

To: Faculty, Departments; Staff:

NEW REQUIREMENT FOR FULLY ONLINE SECTIONS

Beginning with Summer 2013 registration, any student wanting to register for a fully online course must first demonstrate competency in FerrisConnect skills. See below for additional details on how this competency might be met, the overall objective of this new requirement, and how this might impact you.

Background:

A survey of online faculty in March 2011 indicated a strong need for students to have some skills in the online learning platform, prior to taking an online class. Over 80% of faculty who responded to our survey answered 'strongly agree' or 'agree' to the statement: "a student orientation should be required before students can begin an online course".

As a result, the E-MAT team and the office for Online Education began development of an online learning orientation which will be required of students prior to taking a **fully online** course. This orientation will provide students with information on commonly used FerrisConnect skills and has a quiz at the end testing their knowledge. The orientation and quiz results will be managed by Extended and International Operations.

Implementation:

Summer 2013 classes which are offered in a fully online format, will need to have a new test score added as a pre-requisite to the online course section. This will be done by the departments entering the schedule into Banner. Once this pre-requisite is listed on the section, a student will only be able to register for the class if:

- a) They have completed the **online learning orientation** found at www.ferris.edu/online/prepare
or
- b) The student submits a **waiver form** indicating that they have previously been successful in a fully online course at Ferris, in this current platform (Summer 2012 this was in "Ferris Learn" and Fall 2012 this was in FerrisConnect).
or
- c) The class instructor requests that the student be registered, '**overriding**' this pre-requisite (can be done via communication within the offering department). *In addition, it will be at the Department's discretion to submit fully online courses without the pre-requisite, allowing any students to register in those classes. However, that does not override the student's need to complete the orientation for any other fully online courses.*

Once a student completes items a or b above, EIO will enter the student's test score data in Banner, so that it indicates they have completed that pre-requisite. EIO will enter these scores within 1 – 2 business days of the orientation completion or the waiver submission (we will strive to do this as early as possible). Students need only complete the orientation or waiver form ONCE for any fully-online classes.

Knowing this is a new process, we anticipate being flexible with online registrations for this first semester – Summer 2013. While we will strongly encourage students to take the orientation or submit the waiver form, we may allow their registration so that they can still complete their registrations. For those that submit their name on the wait lists, we will have a link or directions from the wait list page as well.

Both the orientation and the waiver form will be available to students by December 10th, in preparation for Summer registration availability in January. Questions and concerns on the process should be directed to EIO at ferrisonline@ferris.edu or to Deb Thalner (866-387-9430).