

# Path to Success: Online Training Approval Process

Jeff Gold

May 1, 2024

***2024 FIRE SERVICE INSTRUCTOR  
CONFERENCE***



Jimmy Patronis Florida's Chief Financial Officer and Florida's State Fire Marshal.

Director JoAnne Rice, Division of State Fire Marshal

# Elias “Buck” Tomlinson

“This class will be the most important class you will ever take!”



46 years in the fire service as a forest ranger, Captain with NASA Fire Service, and Instructor at the Florida State Fire College.

# BFST: Delivery Formats:

1. Face-to-Face or Traditional
2. Fully Online or Distance Learning
3. Hybrid or Blended



# History of Non-Traditional Learning

- The Correspondence Course
  - Dates back to 1728 Shorthand (Next 1840)
  - 1858 University of London offered diplomas and degrees (Non-Accredited).
  - Little to no interaction with teachers (remember this).
  - Very few left? Correspondence vs. Distance Learning?

# History of Non-Traditional Learning

- The Distance Learning Course
  - 1920's radio then television (1970's).
  - 1984 University of London offered diplomas and degrees.
  - Late 1988-1989 University of Phoenix (2013)
  - 1997 Blackboard
  - 2003 Skype
  - 2005 UoP Recruiting
  - 2005 YouTube
  - 2011 Zoom
  - 2020-2021 COVID-19

# History BFST Online

- 2015 First Inquiries
- Susan Schell
- Public Safety Training & Development, LLC (October 2016)
- Ricky Rescue (November 2016)
- 28 Distance Learning Providers
- 18 Distance Learning Colleges/Universities

# History BFST Online

- June 2022 – Now:
- Only three (3) new providers.
- Only five (5) programs had classes approved.
- Disapprovals:
  - Fail to provide class to review.
  - Fail to provide JPRs that are listed in BFST Syllabus.
    - Submit a “canned class” with nothing else.

**Bureau of Fire Standards and Training**  
**BFST Courses – Approved Delivery Formats**  
**May 10, 2021**

COURSE NAME	Distance Learning	Blended	Traditional
ANALYTICAL APPROACHES TO PUBLIC FIRE PROTECTION	✓	✓	✓
APPARTUS OPERATIONS		✓	✓
ARSON INVESTIGATION			✓
BUILDING CONSTRUCTION FOR THE FIRE SERVICE	✓	✓	✓
CHIEF OFFICER	✓	✓	✓
CODES AND STANDARDS			✓
COMPANY OFFICER	✓	✓	✓
COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION	✓	✓	✓
CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTS AND PLANS REVIEW			✓
ETHICAL & LEGAL ISSUES FOR THE FIRE SERVICE	✓	✓	✓
FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY EDUCATOR I		✓	✓
FIRE & LIFE SAFETY EDUCATOR II		✓	✓
FIRE CHEMISTRY	✓	✓	✓
FIRE INVESTIGATION: ORIGIN AND CAUSE			✓
FIRE PREVENTION PRACTICES	✓	✓	✓
FIRE PREVENTION ORGANIZATION & MANAGEMENT	✓	✓	✓
FIRE SERVICE COURSE DELIVERY		✓	✓
FIRE SERVICE COURSE DESIGN		✓	✓
FIRE SERVICE HYDRAULICS		✓	✓




**Bureau of Fire Standards and Training**  
**BFST Courses – Approved Delivery Formats**  
**May 10, 2021**

COURSE NAME	Distance Learning	Blended	Traditional
FIREFIGHTING TACTICS AND STRATEGIES I	✓	✓	✓
FIREFIGHTING TACTICS AND STRATEGIES II	✓	✓	✓
FLORIDA HEALTH & SAFETY OFFICER		✓	✓
FLORIDA INCIDENT SAFETY OFFICER		✓	✓
FLORIDA STATEWIDE EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN (SERP)	✓	✓	✓
HAZMAT TECHNICIAN		✓	✓
LATENT INVESTIGATIONS			✓
LEGAL ISSUES FOR THE SAFETY OFFICER		✓	✓
LEGAL ISSUES FOR INVESTIGATORS			✓
LIVE FIRE TRAINING INSTRUCTOR PROGRAM			✓
LIVE FIRE TRAINING INSTRUCTOR REFRESHER			✓
PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT FOR THE FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICE	✓	✓	✓
PRIVATE FIRE PROTECTION SYSTEMS I	✓	✓	✓
PRIVATE FIRE PROTECTION SYSTEMS II	✓	✓	✓
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER (2017 - FEMA)	✓	✓	✓
QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS	✓	✓	✓
STRATEGIC PLANNING	✓	✓	✓

