

Class Facilitator Guidelines and Best Practices

Technical Aspects of Facilitating the Class:

This is mainly a summary of important points from the Facilitator Orientation 0333 class - <https://iteechu.org/moodle/course/view.php?id=333> - that need to be understood and followed closely. (You will need to copy and paste it into your browser for it to connect properly.)

NOTE: If you have not done so please click on the above link and enroll yourself in this class. It will appear on your "Dashboard" and remain there for you to refer to. You should Launch the class and Select the "Study the Class" option and complete an initial study of the material if you have not yet done that. If you have completed the study track it would be a "**best practice**" to Launch the class again and select the "Review the Class" option to refresh yourself on these technical, managing the class, instructions before the start of each term.

1) When the Registrar officially creates the class in LMS and enrolls the students and facilitators (generally about 10 days prior to the start of the term) the class will appear on the facilitator's Dashboard and the facilitator will be able to Login and Launch the class. On the course "Home Page" you will see the course template that has been developed by the Curriculum Director and contains the structural components for the students to get acquainted with the class, study the content (Head aspect) and be graded. The template has three (3) main sections. Here are some technical highlights for managing each section:

General:

- a) Some components in this section are intentionally hidden from the students and are for use by the facilitator and co-facilitator only. Facilitators should not make them available to students, but should open and read through each one.
- b) The facilitator will need to post content to the Announcements, Prayer Room, Chat Room, Contact Information and Office Hours, for students to read. The template does not include this information as it should be specific for each course and entered by each facilitator. If you need any assistance with this please contact the Dean of Faculty.
- c) Please add a "**My Personal Story**" forum (Please use this as the title/subject). Make it a separate item rather than part of the Announcements or another component. Create it by "copying" (see

screenshot below) either the Chat Room or Prayer Room and then changing the subject line, and adding messages and other information, like a list of information to be included in their bio. It is best if this is visible in the General section. This is where facilitators and students add their personal bio. Facilitators should post their bio, with appropriate picture, prior to the start of class. Having it in the forum format allows interaction with one another.

NOTE: We are looking to standardize this non-graded forum across the courses as it is the first opportunity for everyone to get acquainted and provides useful information. Having it standardized will provide consistency with all the classes so students will recognize this and be able to copy their information into new classes.

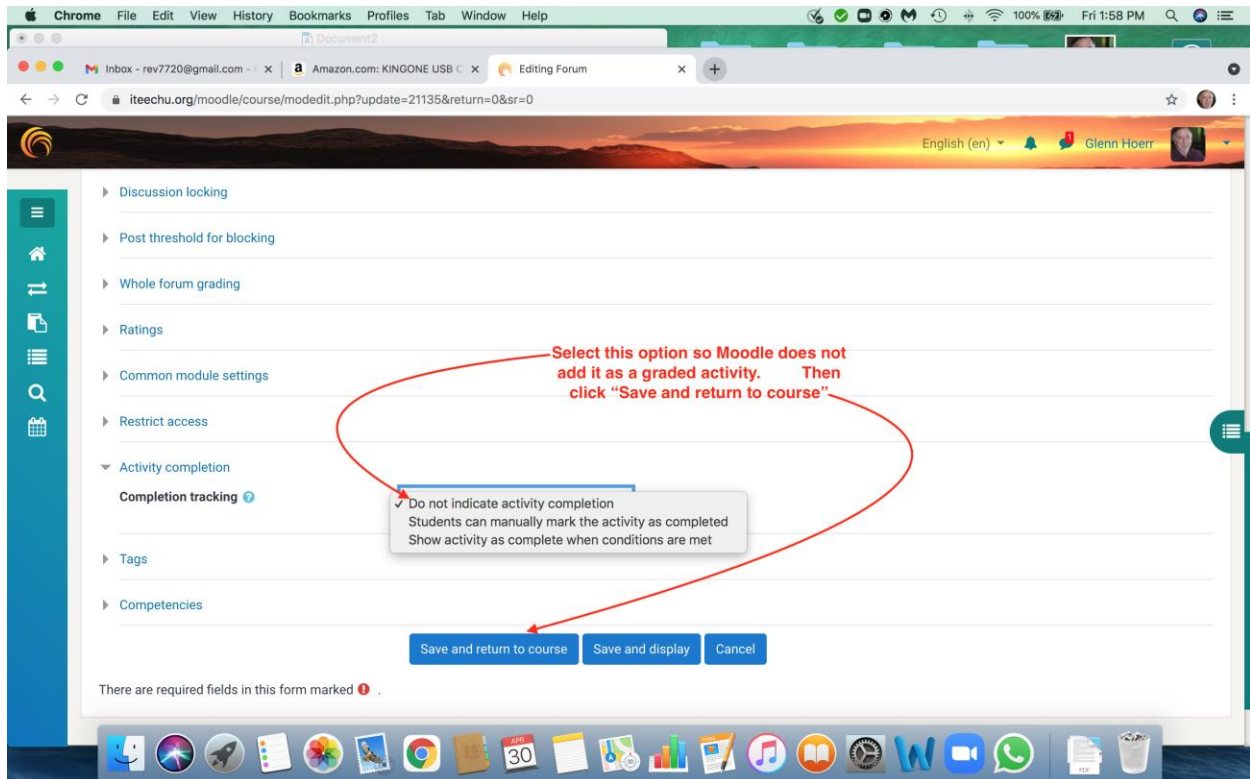
d) Facilitators can edit, add graphics, articles, videos, etc. to this section but should do so by copying one already there and then editing the text. (**Module 1, Lesson 1, Topic 2 in Facilitator Orientation**)

