

- [About ILO](#)
- [High School Credit Classes](#)
- [College Credit Classes](#)
- [AEA Professional Development Classes](#)
- [FAQ](#)
- [Resources](#)
- [Contact Us](#)
- [ILO Moodle Login](#)
- [Iowa Learns](#)



Frequently Asked Questions

1. [What is Iowa Learning Online \(ILO\)?](#)
2. [Who provides the courses for ILO?](#)
3. [What technology is needed by a student enrolled in an ILO class?](#)
4. [What about the teachers for ILO?](#)
5. [What support is provided to teachers in ILO?](#)
6. [What about existing distance learning courses in Iowa? Must school districts offer their courses through ILO?](#)
7. [Are Advanced Placement or AP courses offered through ILO?](#)
8. [How are ILO courses conducted?](#)
9. [How are grades and credits determined?](#)
10. [How many courses may a student take from ILO?](#)
11. [What about class size for an ILO course?](#)
12. [How is "eligible" Iowa high school student defined?](#)
13. [When did ILO become operational?](#)
14. [Who can enroll students in courses listed on the ILO Web site?](#)
15. [What are the enrollment fees for high school courses?](#)
16. [Are courses be offered through ILO for college credit?](#)
17. [What about enrollment or tuition fees for post-secondary courses that are offered through ILO?](#)
18. [Who operates ILO?](#)
19. [Suppose I am the principal in an Iowa high school and I have students I want to enroll in an ILO course. What am I expected to provide to these students?](#)
20. [What about the personnel support at the local level?](#)
21. [What about summer school?](#)
22. [What about GED?](#)
23. [What is the role of the Site Coordinator \(coach\)?](#)
24. [Who pays for the ICN sessions associated with ILO classes?](#)
25. [Who makes the ICN reservations?](#)
26. [Are the ILO Site Coordinators\(coaches\) paid?](#)
27. [What is the school counselor's role?](#)
28. [What are some characteristics of successful online learners?](#)
29. [What is the ILO drop/withdrawal policy?](#)
30. [Who is the Site Coordinator \(coach\)in a home school situation?](#)
31. [If we have more questions, where can we get more information?](#)

1. What is Iowa Learning Online?

Iowa Learning Online (ILO) is an [initiative of the Iowa Department of Education](#) designed to help local schools expand student learning opportunities. The ILO Web site provides a list of online and Iowa Communications Network (ICN) video courses that are available to eligible Iowa high school students in grades 9-12. ILO serves as the official clearinghouse of high school course offerings, making it easier for educators and students to find the best courses to meet educational needs. The Web site is a centralized location for Iowa distance learning providers such as local school districts, postsecondary institutions (community colleges, regent universities, independent colleges/universities) and area education agencies to post information on distance learning courses to a variety of Iowa students.

In addition to providing a central, credible source for online coursework, ILO benefits students and schools in other ways. It helps address increasing teacher shortages, particularly in hard to fill regions or subject areas, and provides a wider variety of courses to all students, allowing schools to provide courses or advanced subjects that otherwise would not be available.

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2. **Who provides the courses for Iowa Learning Online?**

Course content has been obtained from any number of sources. Some courses have been developed by Iowa educators. Some Internet-based course curriculum has been purchased from outside sources, such as another state department of education or school.

[top](#)

3. **What technology is needed by a student enrolled in an ILO class?**

General guidelines for classes delivered via the Internet are found on the [technical requirements for Web-based courses](#) page. Classes delivered via the Iowa Communications Network (ICN) require that students have access to a local ICN classroom at the time and days indicated in the class description.

4. **What about the teachers for ILO?**

ILO works with Iowa schools districts and AEAs to provide teachers for the high school courses offered through ILO . Each course instructor is properly licensed in the state of Iowa with secondary level endorsement in the content area of the course (such as math or science).

For those courses for which post-secondary credit is offered, the post-secondary institutions provide the instructors.

5. **What support is provided to teachers in ILO?**

High school teachers who have never taught "at a distance" before are provided staff development opportunities through the state's Area Education Agencies.

