

KEPLER COLLEGE

EDUCATION PROGRAM

INSTRUCTOR

HANDBOOK



*Welcome to Kepler College. We wish you a fulfilling
teaching experience.*

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OVERVIEW

Kepler College, a premier astrological non-profit institution, stands as one of the country's longest-standing and best-established schools of astrology. Our unique structure, resembling a traditional academic program, brings together a diverse range of astrologers and viewpoints, collectively offering hundreds of years of experience.

We offer all levels of instruction, from beginning to advanced to professional. Our students can attend live classes, interact with qualified instructors, and form long-lasting relationships with each other and the community.

Kepler College was founded in the 1990s by astrologer Maggie Nalbandian, who had an idea of a university that would incorporate astrology into academia. In 2010, Kepler College began the transformation from a liberal arts degree-granting college into a diploma and certificate-based program for students of astrology. We now operate as a fully online institution with the mission to provide the highest quality education in astrology and related disciplines, including a structured pathway to a professional astrological practice.

Kepler College Mission

To provide astrologers with a quality education in astrology and related disciplines including a structured pathway to professional practice.

Learning Goals

Kepler College wants its students to become well-rounded in the field of astrology, with a grounding not only in techniques but an understanding of astrology's long history and philosophies as well as the different choices that astrologers through the ages have made concerning their practice. This handbook explains how faculty can help Kepler College achieve this goal and clarify how interactions between the administration, students, and instructors work.

Below is an overview of Kepler's learning goals. The Instructor Course Preparation material at the end of this document provides more details.

Kepler courses should be designed to help students:

- Develop Critical Thinking skills to apply to astrological practices
- Understand how astrological approaches have changed

- Expand astrological vocabulary
- See multiple perspectives about course content
- Achieve course objectives
- Identify assumptions, perceptions, and filters that could interfere with their ability to present astrological information to others.
- Explore the underlying heritage and philosophy of astrological knowledge and practice.
- Develop an ethical approach to the practice of astrology
- Understand the need for a systemic approach in applying astrological concepts and techniques

Presenting Astrological Approaches or Techniques

To present astrological material in its larger context, students need:

- A historical context including underlying assumptions, philosophy, and lineage
- Known major variations in application over time
- Inter-relationships with other methodologies
- Orientations and attitudes of authors
- Potential uses of methods and approaches
- Controversies surrounding variations in a specific approach or technique

Certificate Presentation Model

Certificate classes are either 10 or 5 weeks in length. The student can expect to spend approximately **8-10 hours per week** on coursework.

Students may take single classes, pursue certificates, or work towards a diploma. Several of our courses prepare students for qualifying exams at AFA, ISAR, and NCGR. Completing our basic diploma will enable students to take the NCGR Level 4 certification without taking the previous exams.

Kepler College currently allows open registration for any course. If there is a prerequisite study that a student needs to be successful in your course, please clearly identify the specific skills required and indicate how the student can satisfy them or provide a quiz that the student can complete to test their competency.

Instructor Role

Contractual Obligations

Instructors are hired as independent contractors meaning that:

- Instructors can end the relationship at the close of any term.
- A course can be cancelled because of insufficient students one week before the start date. If a course is cancelled, the instructor is not paid.
- Courses in the Certificate Program must fit the educational goals and objectives of the Certificate or Diploma.

- With guidance from Kepler College administration, instructors choose how to meet the course objectives and own the copyright of their presentations and written material.
- Kepler College expects instructors not to offer the same course in a competing educational program. We wish to avoid any possibility of a pricing war with other schools. We also do not want students to assume that the course automatically transfers credits to Kepler College, as different schools have varied presentation and evaluation requirements.
- Kepler College can offer a discount or scholarship for a course. In this case, instructors will receive regular pay as if the student had paid full price.
- Conversely, if you wish to offer a reduced rate to any of your personal contacts, that amount will come from the instructor payout. Contact the Registrar (registrar@keplercollege.org) with the discount desired to create a coupon code for you to offer to the people you invite at a discounted rate.

Expectations for Certificate Courses

Quick overview:

- Students can expect to spend an average of 8-10 hours per week per course on course requirements.
- Live courses have a weekly two-hour online session that covers the weekly material and allows students to interact, practice, and ask questions.
 - Self-study courses should have at least one live interaction with the student.
- Instructors will need to budget time for regular communications with students through discussion forums, direct questions, and by providing feedback on homework.
- Instructors will need to grade homework weekly.
- Instructors should respond to student questions within 24 hours unless the instructor has set a specific response. (For example, the instructor can set up office hours or say that they will respond on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.)
- Instructors must prepare a final evaluation for each student . Detailed instructions are under the Student Evaluation section.
- Kepler College can provide a teaching assistant (TA) to work alongside the teacher. Depending on experience and the level of work provided, the TA will receive a percentage of instructor pay.

Kepler College policy requires the student to attend at least one class or lab in person in order to receive a certificate.

Course Preparation and Delivery

Follow the general guidelines in the Instructor Course Preparation Manual (at the end of this handbook). Instructors can add course materials consisting of written, audio or audio-visual lectures, online links, handouts, etc. Instructors are responsible for adhering to **copyright laws and regulations**.

In general, courses require a course syllabus/outline and a weekly syllabus/outline, plus additional resources that supplement instructor lectures and assignments to demonstrate learning and provide an opportunity for students to receive feedback.