The screenshot shows a Moodle course page for '0390 Romans English'. The page lists several activities: Announcements, Contact Information and Office Hours, Coffee Shop, Prayer Forum, How Is This Course Graded?, Facilitator's Teaching Notes for this Course, and ITEE University Grading Notes. Red annotations and arrows provide a four-step guide to duplicating and editing a forum:

1. Open the "Editing" function (indicated by an arrow pointing to the top right 'Edit' button).
2. Select the "Edit" link adjacent to one of the "Forums" already listed in the Course Template if you are wanting to add an ungraded Forum, or another activity, like an "Article" (indicated by an arrow pointing to the 'Edit' link next to the 'Prayer Forum').
3. Select the "Duplicate" option and a copy of that Forum will appear below the original in the left column (indicated by an arrow pointing to the 'Duplicate' option in the dropdown menu).
4. Now select the Edit adjacent to the Forum copy. In the drop down select "Edit Settings." Make appropriate changes to the "Subject" and "Content" in the boxes and then save the changes. (indicated by an arrow pointing to the 'Edit Settings' option in the dropdown menu).

If you insert a new Forum, or Activity by using the "Add a new activity" option Moodle will automatically set it up to be graded which is adding a new graded component, which alters the automatic grading built into the class. **NOTE:** If you do use the "Add a new activity"

option make sure you click on the "Edit" icon in the upper right of the Home Page; then click on the word "Edit" on the right side adjacent to the activity; select "Edit Settings"; scroll down until you see the "Activity Completion" option; on the drop down arrow select "Do not indicate activity completion." This will allow the student to read, enter comments and post and reply to others without Moodle adding it to the grading. (see screenshot below)



Introduction:

This section is fairly standard in most of the courses. Some courses will have it as a separate section, while others will have it incorporated at the beginning of Module 1. It provides general information for the student about the class structure, background information about the course topic, an overview of the content and possibly a video summary. These are all graded activities set-up in the course template and only require the student to open and read them to receive a complete. As a facilitator you do not need to do make any adjustments in this section.

Modules or Lessons:

This section makes up the majority of the "Head" component for each course. It includes the content students are studying as well as most of the grading activities. Most courses will have these labeled as Modules, but some will call them Lessons. There will be anywhere from 8-15 Modules in the course.

NOTE: At the beginning of the term when the facilitator receives the course template, all the Modules for the course are "open." The facilitator should make sure these are "**HIDDEN**" from the students, except the one needed for the first week of class. Use the "Editing" and "Hide" functions to do this. (**Module 1, Lesson 1, Topic 1** "Component Editing" in the Facilitator Orientation course.) This is to help develop the "Learning Community" environment while keeping students engaged in the flow of the "weekly cycle" for the class. Each week, using the "Edit Settings" and "Show" functions, the next Module should be revealed for the students to work on.

