Statement of Practice: The Role of Instructional Designers/Developers in Online Courses

Instructional design/development roles mean different things in different contexts. Because the Reinert Center is an educational development center, we do not build online courses <u>for</u> faculty. Instead, we engage in a collaborative process in which we build courses <u>with</u> faculty. This approach aligns us with our mission, our core values, and the ethical guidelines for our field. Because this approach may not be well understood, we articulate below key principles that underlie our work with individual instructors in the online environment, including when we do and do not "enter" online courses.

Administrative Access within the University LMS (Blackboard)
Reinert Center team members who provide instructional design support for online teaching will be given administrative access to all courses in the University's learning management system (LMS), currently Blackboard. This access allows us to enter/access an instructor's online course, within certain parameters, which are described below.

We will enter/access online courses only when . . .

- **The instructor is engaged in a developmental relationship with the Reinert Center.**
  We only provide this level of instructional design support to instructors with whom we have an existing/established relationship. This practice ensures that we have had at least a preliminary consultation with an instructor about a course's design, goals, etc., prior to accessing the online course.
- **The instructor invites us in.** We will not access an instructor's course unless they ask us to do so; we will not enter an online course at the request of anyone else, including the instructor's chair, dean, or other administrators.
- **The instructor also is logged into the course**. There are risks associated with entering an online course when the instructor is not "present"; we will avoid those by only logging in when the instructor also is logged in (except in the case of template/layout copy, described below).
- **We are helping the instructor to identify issues and talk through solutions they can implement themselves.** We seek to empower instructors to build their own courses, since decisions about how an online course is built are inextricable from the ways in which one teaches the course.
- **The instructor has requested that we copy a course template/layout into their course**.
  If an instructor wishes to use a course template/layout that has been developed by the Reinert Center, they can request that we copy that layout into their course shell.

All of these practices are consistent with how the Reinert Center approaches entering on-ground classrooms – by instructor invitation, while the instructor is present, focused on helping to identify solutions instructors will implement in their own teaching. More administrative functions, such as adding a link to a course, are not typical of the instructional design/instructor relationship within the context of a teaching center.

It is important to note that requests for ***technical support*** for the LMS, or requests that do not adhere to the conditions described above, generally will be routed through the ITS Help Desk and/or faculty support team.