# BFST

## Online/Blended Course Evaluation Guidelines

- Review the guidelines before building the class.
- BFST Course Curriculum
- Syllabus
- Review NFA JPR (Job Performance Requirements)



THE BUREAU OF FIRE STANDARDS AND TRAINING

**Online/Blended Course Evaluation Guidelines**

The BFST Online/Blended Course Evaluation Guidelines are intended to help instructors create and facilitate well-designed online/blended courses. The Guidelines outline specific features of online/blended courses and recommend ways to design, deliver, and improve courses. The Guidelines identify the key features of courses and gives suggestions on how to implement each one in a course. Not all Guidelines will apply in every course.

The Guidelines are divided into 5 categories (course overview/information and content, learning objectives and learning engagement, learner support, interaction/presence, feedback and assessment).

The Guidelines shall be used as a tool:

- for self-assessment by instructors during the design and development of their online/blended courses.
- For BFST personnel to provide constructive feedback to instructors on the design and delivery of their online/blended courses.

Course Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_

Course Name/Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluator Name / Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

# Online Course Approval Process

The Division of the State Fire Marshal (Division) has established a THREE STEP process for the review and approval of online or blended delivery courses that lead to a Florida Fire Service Certification.

Before this can be done, the class needs to be build completely.

# Online Course Approval Process

- The FIRST STEP is to view the Bureau of Fire Standards and Training (BFST) Online/Blended Course Evaluation Guidelines document.
- The SECOND STEP is to perform a "self-review" to see how your course matches up to the BFST Guidelines. Spending a little extra time on this very important step will help ensure that the approval process moves along smoothly!
- The THIRD STEP is to submit a Request to Offer Courses in Online/Blended Format Worksheet. You must submit a separate worksheet for each course. FULL ACCESS is needed.

# Review Process

- JPR
- Syllabus
- Discussion Questions
- Timing mechanism.
- Test and Quizzes
  - Do not:
    - Look for similarity in classes.
    - Costs

# Colleges and Universities

**Regionally/Nationally Accredited Colleges and Universities** are NOT required to follow the process listed above. To obtain Bureau of Fire Standards and Training (BFST) course approval, **Regionally/Nationally Accredited Colleges and Universities** shall submit a letter to the BFST from the Program Dean listing the certification courses they intend to teach in an online/blended format.



# Are the students learning?

- Law Enforcement Academies vs. Fire Academies
- Advanced Courses
- Continuing Education





# It's Up to US!

DRAWN<sup>BY</sup>FIRE™

By PAUL COMBS

JUST READ AN ARTICLE ABOUT STERNAL I/Os, WATCHED AN INSTRUCTIVE INTERNET VIDEO, SO NATURALLY I STARTED A BLOG AS AN EXPERT ON THE SUBJECT.



COMBS DRAWN<sup>BY</sup>FIRE  
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Questions and/or Comments

# Virtual Training Platform: Pros and Cons

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# What are the advantages of Online or Distance Learning Classes?

- For the student:
  - Flexible Schedule: Depending on class structure.
  - Self-Paced: Usually weekly assignments and possible ability to work ahead.
  - No travel time to class.
  - Good for Visual Learner and possibly the Audible Learner.
  - Solitary Learner.

# What are the Disadvantages of Online or Distance Learning Classes?

- For the student:
  - Self-Paced: 80-95% of College Students procrastinate<sup>1</sup>.
  - Technology requirements.
  - Physical learner and those who learn better traditionally.
  - Social Learner.
  - Cost: Technology fees, out-of-state tuition, private corporations.

