



DODEA VIRTUAL HIGH SCHOOL Glossary of Online Learning Terms

In this glossary, you will see definitions of terms that are commonly associated with the online environment and are frequently used throughout the DoDEA Virtual High School (DVHS).

Adobe Connect Pro - Adobe Connect Pro is the web conferencing tool used by instructors of the DVHS to engage in synchronous (real-time) instruction with students. It is very similar to Defense Connect Online (DCO).

Asynchronous instruction - Instruction that is separated by time. Examples are email, online discussion forums, message boards, blogs, and podcasts.

Blog - As a noun, a website or a section of website used for expressing ideas and opinions of users in multiple modalities, often maintained by one leader. As a verb, maintaining or adding content to an ongoing asynchronous discussion housed at a target website.

Brick and mortar schools - Refers to traditional school or traditional school building, as contrasted with an online school.

Content repository - A venue for saving and sharing content. A digital content repository is an online venue for saving and sharing digital content.

Digital learning - A synonym for online learning.

Digital literacy - Digital literacy is the ability to locate, organize, understand, evaluate, analyze and create information using technology. (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2009)

Discussion board - A discussion board (known also by various other names such as discussion group, discussion forum, message board, and online forum) is a general term for any online "bulletin board" that provides a venue for questions and answers.

- Note: In the DVHS, all online instructors monitor discussion boards to ensure that students post appropriate content.

Distance education - General term for any type of educational activity in which the participants are at a distance from each other. In other words, instructors and learners are separated in space. They may or may not be separated in time (asynchronous vs. synchronous).

Face-to-Face (F2F) - When two or more people meet in person. F2F refers to the traditional classroom teaching practices as seen in brick and mortar schools.



Facilitator - The facilitator of the DVHS is a local teacher or employee at a school that supervises students during class period on a regular basis. They serve as a liaison between the online teachers, the students, parents, and school administrators.

Interaction for Learning - The flow of communications and activities within the structure of a course. The following are the three main types of interaction for learning that takes place within an online course:

1. Student to Instructor
2. Student to Student
3. Student to Content

LMS - LMS is the abbreviation for Learning Management System. An LMS is the platform or delivery system through which online courses are offered. An LMS generally includes software for creating and editing course content, communication tools, assessment tools, and other features for managing the course. In DoDEA, all online courses use Schoology as the LMS.

Online course - Any course offered over the Internet.

Online learning - Education in which instruction and content are delivered primarily over the Internet. The term does not include print-based correspondence education, broadcast television or radio, videocassettes, and stand-alone educational software programs that do not have a significant Internet-based instructional component. (U.S. Department of Education Office of Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development Policy and Program Studies Service, 2010). Used interchangeably with Virtual learning, Cyber learning, e-learning.

Openfire - Openfire is a real time collaboration (RTC) server licensed under the Open Source Apache License. It uses the only widely adopted open protocol for instant messaging, XMPP (also called Spark).

Spark - Spark is an Open Source, cross-platform IM client optimized for businesses and organizations. It features built-in support for group chat, and strong security. It also offers a great end-user experience with features like in-line spell checking, group chat room bookmarks, and tabbed conversations.

Student to Content Interaction - This type of interaction occurs when the student interacts with instructional content such as lessons within modules, online readings, and online videos.

Student to Instructor Interaction - This type of interaction occurs when the instructor directly interacts with the student either to deliver instructional content or to provide direct feedback regarding student performance. Examples include: discussion board forums, course announcements, instant messaging, web conferencing (Adobe Connect Pro), video teleconferencing (VTC), blogs, online journals, telephone, and email.



Student to Student Interaction - This type of interaction occurs when there is regular interaction among students. Activities that foster student to student interaction are collaborative and student-centered. Examples include: group discussion threads in the form of discussion boards, blogs, and wikis, and group assignments and projects.

Synchronous instruction - Instruction in which the participants interact in the same time space. Examples are web conferencing (Adobe Connect Pro), and instant messaging (Spark).

Tag - Tag also referred to as metadata is a coding statement for learning objects within a curriculum that describes the contents (using keywords, descriptive terms) enabling searches.

Threaded discussion - A forum that includes a running commentary of messages used by a group to facilitate asynchronous online discussions.

Web Conference - A system by which many computer users can communicate with each other at the same time using webcams and audio devices over the internet often referred to as a webinar. The web conferencing tool in the DVHS is Adobe Connect Pro.

Wiki - A restricted or open website developed collaboratively by a community of users, allowing any user to create, add and edit content.