Each course template allows the facilitator to edit the wording of the Life Notebook questions and the Discussion Forum questions in each Module. While it is an option it is not necessary and should be done sparingly.

DO NOT edit any of the actual Course Content, Self-Check Quizzes or Unit Exams. (See **Module 1, Lesson 1, Topic 3** in the Facilitator Orientation.)

Life Notebooks:

- Review the Life Notebook questions in each Module. You may edit the wording, change the question entirely, or do nothing. If you are fine with the wording, just leave them as is. (Probably the best option for facilitators regarding Life Notebook questions.)
- **DO NOT**, under any circumstances, "Delete" a Life Notebook question. This would change the Course Settings, which facilitators should not do.
- **DO NOT** add a Life Notebook question to any Module without approval from the Curriculum Director.
- **DO NOT** "Hide" a Life Notebook question. These are factored into the grading and if the student cannot see them to submit a response Moodle will show 0% complete for the assignment. Consider the Facilitator Orientation class instruction about this:

From **Module 1, Lesson 1, Topic 1**

"Consider carefully before you hide any components. Any components which you hide from students (but are still active in the Course Completion settings) will prevent your students from reaching 100% course completion."

*"Facilitators should **not** change any Course Settings, even where technically possible. These are configured as required for course components to work effectively, and changes may cause components to fail."*

- For the most part facilitators should leave the Life Notebook questions as they were designed to fit the course content and are established in the Course Settings.
- Review the instruction about Life Notebooks in **Module 2** of the Facilitator Orientation 0333 class for more clarity.

Discussion Forums:

These are designed to get the students thinking about ways the truths they are learning in a particular Module of the course content might be practically applied to life situations.

- Each Module as written in the course template contains at least one main Discussion Forum question, and often offers 1 or more "Alternate" Discussion Forum questions. They should be labeled as "alternate #".
- Facilitators should review each of the options and select the **ONE** they prefer for the class. Courses are designed for Moodle to use only one Discussion Forum per Module. Again, the question selected can be re-worded. (see **Module 1 Lesson 1, Topic 2**, page 2 in the Facilitator Orientation) but the one used should be from the course template.
- If the facilitator keeps more than one Discussion Forum, or adds one of their own choosing, this will increase the number of graded assignments for the class, as well as increase the workload and the requirements for completing the course. **One** per lesson is the intention and most manageable for students.
- **DO NOT** "Hide" Discussion Forum questions you do not intend to use for the Module. Moodle still recognizes these as needing to be completed, but since the student cannot see them Moodle will automatically record them as incomplete.

DELETE all of the Discussion Forum questions, or alternates, not being used in the class. Use the "Edit Setting" function to do this. If they are not deleted Moodle views them as assignments needing to be graded.

From the Facilitator Orientation class **Module 1, Lesson 1, Topic 2:**

*"Then, you should **DELETE** the Discussion Forums that you will not use in the class. This is very important. If you do not delete the unused Forums, the system will not be able to properly determine if a student has completed the course. Also, the course completion percentage will be incorrect, so students will wonder why they have not completed certain modules."*

You will delete them by making sure Editing is turned on, then clicking on Edit to the right of the Forum, and Delete."

- Courses are generally designed for **One** Discussion Forum per class Module. Any additional Forum questions added to a Module should be **approved by the Curriculum Director.**

Manual Completions for Students:

When all the enrolled students in your class have completed their assignments, or at least enough to complete the course, you will need to check the Course Completion Report. If they have completed, and passed, 100% of the activities required, the Moodle system will automatically show them as complete on the Course Completion Report. (The last box on the right side should have a check mark in it.) If the Completion Report does not have a check mark, then either the student has not completed a required assignment, did not receive at least an 80% on a Self-check quiz, did not receive at least a 70% average grade on the Unit Exams, or did not complete at least 70% of the Head activities for the class (Life Notebooks, reading articles, etc.) The system may not mark students automatically, even after you put in their grade for the Heart and Hands Assignments, because there are some activities that have not been completed by the student. If they had all been done, the automatic Complete would show up. HOWEVER, so long as the student completed at least 70% of them, and you have confirmed that by manually checking what has been completed, you are permitted to assign that student a manual Complete.