Required and Optional Reading

Along with the course outline, you need to identify any book(s) you want students to purchase for the course. The required texts for the class should total no more than \$70. If the instructor wants a more expensive text, they need approval from the administration.

IMPORTANT: You must submit an outline of your course, including your required texts, one term (4 months) before the start of the course. *Your course will be added to the Kepler College store at least eight (8) weeks before the start of the course.*

- Required materials are those that support your course objectives and that students need to complete their assignments.
- A required book may be a classic text. For anything written before 1923, you can find an ebook version that students can download for free.
- Avoid requiring additional books if you only intend to use information from one or two chapters.
- Do not assign out-of-print work unless you can find a source for adequate copies. Provide all known sources for purchase to the Kepler College office so the names can be provided to students.

You can reduce textbook costs by finding a source of used texts or using an older edition. You may also find online texts and articles via the CAELi library.

Online Learning Platform

Kepler College uses Moodle software for its online classrooms. <https://keplerclasses.org>.

You will be enrolled in the Instructor Resource section of Moodle and are required to watch the training videos provided. Additional training materials and helpful hints are available in the Library under Instructor Resources. Visit <https://moodle.org/>. If further assistance is needed, Kepler College administration is available for support.

Moodle provides an organized structure divided into weeks. At the top of the course site, you must provide a general course overview/syllabus, information on required readings, assignments, grading and how you will conduct the course.

Instructors must provide the content and modify the structure to meet each term's course needs.

In addition to written material, instructors should prepare a PowerPoint-style presentation highlighting important concepts to appeal to multiple learning styles. Instructors can also prepare prerecorded works to be added to the classroom's Vimeo showcase.

The General Course Overview

The general overview is used as a basic outline for the course in Moodle, and the course description is in our store.

The general overview should include:

- Title of course
- Overall goals and reasons for taking the course
- What students will know about and what they will be able to do by the end of the course
- Topics for each week so students can see how the overall flow builds their skills and learning to ensure they can successfully meet the overall goals and requirements of the course.
- Any required books and any optional readings they will find useful
- The types of activities they must complete (forum discussions, online meetings, papers, quizzes, labs or other assignments)
- How you will evaluate their work and understanding to give them a passing grade; optionally, you can also include any specific criteria you will use for a Pass with Distinction

The weekly overview:

Each week's outline should provide information on what will be covered so that students can

1. See how that week fits in with the overall objective of the course
2. Understand what they should focus on for the week
3. Know what assignments they need to complete.

The weekly overview should include:

- A general description of the topic(s) that will be covered that week, highlighting the key points
- Specifics on what students will know about and what they will learn and/or be able to apply.
- A discussion forum, self-marking quizzes, online articles, written assignments
- Additional resources

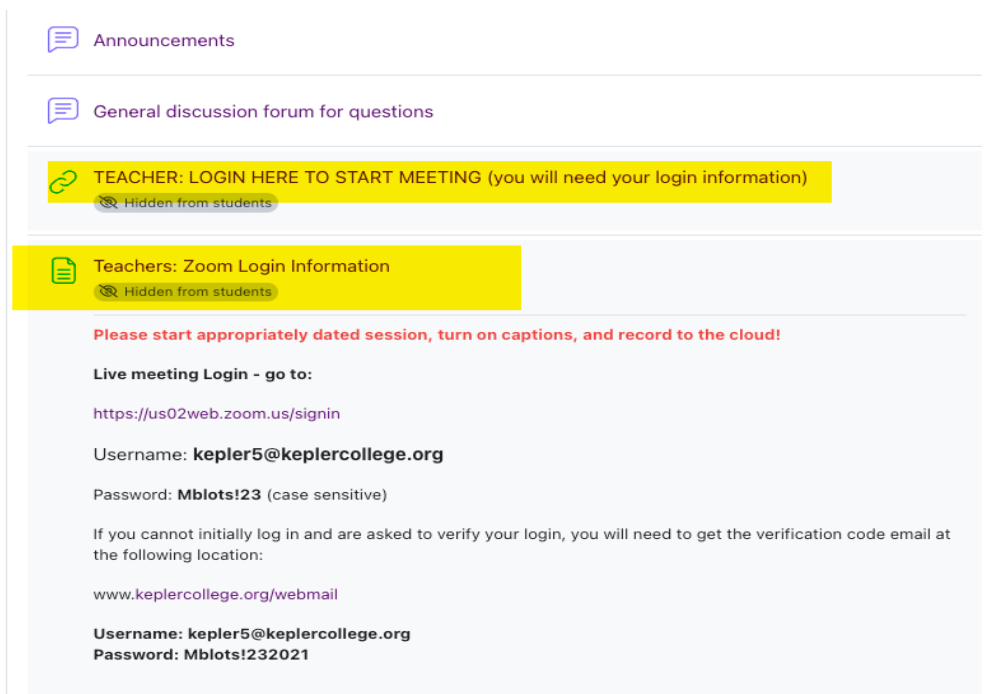
Preparation for the live sessions

Kepler College uses Zoom for all courses and meetings.

The live sessions are **not just a time** for lectures **but also** real-time interaction between students and instructors. Kepler College asks that instructors design the live sessions around these two important considerations:

1. Highlighting what is important in that week's material.
2. Give students a chance to interact with you and the material as they apply concepts, ask questions, and give opinions (with credible support).

The link to join will be at the top of the page in your online classroom. For new instructors or those needing extra help, Kepler College will assist with opening the live session and providing technical assistance.