1. [https://www.apa.org/gradpsych/2010/01/procrastination#:~:text=A%202007%20meta%2Danalysis%20by,coursework%20\(Psychological%20Bulletin%2C%20Vol.](https://www.apa.org/gradpsych/2010/01/procrastination#:~:text=A%202007%20meta%2Danalysis%20by,coursework%20(Psychological%20Bulletin%2C%20Vol.)

# What are the Advantages of Online or Distance Learning Classes?

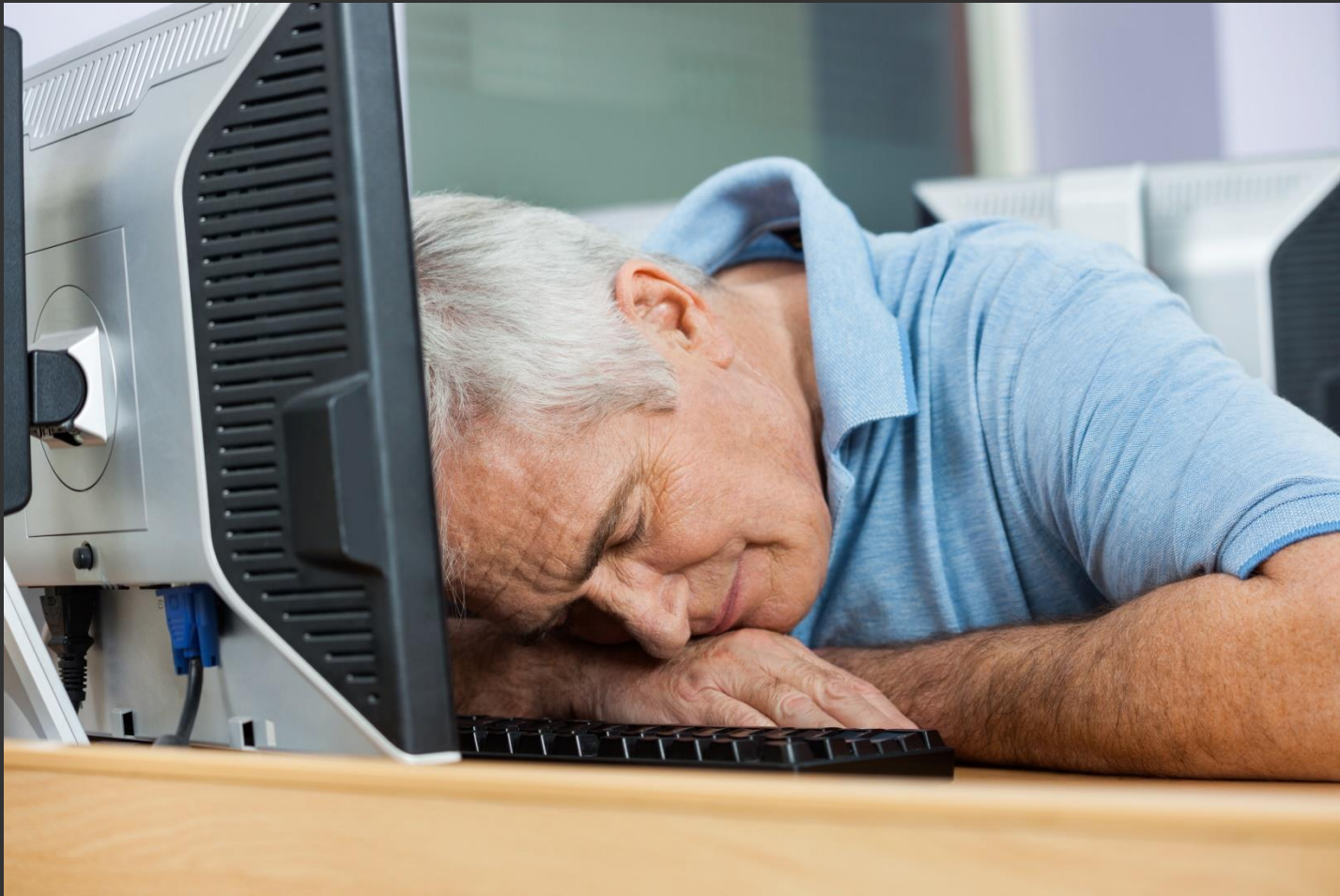
- For the School:
  - Overhead Costs: Classrooms and offices.
  - Safety: No onsite location and limited interaction with students and staff (liability).
  - “Canned” Classes.
  - PROFIT: Instructor salary (adjunct), worldwide students, and potential for passive income.

