PLAN: Key Takeaways

A well-designed learning environment will address individual differences, motivate the student, avoid information overload, create a real-life context, encourage social interaction, provide hands-on activities, and encourage student reflection. This environment will increase student motivation, student engagement and interaction, and an improved role for instructor.

Key Steps to Planning Your Online Course:
1. Define and refine student outcomes
   - Develop 5-7 learning outcomes per course: 1 ultimate followed by mediating and foundational goals.
   - Outcomes can relate to the cognitive, affective, or psychomotor domains.
   - Use active verbs that relate to Bloom’s Taxonomy to ensure assignments can be matched to the appropriate cognitive level.
     - Ex: “demonstrate” or “examine” rather than “understand” or “learn”
2. Determine if the course will be synchronous or asynchronous.
3. Design assessment opportunities that align with student outcomes.
4. Determine the technology that will help the students complete assessments in order to achieve learning outcomes successfully.
5. Plan development time so that the course materials are completed with time for a thorough review before the semester begins.

Questions for Application:
Q: How can I match course content, assessments, and communication style to my students’ needs?
A: Gauge your learners’ needs based on your experience with the students, a survey, and/or student introductions.

Q: What platform should I use?
A: After deciding whether your course will be synchronous, asynchronous, or hybrid/blended, use University-approved course tools such as an LMS, Google Sites, or WordPress to create and house the materials.

Q: Why are learning outcomes important to me?
A: Create learning objectives prior to writing content or assessments to help ensure all activities relate to the learning. Providing your students with the learning outcomes gives them a roadmap to follow.

Q: When does my course go live?
A: Develop a schedule for yourself to write units and assessments. Leave enough time for a final walkthrough and testing before the course is offered.