The screenshot shows a classroom interface with several sections:

- Announcements**: A purple icon and text.
- General discussion forum for questions**: A purple icon and text.
- TEACHER: LOGIN HERE TO START MEETING (you will need your login information)**: A yellow highlighted box with a purple icon and a "Hidden from students" button.
- Teachers: Zoom Login Information**: A yellow highlighted box with a purple icon and a "Hidden from students" button.
- Please start appropriately dated session, turn on captions, and record to the cloud!**: A red text instruction.
- Live meeting Login - go to:**: A section with the following details:
 - URL: <https://us02web.zoom.us/join>
 - Username: **kepler5@keplercollege.org**
 - Password: **Mblots!23** (case sensitive)
- If you cannot initially log in and are asked to verify your login, you will need to get the verification code email at the following location:**: A section with the following details:
 - URL: www.keplercollege.org/webmail
 - Username: **kepler5@keplercollege.org**
 - Password: **Mblots!232021**

Additional information is made available in the Teachers: Tech Resources



The screenshot shows a classroom interface with a yellow highlighted box containing the text "Teachers: Tech Resources" and a "Hidden from students" button.

To record, click the **record button and record to the cloud**. Kepler College is responsible for moving the recording to Vimeo storage and including it with the classroom showcase.

Final Evaluations – Overview

(Appendix B has an example of Kepler College's evaluation workbook)

Evaluating student work is one of the most important responsibilities of an instructor. Each term, evaluations and comments for each student assigned to you must be completed before final payment is made.

The Team-Teaching Model

Because students benefit by having multiple viewpoints, Kepler encourages a team-teaching model. This could be two or more instructors who take different responsibilities for the course content or inviting a guest lecturer for one or more sessions.

Renewal of Instructor Contract

Unless you are otherwise notified or decide not to teach, your instructor contract is usually automatically renewed. Non-renewal can occur for the following reasons:

- A change in Kepler College's goals for its overall curriculum or a course that is consistently not getting enrollments.
- Repeated failure to submit evaluations on time.
- Consistent negative evaluations from students.
- Inappropriate interactions with students, such as attempting to sell or promote your products and services or other conflicts of interest which have not been disclosed and approved.
- Instructor misconduct or violation of Kepler College policies related to privacy, educational integrity, communications, harassment, or grievances.
- Other violations of the instructor contract.
- Lack of registered students

GENERAL INFORMATION

Additions and Withdrawals:

- Students can withdraw prior to the second week of class if they feel the class is not appropriate for them. They will be charged a \$20 administration fee.
- You will be notified of any students withdrawing from your course.
- Unless sold out, courses are listed for sale for four days after the start date. If a student requests to join the course after this time you will be asked for approval to add the student to your classroom

The registrar is your main contact for all issues concerning additions and withdrawals (registrar@keplercollege.org).

Auditing Students.

- Students can indicate that they choose to audit the class at any time. Auditing students are not required to submit assignments.
- Students that do not complete the required assignments by the deadlines provided, will be moved to Audit status.
 - The student has three years to access the course material
 - They will not receive a credit for the course
 - If they desire a credit, they will have to register for the course again

Guest Lecturers.

- Guest lecturers will be paid a stipend based on the number of students in the class.

- The pay will not be less than \$100 but can be determined by the instructor and the Certificate/Education Coordinator

STUDENT EVALUATION INSTRUCTIONS

The Kepler Certificate Program uses a pass/fail system with a narrative evaluation. A sample evaluation is in Appendix B and in the Kepler College Library on the Instructor website.

- Evaluation Workbook will be linked to your classroom. You can update the evaluations throughout the course.
- Evaluations should be completed within three weeks after the end of the course.
 - Submitting instructor evaluations of their students promptly is a must. Every student has the right to receive a prompt and thorough evaluation of work completed. This is an essential element of the learning process and, therefore, of the teaching process.
 - If additional time is required, please inform the registrar of the extension.
- When evaluations are completed, send an email to the Registrar letting her know they are complete registrar@keplercollege.org.
 - The registrar will send the evaluations with any comments to the students
- The Registrar's office will record all student evaluations and instructor comments in the AirTable database.

The primary purpose of the final evaluation is to be a record of growth and accomplishment for the student. You are evaluating the student's ability to complete course objectives. Be careful about including personal life circumstances or information or judgments about character or philosophy.

Kepler College uses a pass/fail system. Therefore, you do not need to compute grade-point averages. Because of a student's circumstances, their record will show one of the following letter codes:

- P = pass (average of 70 % or better)
- PD = pass with distinction (average of 94% or better)
- A = no credit/audit
- W = withdrawal

Miscellaneous

Student work may be published with student permission in the Kepler College newsletter, on the Kepler College website or other promotional materials. If a student submits something of interest, don't hesitate to contact the registrar for further direction.

EVALUATION OF INSTRUCTOR PERFORMANCE

Student Evaluations of the Course and Instructor

A confidential survey on course content and satisfaction is given to students at the end of each term and asks for feedback on:

- Clarity in stated goals and objectives of course
- Course content matching course objectives
- Presentation and apparent preparation of online course materials
- Instructor knowledge of subject matter
- Timely responses to questions
- Content includes differing views
- Instructors value the students as individuals
- Fair and timely evaluation of assignments
- Coordination of instructors (if applicable)

Review these surveys as a way of improving your classroom.

