



Assessing New Online Offerings at Your Institution

If your institution is developing new online offerings, your AAUP chapter will want to make sure that the same quality courses or programs are available online as on campus. Before the chapter can make a plan, get the facts. Here are several important questions to keep in mind.

Get the facts about the contract:

1. Which online education corporation/s is the administration considering to run this course or program?
2. Can the chapter access and review the current contract between the institution and the corporation or similar contracts between the corporation and other institutions?
3. How will the contract be financed, through a flat rate or tuition-sharing?
4. Does the company under consideration use a Terms of Use or End User agreement? If so, does it contain language that could undermine faculty or student rights? (Most online learning platforms require restrictive user agreements but some open-source platforms do not. If the company under consideration does, it's important to review the agreement and understand how it may impact faculty work.)
5. Who will manage hiring and instruction for online course sections, student recruitment and enrollment, and course development?
6. Can the chapter contact faculty at institutions with similar contracts to gather information about the impact on educational quality, student privacy, academic freedom, faculty governance, and the reputation of the institution?

Discuss next steps:

1. Can the chapter investigate and recommend to the administration alternative open-source online learning platforms like [Moodle](#), [Canvas](#), or [Sakai](#)?
2. Is it clear that the administration is committed to engaging in shared governance with faculty to choose the option that best serves students and faculty? If not, what needs to happen to get faculty a seat at the table?
3. Does the chapter have enough capacity and interest to invest in a campaign around this issue?

If your chapter would like access to model language for letters of agreement and senate and chapter resolutions, visit this [member-only page](#). If your chapter needs further assistance taking concrete action steps that help shape quality online education at your institution, please email privatization@aaup.org.