Competency-based education style gives students the flexibility to work through courses at their own pace.

Starting summer of 2017, Utah State University-Online (USU) will begin offering accelerated options for select courses. This competency-based education style gives students the flexibility to work through courses at their own pace.

“Accelerated options work seamlessly into the traditional courses,” said Kevin Shanley, director of E-Learning and System Support of USU’s Academic and Instructional Services (AIS). “Students register for the semester-based, online course, and then request the accelerated options if they are available. The process is simple and works well both for the students and for the instructors.”

Depending on the course, students can either take a comprehensive assessment to test out of a course, complete a comprehensive project, or go through the original content at a self-paced rate. Each option ensures the student’s mastery of a subject, regardless of the amount of time it takes to do so.

“Higher education is continually evolving, and these innovative, accelerated options allow USU to adapt to 21st century trends,” said Robert Wagner, USU vice president of AIS. “The students come first, and we believe this added flexibility will help them on their road to a college degree.”

Once a student has completed an accelerated option, the instructor reviews their proficiency and submits a course grade. If proficiency is not obtained, the students simply revert back to the traditional, semester-based course timeline.

To see the most recent list of accelerated courses, visit usu.edu/online/accelerate.

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