Administrative Review

As part of Kepler College's ongoing development and in-house evaluation of Kepler College's program, a member of Kepler College's Administration may be tasked to review the course and student feedback, and offer suggestions for improvement. They will evaluate:

- Classroom teaching methodology
- Appropriateness of offerings relative to stated course objectives
- Breadth and depth of material covered
- Use of historical/theoretical underpinnings and practical applications
- Incorporation of recent developments in the discipline
- Course content (including handouts and other supplementary materials)
- How well does course content match the course overview/syllabus
- Textbooks
- Assignments
- Interactions with students

EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT

An employment contract will be issued to you stating your employment and remuneration period(s). One half of your payment is made after the second week of class, after students have had the opportunity to withdraw. The second payment will be made upon completion of your student evaluation form.

Resignation or Non-Renewal of Contract

Instructors are hired as independent contractors. Employment in one term or one year is not guaranteed the following term or year. An instructor can resign at the end of the term by giving notification in writing to the Director of Operations.

When an instructor resigns or when their contract is not renewed, the following will apply:

- **Complete all outstanding work.** Instructor agrees to satisfactorily complete outstanding teaching duties for previously taught courses. Your employment contract requires that you are responsible for taking a student through to a final grade (including an Audit) by the end of the following term. If, for any medical or legal reason, you are unable to complete an evaluation for a student, that student's work will be turned over to the Administration for completion, and you will forfeit the second half of your payment.
- **Confidentiality by Instructor.** The Instructor shall not make any statements concerning Kepler College that would tend to diminish the esteem, respect, goodwill, or confidence in which the school is held by past, present, or future students, potential students, members of the astrological community, or members of the educational community. Instructors are also required to maintain confidentiality of student records in perpetuity.
- **Confidentiality by Kepler College.** The Administration (consisting of the President, Director(s) and Board of Trustees) shall not make any statements to anyone in the general astrological community or past, present or future students at Kepler College concerning the instructor's performance that would tend to diminish the esteem, respect or goodwill in which members of that community hold the instructor. To protect the integrity of legitimate credentials, Kepler College may publish a list of current and past instructors with dates of service.
- **Letter of recommendation.** If an instructor's contract is not renewed or the instructor resigns and asks for a letter of recommendation or lists a member of the Administration as a contact person in their application for employment, the instructor waives their rights under the clause "Confidentiality by Kepler College" only about such recommendation or contact.
- **Contract breach.** If Kepler College or the instructor breaches the contract agreement, and there is a dispute between the parties, both the instructor and Kepler College agree that mediation according to the procedures outlined below will be their first recourse.
- **Mediation Proceedings.** Either party may request mediation in writing to the President and Chair of the Board of Trustees. The Grievance Committee, consisting of the President, Certificate/Education

Program Coordinator, and Chair of the Board of Trustees, will be responsible for the initial review of any dispute. Unless someone else is specifically requested to participate, these are the only people involved.

All communications between the instructor and Kepler College must include all members of the Grievance Committee. If a member of the Grievance Committee is the alleged source of the grievance, that person will not be on the Grievance Committee to adjudicate the complaint. The Vice-Chair of the Board of Trustees, the Operations Director, or another member of the Administrative Council may be requested to sit in their place as agreed to by each side.

Only after negotiations and mediation fail can legal proceedings be instituted against either party for breach of contract. Each party agrees that their dispute will be submitted to binding arbitration proceedings under the laws of the State of Washington.

If such a suit were brought against an instructor, Kepler College reserves the right to include a request for damages that include attorney costs and fees, costs related to hiring a new instructor, and additional damages if the resignation results in Kepler College's inability to offer all or a portion of a course required by students to complete their certificate in a timely fashion. Kepler also acknowledges that in the event of a lawsuit, the instructor may request damages, including attorney fees, costs, and other potential compensation.

POLICIES

Non-Discrimination Policy

Kepler College is committed to encouraging personal and intellectual growth in a democratic and cooperative setting and to the principle of equal opportunity in education and employment. Kepler College expressly prohibits discrimination against any person based on culture, race, color, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation, geographical location, disability, religion, genetic information, veteran status, ancestry, national or ethnic origin, previous educational and/or work experience, and socio-economic background in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, employment policies, scholarship and loan programs, and other administered programs and activities.

Written Communications Guidelines

Because the Kepler College program is online, most communication between instructors, students and administration is through texting, email, message board or online discussion forums. This form of communication makes it easy to misinterpret meanings and emotions. When communicating in person, facial expressions, gestures, and tone of voice are used to communicate meaning. All that is unavailable when it is solely the written word.

Please adhere to the following guidelines:

- Re-read before posting. Once an email is sent or a message posted to a website, the sender has no control over the information.
- Do not forward private information a specific student sends to another party unless the student has permission.
- Only post details about a student online with written permission from the student.

- If you disagree with another person, don't voice that disagreement in any public venue. Phone or email the other person directly to discuss the situation, and only cc individuals who are directly involved or significantly influence the disagreement.
- If a significant disagreement is not resolved by email or phone, follow the grievance procedures and appeal for an outside negotiator.
- Kepler College is a non-profit corporation. Do not send any commercial advertisement to a Kepler College email list, such as all students in a class or all staff or all instructors or post a commercial advertisement in an online discussion or comment without checking with administration.

Instructor/Student Interaction

Instructor/Student relationships

Kepler College adopts the guidance from Stanford University:

There are special risks in any sexual or romantic relationship between individuals in inherently unequal positions, and parties in such a relationship assume those risks.