[top](#)

6. **What about existing distance learning courses in Iowa? Must school districts offer their courses through ILO?**

Participation by Iowa districts in ILO is voluntary.

7. **Are Advanced Placement or AP courses offered through ILO?**

Online Advanced Placement courses are available through the Iowa Online AP Academy at the Belin-Blank Center, The University of Iowa. See <http://www.iowaapacademy.org> for more details. AP courses delivered through Iowa Communications Network video classrooms may be listed on the ILO Web site.

8. **How are ILO courses conducted?**

Each high school credit course has a fully licensed instructor who is responsible for teaching, assignments, homework, and assuring all coursework is completed. The instructor is located at a remote site and his or her teaching is distributed via the ICN video classrooms, via the Internet, or via similar telecommunications modes. Students will generally "attend" the class either in a computer lab or at an ICN video classroom in their home district or school. Some students are required to also participate in periodic labs at regional locations if the course (such as a science class) calls for it. All students registered in an ILO class need to be supervised by local school employees, called Site Coordinators (coaches).

[top](#)

9. **How are grades and credits determined?**

For high school credit, the course instructor determines each student's grade percentage and recommended grade, and submits the percentage and recommended grade to each student's resident district. The resident district determines the grade and award course credit. The student's transcript shows course credit as being awarded by the resident district. ILO will not award any course credits or diplomas.

For post-secondary credit, the grade will be determined by the post-

secondary institution.

10. How many courses may a student take from ILO?

A student may take as many courses as his or her district allows.

11. What about class size for an ILO course?

The district and teacher offering high school credit classes determine the class size. Each course is expected to have 25 or fewer students, although the students may be located at various remote sites. We recommend that class sizes are kept small enough to allow student-to-student interaction as well as teacher-to-student interaction.

12. How is "eligible" Iowa high school student defined?

The student must be enrolled in an accredited Iowa public or private school. The student's resident district/school is responsible for any accommodations for students with special needs.

[top](#)

13. When did ILO become operational?

Summer 2004 was the first semester in which students could enroll in classes listed on the ILO Web site.

14. Who can enroll students in courses listed on the ILO Web site?

The local Iowa school district will be the "gatekeeper." That means if a student wishes to take a course from ILO and to receive credit for the course toward high school graduation, the resident school district must approve the enrollment.

15. What are the enrollment fees for high school courses?

Enrollment fees vary. Some courses on the list of [High School Credit Classes](#) are labeled "**Enrollment Fees Waived!**" because their associated costs—teacher, student enrollment, ICN video, Moodle—are supported by the Iowa Department of Education. The course may also have loaner textbooks available. Other classes listed on the ILO Web site are shared courses that do have associated fees. Generally, high school credit classes have costs of textbooks, transportation to nearby laboratory facilities and other materials, supplies, or equipment that shall be paid for by the resident school/district. Check the Fees, Supporting Materials, and Notes fields of the course record to determine charges for each course. As well, read the [ILO Information for Administrators](#) document for more details on pricing.

[top](#)

16. Are courses offered through Iowa Learning Online for college credit?

A number of [Iowa post-secondary institutions](#) already offer their college courses to high school students. Iowa Code Chapter 261C specifies the conditions and terms by which a student may participate in post-secondary courses while still enrolled as a high school student.

17. What about enrollment or tuition fees for post-secondary courses?

Enrollment fees/tuition costs for students eligible to participate through the Post-Secondary Enrollment Options Act (PSEO) are paid by the local district of residence if the student successfully completes the course per Iowa Code Chapter 261C. The maximum amount is \$250 per course. If students need to attend any part of the course at post-secondary institution (ICN site at a college, for example), the parent/student must provide the transportation.

[top](#)

18. Who operates ILO?

The State Board of Education will serve as the policy board for high school courses offered through ILO. ILO works with Iowa school

districts to provide teachers and curriculum for ILO high school courses. Staff development support for ILO high school teachers will be provided by the state's Area Education Agencies.