Here is how you would go about doing that. Go to the Course Completion Report, or the Activity Completion Report. Count all the check boxes across the page, not including "Self-check quizzes, Unit Exams, or the Heart and Hands assignments. This will tell you how many of the Head activities are included in their Course Completion determination. (NOTE: This should be the same as the number of Head activities stated in the "Facilitator's Teaching Notes for This Course" in the General section on the Home Page for the course. 70% or more of those boxes must be checked for the student to pass the class. This is in addition to completing all the Self-check quizzes with 80%, all the Unit Exams with a combined 70% average and the Heart and Hands assignments with at least a 70% grade. Now go back and count the number of checked boxes for that student. If that total is more than 70% you may manually give them a complete. If it is less you will need to review each unchecked activity to confirm it was not done, or if Moodle missed checking it. NOTE: It is somewhat common for students to miss checking the "Click Here to Submit Lesson for Grading" button at the end of the lesson. This leaves the check box for that activity blank even though

they completed all the work for the lesson. You can send them instructions for how to go back into the lesson and click the box, OR you can manually check off the box in the Activity Completion Report. When you do that Moodle sees it as a complete which raises their completion percentage. If you determine they have completed 70% or more of the activities, along with the Self-check Quizzes, the Unit Exams and the Heart and Hands assignments, return to the Course Completion Report. Looking at the row of boxes adjacent to each student's name you will see that only the solid line boxes are available for you to check in. You will notice all of the activities in the class are dotted line boxes. You cannot check them manually on the Course Completion report. You can check off individual activities manually on the Activity Completion Report. You will also notice the last column to the right, the *Course Completion* column has a dotted line box. You **cannot** check that one. The three columns before it, labeled Co-Facilitator, Facilitator and Registrar, are the manual completion ones. You see solid line boxes only in your role, and dotted line boxes in the other roles. This should make sense. The facilitator can check it off the others cannot.

If the student finished less than 100% of activities there is no automatic Complete. But, if you determine the student has completed 70% of the activities that is enough that a manual Complete from you is warranted. Go ahead and give them a manual check mark in the Facilitator column. Note that the *Course Complete* check mark will show up by itself. You could see it momentarily, or there could be a dramatic time delay. Nothing we can do about it. Thus, whenever warranted, go ahead and do mark the Facilitator's manual Complete box for students *who do not already have an automatic Complete*. Don't worry if the last column does not fill in right away. **Only do this after you have confirmed that the 70% and other required activities have been completed.**

Once you have confirmed all your students have completed everything, or been dropped, email the registrar, Bill, and let him know so he can close the class. That will complete that class for the term.

*** These highlights have been included in these guidelines as they have not been consistently applied and followed in our courses in recent terms. Please review the Facilitator Orientation course for more detailed instruction.*

Relational Aspects for Facilitating the Class:

There are a number of reasons students do not show up, or stop doing their assignments and drop from the class. These include:

- technical issues such as a lost phone, or poor internet
- personal issues such as health, work schedules, too busy
- difficulty with the English language, or cultural differences
- loss of interest
- the workload is too much for them to handle

Some of these neither iTEE or the facilitators can do anything about. We will have student attrition. We can, however, make extra efforts to communicate with the students in our classes, keep them informed, encourage them and “prod” them to successfully complete the class. This is the “Relational Aspect” of serving as a facilitator.

This is mainly a summary of some “**best practices**” for facilitator interaction with the students enrolled in your class. Much of is based on input from the Curriculum Director, Registrar, iTEE President and various current facilitators. Through some basic evaluation and observation, it has become apparent that student attrition rates diminish when there is regular communication from the facilitators, personal responses to their assignments and some general encouragement.

These are the primary means for communicating with students, encouraging the “Learning Community” environment and enhancing the relational impact:

Announcements Forum:

The facilitator can use this forum in the General section of the Home Page to add pertinent information about the class, provide updates and offer instructions. Students will need to be trained to view the Announcements forum when they login to check for any new announcements.