Because of the potential for conflict of interest, exploitation, favoritism, and bias, such relationships may undermine the real or perceived integrity of the supervision and evaluation provided. Further, these relationships are often less consensual than the individual whose position confers power or authority believes.

Just as it is unethical for an astrologer to have an intimate relationship with their clients, it is equally unethical for an instructor to have an intimate relationship with their student, and it can result in the termination of the instructor's contract.

Use of Student Charts

- The delineation of a student's chart should **not** be the primary focus of classroom exercises. No student should be required to use their chart for any assignment. Instead, all students should be asked to use a chart with A or AA-level data, which may or may not be their chart based solely on the student's choice.
- Kepler College does NOT prohibit the use of charts in the classroom to examine and explain from an educational perspective how charts have been used historically through to the present and the sociological and cultural issues involved. Nor is there a problem with comparing and contrasting how charts have been cast and interpreted by different astrological traditions.
- From an educational and ethical perspective, any required use of student charts is strongly discouraged. The reasons?
 - ◇ Personal charts contain personal data (birth date and time) and should not be shared without express permission. If you do use a student's chart, black out or remove this information so the rest of the class cannot see it.
 - ◇ Kepler College approaches the subject of astrology from an educational perspective. **Instructors cannot ethically work with an individual student to read their chart.** Do not slide into a counseling session with the student if you use personal

charts. Keep the focus on what you are trying to present as an educational concept or practice.

- ◇ Even if you do not specifically use personal charts for a live assignment, it may be appropriate to answer a particular question the student raises about their chart related to the technique that is being discussed. However, it is not appropriate to use unrelated techniques or continue answering personal questions regarding the student's chart.
- ◇ Instructors cannot take students as clients.

Privacy of Information

Except for certain public information outlined below, student records are regarded as confidential and are maintained by Kepler College primarily to benefit students in their educational and professional advancement.

Education Records

- Kepler protects the privacy of student education records except in limited circumstances. Student's educational records (including instructor and student evaluations) are kept private.
- Kepler College protects the privacy of instructor employment records. This includes instructor contracts, student evaluations of instructors, and grievance procedures.
- A "student" is defined as anyone who is or has been in attendance at Kepler College. It does not apply to records containing information gathered after a student has left Kepler College.
- A "record" means any information recorded, including handwritten, printed, or electronic and computer media. Records relating to students that are not included relate to a student as an employee; records maintained for law enforcement purposes; and notes prepared by an administrator or instructor that are used only by that person and are not shared with anyone else.

Privacy guidelines

Kepler College does not release information to the general public. Do not release:

- Information regarding a student's status
- Name(s), phone(s) and email address(s) of enrolled students
- Instructor evaluation of student's work

All outside requests for information should be forwarded to the Registrar at registrar@keplercollege.org

Contesting an Evaluation

- Kepler College's confidentiality policy is intended to protect the accuracy of records and the privacy rights of students and instructors. It is not intended to interfere with assessments or decisions of a substantive and evaluative nature made by the instructor or other professional staff.
- The Kepler administration will keep an award of credit made by an instructor based on the **quality of student work and whether the student met course requirements**.
- However, students can ask for a review by the Director of Education if they believe some factual errors or statements **violate privacy rules**. The student must first try to find a resolution directly with their instructor.
- If the case is not appropriate for review, the student and instructor will receive notice in writing within 30 days stating the specific reasons for the determination. The student retains the right to include a statement in their self-evaluation commenting on the contested information and/or stating why the student disagrees with the final decision.

THANK YOU & WELCOME

Again, welcome to the Kepler College instructor. We hope your teaching experience is both fulfilling and rewarding. Please feel free to contact the Education Coordinator if you have any questions regarding the curriculum design or presentation at education@keplercollege.org.

You can also contact the registrar at registrar@keplercollege.org. You will direct your message to the appropriate party.

APPENDIX A – THE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL

The Kepler Administrative Council includes the following

- President
- Vice President
- Operations Director
- Education Director
- Education Coordinator
- Marketing Director

The Administrative Council has responsibility for:

- The overall design and development of the Kepler College Certificate Program, workshops, and webinars
- Determining new courses and instructors
- Developing criteria for the evaluation of courses
- The review and evaluation of Kepler College courses
- The enforcement of both instructor and student rights relating to educational freedom
- Auditing course design and criteria to ensure fair and appropriate student assessment criteria
- Monitoring course content to ensure students are engaged in the development of critical thinking skills, which includes but is not limited to, the neutral presentation of multiple viewpoints when covering controversial material
- Monitoring the appropriateness of the credit assignments in classes

APPENDIX B – EVALUATION FORMS AND RUBRICS

A rubric is a rating scale that measures performance outcomes. It contains various assessment criteria for different levels of performance and thus simplifies the task of providing a final student evaluation. In addition, if used in your class, rubrics help provide students with clear grading criteria.

There are several rubrics included on the faculty website. They are not intended to be absolute guidelines but to give ideas on how you can create a rubric for your own class. Or they can help you focus your thinking on a student’s work. They can also be helpful in the written portion of your final student evaluation. You can include various phrases to help you better explain your designation of poor, fair, good or excellent.

If you create or decide to use a rubric in your final evaluations, it is also helpful for students if you post it to your course site.

Below is an example of the final evaluation form that must be completed at the end of each course.