19. **Suppose I am the principal in an Iowa high school and I have students I want to enroll in an ILO course. What am I expected to provide to these students?**

The course requirements for individual courses are described in the online course catalog. In general, students are expected to have access to the same level of services they currently have such as school counseling services, library/media center access and textbooks for the course. In addition, the school needs to support the student's use of distance learning technology. If the high school allows the student to enroll in an Internet-based course, the school is expected to provide the student with access to a computer during the school day with Internet connectivity through a direct connection. On occasion, the student needs access to a telephone or an ICN classroom so he/she can engage in conversations or activities with an ILO teacher and other students enrolled in the course. Likewise if the student enrolls in an ICN video course, the school needs to provide access to the school's ICN video classroom. If the course requirements specify periodic laboratory components, transportation needs to be provided for the student.

[top](#)

20. **What about the personnel support at the local level?**

While the teacher of the ILO course will be "at a distance," the local high school is expected to provide support personnel for students enrolled in an ILO high school course. There are four specific types of support needed:

- The school district determines a process by which students may participate in ILO courses. Generally the superintendent and high school principal determine this process.
- The school counselor most likely is the individual who actually enrolls students in ILO. The technology consultant or tech support person ensures that the students can technically access courses, whether via ICN video classroom or a computer connected to the Internet.
- The [Site Coordinator \(coach\)](#) is the local school staff member who meets on a regular basis with students to monitor student progress in an ILO course. The Site Coordinator (coach) may be personnel such as a school counselor, a teacher or an administrator. Paraprofessionals may serve as Site Coordinators (coaches). The district is responsible for any accommodations for students with special needs.

[top](#)

21. **What about summer school?**

ILO offers limited summer courses. Local schools/districts are permitted to recover the costs of the summer school course from the student's parents.

22. **What about GED?**

At this time, GED is not a component of ILO .

23. **What is the role of the Site Coordinator (coach)?**

The Site Coordinator (coach) provides vital support to the ILO student. The Site Coordinator (coach) works closely with the student as an advocate, an accountability partner, and a communicator to the teacher, parents, counselors, and administrators. The Site Coordinator (coach), a school employee, may be certified or non-certified.

More information on the [role of the Site Coordinator \(coach\)](#).

[top](#)

24. **Who pays for the ICN sessions associated with ILO classes?**

All ICN session fees will be paid by ILO.

25. Who makes the ICN reservations?

The course instructor or ILO management staff, working in cooperation with an ICN Regional Scheduler and the receiving school, makes all reservations.

26. Are the ILO Site Coordinators (coaches) paid?

Selecting and assigning Site Coordinators (coaches) is the responsibility of the student's school. As a result, it will be that local district's task to determine appropriate compensation.

27. What is the school counselor's role?

The school counselor's responsibility will be to select the right ILO class to address the individual student's learning needs. The counselor's knowledge of the student will greatly determine the success of the student in the online learning environment.

28. What are some characteristics of successful online learners?

Students who find success in the online learning arena:

- Keep up with their assignments
- Ask questions of both the instructor and Site Coordinator (coach)
- Attend all ICN demonstration, discussion, and help sessions
- DON'T GIVE UP!

[top](#)

29. What is the ILO drop/withdrawal policy?

Students registering for ILO courses will be expected to demonstrate ongoing, consistent evidence of engagement in the course during the first two or four weeks or they will be automatically withdrawn from the course. Exceptions for health or personal reasons may be granted by the ILO instructor after consulting with the student's Site Coordinator (coach) and school administrator. [Read more](#) for Fall/Spring and Summer semester-specific details.

30. Who is the Site Coordinator (coach) in a home school situation?

An employee of the school, whether certified or classified, must serve as the ILO student's Site Coordinator (coach). In a home school scenario, however, the Site Coordinator (coach) will work closely with the student's home school instructor (i.e. parent) to ensure that needed support is provided. It should be noted that all tests and quizzes must be directly proctored by the Site Coordinator (coach) (not the parent).

31. If we have more questions, where can we get more information?

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[top](#)