Prayer Requests Forum:

This is a venue where students and facilitators can add prayer requests, pray for one another and build their relational connections. As with “Announcements”, students will need to be trained to check this forum and post requests.

My Personal Story Forum:

This offers facilitators and students an opportunity to share with one another a little about who they are, what they do, their spiritual journey and their

ministry. It is an important “first step” in developing a learning community. Providing a series of questions for students to respond to enables posts to have similar information making it easier for students to provide what they are comfortable including. Reading the students’ bio is also a useful tool for facilitators to learn about their students and help them with providing pertinent comments to them.

Life Notebook Comments:

These assignments are blended throughout each Module in the course. They are intended to have the student engage with the lesson content in a personal way. It is quite common for students to share experiences they have had in their spiritual journey, or challenging life circumstances they are facing. These can only be read by the facilitator and co-facilitator, but not by other students. They offer a unique opportunity to provide direct encouragement and input to students individually. As a “**best practice**” facilitators should read each Life Notebook submission for each student, in each lesson. In addition, the facilitator has the opportunity to offer comments to the students that are specific to that student’s situation and learning. It is important for facilitators to comment to these Life Notebook submissions so students know their assignments are actually being read. Ideally, each student would receive a comment for each submission. While not every facilitator will make 100% their practice, a “**best practice**” would be to read each post, by each student and then comment to at least one Life Notebook submission, for each student, in each lesson. This will give them valuable input as well as the sense that the work they are doing is being read and considered.

NOTE: If the course has both a facilitator and co-facilitator they might share the comment aspect and decide before each lesson who will respond to which Life Notebook question. This would reduce the task for the facilitator, provide valuable experience for the co-facilitator and give more consistent input to the students.

Discussion Forum Replies:

Each Module in the course is intended to have one (1) Discussion Forum question. **NOTE:** *The reason those who design the courses generally want only 1 Discussion Question per week is time. It is simply too much for students to answer and interact meaningfully with more than one question. They struggle enough, and as has been evident, so do facilitators, with maintaining meaningful interactions with just the one (1) question. Let alone multiple discussion questions.*

Discussion Forums present situations for students to consider how they might apply the content they have studied in the lesson. These provide the venue for meaningful interaction between the facilitator and the students.

Their posts form the basis for the interaction and facilitators should look to reply to each student's post, give feedback and ask additional questions. It would be ideal to reply to 100% of the posts, but part of the goal with these forums is to get students interacting with one another. The more they do this, the less the facilitator needs to be involved. Here is a "**best practices**" model that might achieve this level of interaction if the facilitator is not able to reply to every post. Make certain, as a facilitator, every post is read. At the beginning of the class, reply to every post in the first 3-4 Modules. Be sure to ask questions in the replies, and then look to reply back to their replies. This will serve as an example to the students of what the forum discussion should look like. As students become more proficient in replying to one another the facilitator might be able to cut back on the frequency of replying. It is also a good practice to remind students during these early Modules using a WhatsApp group message that they should be replying to the other students' posts and how this develops the learning community. Reading and replying to student posts will also give the facilitator a sense of which students might need some additional coaching. WhatsApp messages are great for this type of individual care and teaching. As the students become better with the interacting the facilitator may reduce how much they reply, but it is still important to maintain a presence in the Discussion Forums throughout the entire class.

WhatsApp: (messages, phone calls, video calls)

Presently this is the most used and effective communication tool for interacting with students. Since most students use their phones for studying the class, as well as their regular communications, they receive messages and such best with WhatsApp. All students receive instruction on using WhatsApp in Student Orientation so most already have an account. Facilitators should send an email to remind students to have WhatsApp downloaded and to add the facilitator's number to their contacts. The class student list includes each student's phone number. Facilitators need to add each student to their WhatsApp contact list prior to the start of class. In addition, a group contact should be established for the class. As a "**best practice**" sending at least one group message to the class each week, particularly reminding them of the weekly study cycle and where they should be in their assignment posts, helps to keep them on track. It would also be a "**best practice**" to message each student individually each week to encourage them with where they are in their studies. If the facilitator notices a student falling behind, WhatsApp is the best way to connect with them, encourage them and learn if they are facing any difficulties. (Regularly reviewing the Activity Completion and Log reports provides valuable information on each student's work.)