The evaluation form will be attached to your classroom every term. The spreadsheet will contain:

- the names of all the students in your class
- Column ‘E’ is where you put the final evaluation. The cell is a dropdown. Put your cursor over the cell and you will see your selection options.
- Columns ‘R’ & ‘Q’ is where you would put any comments that you wish to go to the student or just to be added to the database.
- There is an Instruction tab for additional details.
- For questions, contact the Registrar@keplercollege.org

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	
201 Spring 2023 - 24	Course	Student First Name	Student Last Name	Student Email	Final Evaluation	Final Grade (Optional)	Live Classes (Optional)	Forum (Optional)	LAB (Optional)	Assignment (Optional)	Quiz (Optional)	Final Presentation/Exam (Optional)	Grasp of Material (Optional)	Critical Thinking (Optional)	Technique Application (Optional)	Ability to Communicate Ideas (Optional)	Observes Direction & Meet Deadlines (Optional)	Final Comments (Not sent to Students)	Final Comments for Students (Optional)
3	Fundamentals I	Sage	Abella	sageace01@gmail.com															
4	Donna and Vanessa Callum (TA)	Sarah	Bartholomew	sarahc2011@ke.com															
5		Indi	Betschart	indi@newberry.com															
6		Alex	Blevins	alexandra_blevins@gmail.com															
7		Noelle	Bryant	findngono@gmail.com															
8		Bailey	Burns	baileyburns@gmail.com															
9		Mary	Callahan	maryc21@gmail.com															
10		Grace	Calpus	gracecalpus@gmail.com															
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APPENDIX C - INSTRUCTOR COURSE PREPARATION MANUAL

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Before You Write a Course

Kepler College instructor contracts are quite specific. Other than the Fundamentals courses, Kepler College instructors own their course materials. However, Kepler College owns the course descriptions, stated objectives, and equivalency information. In other words, Kepler College owns everything about a course that could or does reside in the Catalog and on the website. However, the instructor owns the actual content. Should an instructor resign or be replaced, the new instructor will need to prepare new course material unless they are willing to pay a royalty to the initial instructor and the initial instructor agrees.

Before Kepler College adds a course to its store the instructor proposing the course produces a course description a list of learning objectives. While educational freedom covers the instructor's actual content, Kepler College's will ensure program goals and stated course objectives are met.

Presenting Astrological Material

Considerations for Assuring a Sound Educational Presentation

Keep the following considerations in mind as you prepare. They are at the heart of Kepler College's educational mission of developing fully-rounded and grounded astrological professionals.

Our certificate program combines vocational and academic education:

- Vocational education aims to provide competency in the performance of skills, duties or procedures that apply to a specific occupation, often leading to licensure in that field. Kepler College wants students to have solid astrological skills in multiple areas of practice. Kepler College also wants its student to understand more than just a specific technique so they can critically compare and evaluate different options.
- In academic education, more must be taught than how to do something. The 'how' must be grounded in its historical, philosophical and cultural context, along with a comparative and critical analysis of what is being taught. Kepler College wants to ensure that our students understand the cross-cultural and/or historical dimension of what they are learning whenever feasible so they can evaluate what they know in a larger context.

Because vocational education stresses competency, its approach to lifelong learning is **acquiring more techniques, better techniques, or more in-depth knowledge of techniques**. Often, this is linked to continuing education mandates that are part of state-sponsored licensing.

Kepler College's program is more open-ended because immediate practical application is not the only goal.

How is Kepler College's educational approach achieved in practice?

The following guidelines and questions can help the instructor present techniques within Kepler College's educational setting. If you don't know the answers to these questions or are unsure of where to look, please contact the **Certificate Coordinator, tamira@keplercollege.org**.

- Rigorously define a technique:
 - ◇ how is it calculated? What (if any) is its astronomical or temporal basis?
 - ◇ When and where did it originate? Is there a known author of the technique?
 - ◇ Where possible, provide sources for early usage and multiple sources for calculation, application, and interpretation.
 - ◇ Is it part of a cluster of other techniques (as solar arcs and midpoints are typical techniques cosmologists use)?
 - ◇ Which schools or lineages use the technique? Which reject (or ignore) the technique?
 - ◇ Did the technique migrate to other cultures or lineages?
 - ◇ What other techniques are used in place of this technique in other schools?
 - ◇ What are the philosophical underpinnings of the technique?
 - ◇ Does this technique have an underlying set of assumptions that would undermine any other technique?
 - ◇ Has the use of the technique changed over time or across cultures?
 - ◇ What are the practical applications and limitations of the technique?
 - ◇ What controversies surround the use of the technique, and in what context?

Use of Astrological Charts & Methods

Like any other component, the purpose of presenting charts in class is to teach, but to teach what? This is a good exercise in distinguishing between vocational and educational approaches. In the early phase of either vocational or educational training, the use of charts is **declarative**:

to show the components of a chart, the symbols, and the aspects. At this stage, the primary purpose of the exercise is to teach the students to identify how these pieces fit together structurally.

After the student has sufficiently learned the vocabulary to move on to higher forms of learning, the use of a **chart assumes a different role**. The next **major stage** is **functional and/or procedural**. Now, the chart is used to allow the student to verify that s/he can put together astrological sentences. The student is expected to be able to identify positions and then extract meaning from them. Repeated use of charts at this point reinforces the application of **the technique**.