# What are the Disadvantages of Online or Distance Learning Classes?

- For the School:
  - Technology Costs: Platforms and support.
  - Lack of interaction with students and staff.
  - Accreditation standards may be more difficult.
  - Stigma of online classes (dropping/Harvard).
  - Instructors.
  - Competitive Market.



How can we make an online class more interesting?





# First: What LMS? (Learning Management System)

- Blackboard (28%)
- Canvass (21%)
- Moodle
- Google Classroom
- Others out there...
  - Size
  - Cost
  - Interaction

# Canvas LMS

The screenshot shows the Canvas LMS interface for the course **FES6736-7D36(17510) - Homeland Security & Em(ESD)**. The browser address bar shows the URL <https://ufi.instructure.com/courses/454013>. The left sidebar contains navigation options: Account, Dashboard, Courses, Calendar, Inbox, History, Help, and Zoom Conferences. The main content area features a 'Recent Announcements' section with the course title and a University of Florida banner. Below the banner is a video player for 'FES6736 Introduction Video' with the text 'Welcome to FES6736'. On the right, there are buttons for 'Immersive Reader', 'View Course Stream', 'View Course Calendar', and 'View Course Notifications'. A 'To Do' list on the right side includes three items: 'Module 2 Forum: R...', 'Module 3 Paper As...', and 'Module 4 Forum: ...'. The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the system tray with the date 5/17/2022 and time 5:45 PM.

# Blackboard LMS

The screenshot displays the Blackboard LMS interface. On the left is a dark sidebar with the Blackboard logo and navigation icons for Institution Page, Wade Fields, Activity Stream, Courses, Organizations, Calendar, Messages, Grades, Tools, and Sign Out. The main content area is titled 'Courses' and includes a 'Course Catalog' link in the top right. Below the title, there are navigation options for 'Demonstration Courses', 'Current Courses' (selected), and 'Upcoming Courses'. A search bar with the placeholder 'Search your courses' and a filter dropdown set to 'All Courses' are present. A '25 items per page' selector is also visible. The 'Favorites' section contains six course cards, each with a landscape image, course title, ID, and 'Multiple Instructors' text. The cards are: Astronomy 212 (ID: ast101\_WCF), Chemistry 101 (ID: bbw19WFields\_ultrademo\_01), English Composition (ID: ENG\_101\_wfields), Food Science (ID: Wade\_Food), Fundamentals of Artificial Intelligence (ID: Wade\_102), and Introduction to Anatomy (ID: AST\_101\_wfields). Below the favorites, a section for '2018 Spring' shows two more course cards. A help icon is located in the bottom right corner of the main content area.

# Moodle LMS

Moodle 3.9 - Sales Mary M. Thompson

Business 101  
Participants  
Badges  
Competencies  
Grades  
**General**  
Week 1  
Week 2  
Week 3  
Week 4  
Dashboard  
Site home  
Calendar  
Private files  
Content bank  
My courses  
PSCI102  
Business 101  
Panorama  
Site administration

