she was named on the President's List for her academic standing.

*Dedicated to providing flexible learning
opportunities, pathways to degree attainment,
and nationally recognized student support for
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WKU Online & WKU On Demand
Garrett Conference Center 101
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