In a strictly **vocational class**, the students' charts are routinely used in both stages and for a good reason. As a hook, the theory is that everyone likes to know about themselves, which has both the virtue of popularity plus there is the added value of immediate feedback from the other person

about what an astrological combination means. Furthermore, teachers use this as a way to “prove” the method – hearing input from the person that “this is true” provides positive reinforcement to everyone to continue to learn this particular method.

This can work well in an informal and private vocational setting. However, this is not the goal of teaching at Kepler College. For this procedural knowledge to become **subsumed** under conditional knowledge – which is our goal – two extra components are necessary. **Conditional knowledge, in part, requires the development of a logic base, but here, the logic base is a little different than how practitioners of astrology might see it.** A strictly vocational logic base is **aphoristic in construction**: “If the Moon is Void of Course...,” “If Mercury is retrograde...” Here, the student memorizes a series of conditional statements and learns how to apply them.

The educational logic base is more comprehensive. To use the Void of Course Moon example, here the student needs to know the definition of Void of Course;

- ◇ whether there are variations in that definition, whether it was defined the same way in different historical periods, whether it is similar in Hellenistic, Vedic, Arabic, Latin, 17th c. English or modern astrology?
- ◇ How have different cultures in different periods interpreted it, and have they used it at all?
- ◇ Should Outer planets be considered?
- ◇ What are the astronomical ramifications of Void of Course Moons?
- ◇ Can the student design an experiment to test the validity of the interpretations?
- ◇ What other techniques are necessary for Void of Course Moons to “work,”
- ◇ What other techniques are then dependent on Void of Course Moons?
- ◇ What does the concept say about definitions of aspects and orbs?

In the core astrological certificate curriculum, declarative, functional and procedural exercises are necessary to teach the student about the methods. However, critical thinking questions, for example, about the transmission and development of methods and the type of information needed to evaluate or compare different methods, must still be included. A student who has completed our core astrological curriculum should have the tools and critical thinking skills to understand what pieces of information they need to evaluate or attempt to duplicate any new astrological technique they encounter.

No courses should include a technique that is not examined critically. In particular, **no presentation of technique;**

- ◇ should advocate one point of view
- ◇ should limit the student’s choices about variations in the technique unless the exercise is clearly labelled as historical, e.g., an exercise in doing solar returns using the methods of Bonatti.
- ◇ may advocate a controversial viewpoint within the astrological community without clearly labeling the nature of the controversy and identifying alternative methods. For example, in a Western astrological presentation, it would not be appropriate to mandate a house system for other than historical reasons, and even there, it should be mentioned that such an approach is arbitrary.

The basic steps to take when teaching astrological methods are to identify:

- ◇ Origin of the method and time period
- ◇ Who uses the method
- ◇ Variations in method
- ◇ Strengths and weaknesses of method
- ◇ Controversy surrounding the method

To the greatest extent possible, Kepler College encourages the following:

- ◇ Comparative exercises encourage the students to think and to make up their own minds.
- ◇ Genuine interest in challenging the students to think about issues like consistency and proof Exercises, which encourage the students to develop reasoning skills
- ◇ Exercises which encourage the students to consider specifics within broader philosophical and historical contexts

A valuable thought experiment to remember is that Kepler College must be a welcome home for someone interested in astrology but agnostic. For example, someone who wishes to be a historian of science and who wishes to learn about how astrology works from an insider's perspective should feel just as welcome at Kepler College as someone who has passionately studied astrology and done charts for thirty years.

ADDITIONAL HELP IN DESIGNING YOUR COURSE SYLLABUS

Your course syllabus is the document in which you

- ◇ define course policies and procedures
- ◇ establish course requirements.
- ◇ Specify required reading
- ◇ detail assessment procedures

The syllabus must be available on the course site, although it may be split into multiple documents. Any changes in requirements or deadlines should be announced to the class through a **forum post** in the "News Forum." and confirmed through an updated print version of the syllabus or syllabus section.

A course syllabus is the best tool for thinking through the organization of your course. By completing this document first, you will save a great deal of time in the future because you have already done the hard work of ensuring that your course flows, that what you are hoping to teach is what students will be learning and that you know how you will be able to evaluate student's learning at the end of the course.

The syllabus will include:

- ◇ **The Course Description** (1 to 2 paragraphs). This description will be used in the catalog, Trello planning board, and in the Kepler College store. It provides an overview that should give the student a reason to want to take the course.
- ◇ **Course Learning Objectives:** Course objectives will include the types of learning you want to see from your students, which you will evaluate at the end of the course. A subset of outcomes and objectives should be created for each week or session to help the student achieve the overall course objectives.

Questions you should ask yourself as you prepare the goals and outcomes for the course:

- ◇ What do you want students to know about? What concepts should they be familiar with?
- ◇ What techniques or methods do you want students to have at least some practice in applying?
- ◇ What level of expertise do you want to develop? What techniques should they be at least comfortable with, even if not fluent?
- ◇ What methods/techniques should students be to combine and synthesize into an interpretation?
- ◇ What concepts should they have analyzed, compared or contrasted with other concepts?
- ◇ What potential application, ethical pitfalls, or concerns should they know about or have actively engaged in debating?

