Introducing "Online Education as a Discipline" [https://doi.org/10.20935/AL434](https://doi.org/10.20935/AL434) by Steve McCarty, longtime professor in Japan

*Academia Letters* are a new genre, multiple peer reviewed and interactive (see below). Articles can be up to 1,600 words before References, and "Online Education as a Discipline" is 1,500+ words. The Academia.edu CEO’s invitation explained that possible "content reflects the entire range of scholarly thinking," including "reflections on a topic or field." This paper thus aims to paint in broad strokes a pan-disciplinary vision of online education that goes beyond technology to the mission of Academia in global society.

**ABSTRACT:** This short paper first explains what a discipline is by clarifying the difference between a field and a discipline. Then it explains what online education is, as an academic discipline. It discusses disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity issues relevant to all academic fields. The paper suggests a method for discerning the most salient definitions, particularly for technical terms in a new field, by placing terms in their historical, disciplinary, and cultural contexts. The paper thus explains how the terms distance education, e-learning, and online education - often used interchangeably - have a different meaning. The development of online education from a new field into an academic discipline is traced, particularly since 1996 through the example of wholly online academic conferences. Then the current situation of emergency remote teaching is contrasted non-judgmentally with professional online education that aims to surpass face-to-face learning outcomes in some ways through the affordances of online media, which students will also use in their future workplace. Furthermore, the dimension of institutional culture is represented in a dialogue with an Indian academic. The expectation of an online education sector of IT specialists coming to the rescue of teachers thrust online is countered by arguing for the professional development of all teachers. With online or blended learning continuing in future education and daily life, universities are needed to exercise their full disciplinarity and steward the professions in society, while academics share knowledge globally.


Read it at [https://www.academia.edu/45386298/Online_Education_as_a_Discipline](https://www.academia.edu/45386298/Online_Education_as_a_Discipline)

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