## Intro to Business

Dashboard / My courses / Business 101 / General / YuJa

### YuJa

**Media Library** Manage Media Create Recording Video Conference

Search EDIT CHANNEL MORE ACTIONS

**PERSONAL**  
Intro to Business Additional Videos Student Submissions

My Media  
Shared With Me

**SHARED**  
EnterpriseTube  
Shared Folders  
All Channels  
User Collections

**ARCHIVE**  
My Archive

**The Cycle of Supply & Demand**  
5 months ago 3:28

**Business 101**  
a year ago 53:07

**Legal Language of the Market**  
a year ago 12:15

**Net Income Statements**  
a year ago 00:33

**Income Tax**  
a year ago 1:17

**Profile Interview Series**  
a year ago 18:27

**Mastering Accounting Numer...**  
a year ago 2:53

**Trial Balance**  
a year ago 17:19

**Accounting on Wall Street**  
a year ago 1:31

**More Media**

**Operating Financial Budgets**  
a year ago 25:06

**CEO Talks Interview**  
a year ago 23:40

**The Technological Revolution**  
a year ago 18:50

**Working Abroad as an Account...**  
a year ago 1:03

**Why Timing is Everything in th...**  
a year ago 11:54

**Bookkeeping 101**  
a year ago 2:22

**Business, Cost Behaviors**  
a year ago 1:58

**Meet Accounting Mastermind ...**  
a year ago 23:38

**The Risk of the Stock Market**  
a year ago 1:33

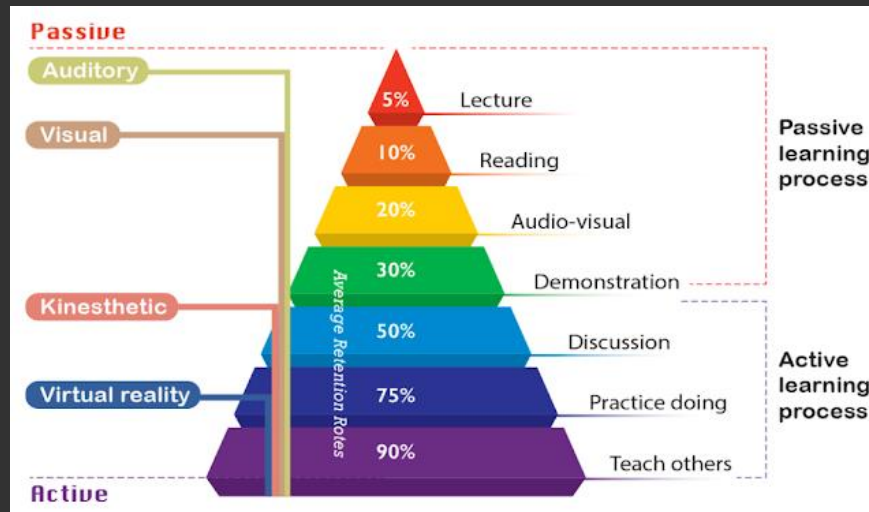
**Business Entrepreneurship Edu...**  
a year ago 17:46

**Intro to Debits and Credits**  
a year ago 4:27

**Ask Accounting Questions**  
a year ago 2:24

# Back to Basics

- Visual: Text, PowerPoint, video, etc.
- Auditory: Audible books or lessons.
- Kinesthetic: Physical activity.
- Active vs. Passive Learning



# Be Creative

- Provide links to articles, videos, audible links and books (review them first).
- Have students create video discussion replies.
- Create video lessons yourself.
- Utilize online games for review and study (Kahoot).
- Have students video themselves teaching.

# PowerPoint Presentation on Zoom saved on YouTube

Why I selected this study:



# Introductions and Syllabus

- Consider a video introduction.
- Reply back with an original message.
- Have students reply back to other's post.
- Clear syllabus with all expectations.
- Deadlines in syllabus.
- Consider a quiz about the syllabus.



# Discussion Questions

- Relevant
- Require replies for interaction.
- Minimum standards (word count) for initial response and replies.
- Monitor for inappropriate content.
- Make interactive replies YOURSELF.
- Check for fraud, spelling, and grammar errors.
- Enforce APA or MLA standards.

# Assignments

- Give clear directions and have ability to answer student questions.
- Provide rubric.
- Give examples if possible.
- Grade in timely manner and add feedback.
- Make sure assignment is correct from the instructor.
- Check for plagiarism.

# Tale of Two Services

- Fire vs. Police



# Life or Death!

- Just to make money? Passive Income? Who are you hurting?
- Easy vs. Good
- In house training (Target Solutions, etc.)
- Civil Liability – PROFIT vs. Non-Profit
- FRAUD
  - Promotions
  - Technical Ladder/Incentive Pay

“This class is the most important class you will ever take!” Buck Tomlinson

ANY  
QUESTIONS?

