E-LEARNING MODULES

AT THE SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

A USER GUIDE

SHARING INFORMATION BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

E-learning modules are self-paced, web-based instructional materials with which clients interact individually on a computer. Unlike webinars and classroom captures, e-learning modules are not merely recordings of live events. Modules include a well-designed PowerPoint presentation, narration, various interactive learning activities, and questions with feedback.

BENEFITS OF E-LEARNING MODULES

• Unlike face-to-face courses and live webinars, participants can access e-learning modules any time from any location with a computer and Internet access, reducing scheduling conflicts and travel expenses associated with face-to-face courses.
• Participants proceed at their own pace, repeating segments and responding to learning activities as needed to help ensure comprehension.
• Clients who cannot attend face-to-face classes can still receive instruction that may be critical to their ability to successfully perform their job duties.
• E-learning modules are ideally suited to content such as basic information or procedures that change little over time.
• E-learning modules can be used to supplement, complement, or replace existing face-to-face courses or may be developed as an entirely new course.
• E-learning modules can be designed to meet targeted needs and can range in length from eight minutes to an hour or longer (when multiple shorter modules are strung together).
• By completing an e-learning module prior to attending a face-to-face course, clients can be expected to arrive with a base level of understanding of a given topic.

THE BASICS

HOW LONG ARE E-LEARNING MODULES?

An e-learning module is typically 15–25 minutes in length. This is not a technical limit, but rather a practical and instructional limit. Convenience and learning are both served when online content is presented in shorter segments. In situations where lengthier training is needed (e.g., to meet CEU requirements), multiple shorter modules can be strung together to create a longer training module.
HOW MUCH TIME IS NEEDED?

DESIGN PHASE: 2–6 WEEKS
The design phase involves developing a concise, well-designed base PowerPoint presentation with narration script. In addition to identifying the basic information to be conveyed, this process will include identifying module objectives and developing learning activities and questions with relevant feedback. This is usually an iterative process. This period also provides time to request a course code, complete a budget (using the same approval process as other course budgets), and create a marketing plan to promote the e-learning module to the appropriate audiences.

PRODUCTION PHASE: 5–15 DAYS
With the design phase complete, the production phase can take 5–15 days depending on module length and complexity. In this phase, the narration is recorded, handouts are formatted, and slides and animations are created and synchronized to the narration recording. Course evaluations are attached and marketing materials are generated in preparation for review.

POST-PRODUCTION: 3–8 DAYS
Post-production is initiated once drafts are sent to faculty for review. This process may require more than one round of edits and review before the e-learning module is ready to be made available to clients. The timing depends on scheduling and the time it takes faculty and the Instructional Support team to review the module and make necessary revisions.

IN ADDITION TO POWERPOINT, WHAT LEARNING ACTIVITIES ARE SUPPORTED?
E-learning modules are based on two primary learning activities that serve to correct client misconceptions and reinforce accurate responses:

- Viewing and listening to a set of well-designed, narrated PowerPoint slides
- Responding to comprehension checks and receiving thoughtful feedback for correct and incorrect responses (includes quizzes such as true/false, matching, multiple choice, short answer, or essay)

In addition, e-learning modules support video scenarios, software demonstrations, and individual or group learning activities that can be created as part of a printable handout. The Instructional Support team is available to work with presenters to develop appropriate activities to support stated module objectives.

HOW ARE E-LEARNING MODULES KEPT CURRENT?
Edits to e-learning modules can be made by the Instructional Support team when appropriate; however, this format is best suited to stable content rather than content that changes frequently, for which a webinar is a more appropriate medium. It is the responsibility of the faculty author to review module accuracy and web links on a regular basis, prioritize and authorize necessary edits to instructional content, and submit a request to Instructional Support. The IT Division will alert faculty to edits that are needed due to accessibility or functionality issues.

Requests for edits to existing modules will be completed during regularly scheduled IT maintenance windows. Exceptions can be made for minor urgent corrections. Requests for significant edits or revisions will be evaluated on an individual basis and may require that a module be temporarily disabled until edits can be scheduled and completed.

WHAT ARE THE COSTS FOR E-LEARNING MODULES?
The cost to produce an e-learning module is about $4,000. This expense can be recovered in the following ways:

- If offered as part of a course, the e-learning module costs are included in the course budget.
- E-learning modules can be offered on-demand for $23 via NetSuite.
- Production of some e-learning modules is funded by grants.
THE PROCESS
Planning an e-learning module requires many of the same steps as planning a face-to-face course, but there are some differences.

1. **INITIAL PLANNING MEETING (FACULTY, PROGRAM MANAGER, INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT)**
   - Discuss options, audiences, timing

2. **BUSINESS AND REGISTRATION (FACULTY, PROGRAM MANAGER)**
   - Discuss pricing, release date, budget

3. **DESIGN (FACULTY, INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT)**
   - Design consultation to determine objectives, design learning activities and materials

4. **MARKETING (PROGRAM MANAGER, MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS)**
   - Create course page, marketing plans, announcement materials

5. **PRODUCTION**
   - Create slides, narration, animations, evaluations, handouts

6. **POST-PRODUCTION**
   - Review and publish the module

7. **REPORTING AND MAINTENANCE**
   - Implement updates as needed

GETTING STARTED
For more information or to inquire about creating an e-learning module, contact the **InstructionalSupport@sog.unc.edu**.

SAMPLE E-LEARNING MODULES AND ADDITIONAL MATERIALS
Sample e-learning modules and additional resources can be accessed at the IT Division website at **www.sog.unc.edu/itd**.