Zoom Meetings:

This is a means to meet “in-person” and have the facilitators and students get acquainted, provide updates and interact with class content. Each facilitator can choose how to use this resource. An initial meeting at the start of the term, and then several more during the term, are useful in enhancing the learning community environment. Some facilitators host an optional weekly Zoom meeting to talk through the lesson for that week. Facilitators are encouraged to incorporate Zoom meetings throughout the term, though there is no requirement at this time to do so. The recommendation as a “**best practice**” would be to host at least 3 Zoom meetings during the term.

It has been demonstrated in the classes over the past several terms that consistent and meaningful interaction with the students by the facilitator increases the likelihood of students, who do not experience extenuating personal issues, completing the class successfully. It is the “pastoral care” element of teaching and models how Jesus disciplined others. iTEE Global is looking to develop consistency in how courses are set-up and taught, while allowing facilitators freedom to apply their unique skill set in how they teach the class. This will be a work in progress over the next few terms and everyone’s input and cooperation is appreciated.

Moving forward the Dean of Faculty will be observing these areas of course management during the term in each class, providing insights into how Moodle operates, presenting suggestions and appropriate points of training, and offering coaching when needed.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Glenn Hoerr
Dean of Faculty

SUMMARY of KEY FACILITATING POINTS

- 1) Facilitators will be identified and assigned to appropriate courses 14-21 days prior to the start date of the term by the Dean of Faculty
- 2) Facilitators should review the Facilitator Orientation 0333 course before they start adjusting the course template (1-2 weeks prior to term start date)

- 2) Facilitators will receive an initial list of students in their respective classes compiled by the Dean of Students and Registrar approximately 7-10 days prior to the start of class
- 3) Facilitators should login into iteechu.org/moodle/login and Launch their course after the class has been created by the Registrar
- 4) Facilitators should add appropriate content to the links in the General section of the course Home Page.
- 5) Facilitators should add a no-graded "My Personal Story" forum to the General section of the Home page.
- 6) Facilitators should **NOT** add any new graded activities to the course template.

NOTE: Graded activities are indicated by a small blank box on the right side of the page, adjacent to the activity name. Facilitators should make sure there are NO grading boxes in the General section for any added activities, articles and the like.

- 7) Facilitators should "Hide" all the class Modules except Module 1 before opening the class for students. Succeeding Modules should be opened 1 per week from that point forward.
- 8) Facilitators should **NOT** change, add to, or alter any of the course content.
- 9) Facilitators may edit wording in Life Notebook and Discussion Forum questions, but it is not required.
- 10) Life Notebook questions should **NOT** be added to the course.
- 11) Life Notebook questions should **NOT** be "Hidden" from the students. These are designed as part of the Course Settings.
- 12) Life Notebook questions should **NEVER** be "Deleted" from a Module.
- 13) Facilitators should review each Discussion Forum question and Alternate Discussion questions provided in the course template.
- 14) Facilitators should select **ONE** Discussion Forum question for each Module, but only **ONE**. This is the intent of the course developers to only have one per Module. The "Title" and wording of the selected question may be edited.
- 15) If an "Alternate" question is selected it should be given a "Title" pertinent to the Module.
- 16) After selecting the preferred Discussion Forum question the facilitator **MUST** "Delete" all the remaining Discussion Question options. Facilitators should **ALWAYS** retain one of the Discussion Question options provided in the course template. **DO NOT** delete them all and add your own question.
- 17) **DO NOT** "Hide" the extra questions. Moodle still sees them and will give a 0% completion for that item in the students' grading.
- 18) Facilitators should **NOT** add extra Discussion Forum questions without the approval of the Curriculum Director.

- 19) Facilitators should read all of the Life Notebook submissions and all of the Discussion Forum posts of the students in each Module.
- 20) Facilitators should reply consistently to student posts in each Module.
- 21) Facilitators should have weekly contact with students through WhatsApp or other appropriate means of communication.
- 22) Facilitators should have fun teaching their class.