The next step is to turn these thoughts into a more specific form so that you and the student can measure whether or not what you intended them to learn is what occurred. Here are some examples:

- ◇ **Knowledge and Application examples:**
 - “By the end of this course, students will know about the differences between natal charts and transits, solar and other planetary returns, progressions and directions”
 - “By the end of this week, students will understand the principles of solar arc directions and how this type of chart is calculated based on the natal chart.”
 - “By the end of this week, students will know how fast planets move in their orbit around the sun compared to their movement in an astrological chart.
- ◇ **Critical Thinking examples:**
 - “By the end of this course, students will be able to compare and contrast the various cosmological concepts of Earth-centered and Sun-centered theories in the studied literature.”
 - “By the end of this course, students will be able to evaluate what forecasting technique or techniques will be most useful to answer a specific question.”
 - “By the end of this week, students will be able to create an interpretation of a planet in a particular sign and house and incorporate into that interpretation whether the planet is being challenged and/or assisted by other planets in the chart using major aspects.”
- ◇ **Critical Thinking**
 - You can also describe what the students will be covering in a more general fashion – either style is fine as long as the students get an idea of what will be expected of them and what you think is important enough that they should be able to do something with the information. Here is an example:
 - **Example:** This week, students will examine the astronomy of the planets and compare it to the planet’s astrological symbolism

Prerequisites:

- The course must be identified as Beginner, Intermediate, or Advanced.
- Any expected Prerequisites for the course need to be identified. For example, Astromapping for Beginners must be taken before any other AstroMapping courses.
- Sometimes, it is advisable to create a short placement quiz for the student to take that identifies the concepts needed to take a course successfully

Contents:

- Outline of the course contents (weekly descriptions and outcomes)

Assignments & self marking quizzes

- Description of the work expected of each student. Scheduled assignments and due dates.
- **Reading List:** Required reading and optional recommended reading / essential for your library

Grading

Explain the option of taking the course as an Audit student. By doing this at the beginning, you can establish how many students you will have to grade.

- Explanation of the grading system (minimal level for Pass, etc.).
- How will you evaluate whether or not the students have met your course objectives and outcomes?
- What factors will be included, how will they be weighted, and how will they be translated into grades?
- How will the students know how they are progressing week by week?
- Lateness of work or Missed Assignments: Specify the conditions for accepting late work and inform students if missed assignments may be made up and the procedure for doing so.
- If extra credit is an option, state what is acceptable and how it is graded.
- Include any rubrics used for evaluation.

Discuss how to reach the instructor – normally through forums or Kepler College email. Avoid providing telephone numbers as a contact form

Request to be informed of any needs of students with physical or learning disabilities.

The following items may be essential or valuable for some courses:

- ◇ If this course is a practicum, attendance is crucial. If the student is in a time zone that does not support regular attendance, arrange for the student to do their final presentation in person.
- ◇ If attendance is not a requirement, ensure that the student attends at least one class or a lab in person. Verification that the person is who they say they are is important.
- ◇ Explanation of the individual student's responsibilities in shared or collaborative work and how the individual's contributions are evaluated
- ◇ Expectations of student participation in class
- ◇ Rules concerning submission of late assignments
- ◇ Mechanisms for apprising the student of progress and standing in the course

Planning for Major Assignments

Many courses are designed around weekly Forum discussion questions, self-marking quizzes, or a short assignment with one or two major assignments to demonstrate competency. Most instructors assign a final paper or project due the last week of class. This can burden both the students and instructors, requiring them to expend a comparatively large amount of time right at the point that the extra time for preparing evaluations is due. Consider ways to break major assignments into parts or space demonstrations of learning throughout the course schedule.

Other Factors in Course Preparation

A detailed syllabus is wonderful for the student on the first day of class: she/he can easily see the contours of the course and the weeks with heavier assignments.

Kepler College has configured its classrooms to show all material organized by week so the students can see resources and assignments and receive a complete picture of how the term runs. All weeks are hidden from the student except the current week and the next week's syllabus.

As you teach your course, make any changes necessary. This classroom will be copied and used as the basis for the next time you teach this course again. Any changes to description, design, or outcomes must be communicated to the Operations Director to ensure that updates are made to the website, Trello board, and course catalog. If possible, ensure that all changes/updates are made to your course content by the end of the second last class (4th week of a 5-week course or 9th week of a 10-week course).

If your course is offered in back-to-back terms, you will be contacted by operations to let you know when they will be making a copy of your classroom. Go-ahead confirmation is needed so we know all is good to go.

Proposing a new course or changing an existing course

The instructor and the Certificate Coordinator must approve new courses or major changes to current courses. The process can be initiated by emailing the Certificate Coordinator and the Education Director.

A new course proposal should include a draft of the Overall Course Syllabus described above. If you are proposing a workshop, this document may be one page. Designing an in-depth 10-week certificate course will take longer because you must also include a brief overview of the weekly objectives and learning outcomes.

The Administrative Council will examine the information to ensure all the questions are answered and that the proposed course or course change is appropriate. With input from the Certificate Coordinator, the Administrative Council will make the final decision.

Course Scheduling

The Administrative Council and the Certificate Coordinator are responsible for determining the frequency of a course offering and in which term it appears. The Certificate Coordinator must know your availability to teach.

INTRODUCTION TO BLOOM'S TAXONOMY

Bloom's Taxonomy was the work of Benjamin Bloom, an educational psychologist. His classification system is one of the more popular ones available for understanding the depth of learning required of students. Multiple websites are devoted to this taxonomy, and some are listed below. But the overall idea is the following. There are six levels of learning as designated in this pyramid:

Knowledge – which could be considered procedural knowledge in Bigg's classification – Knowledge is the lowest level of learning. The words used for each step in learning can help you think about what you want from your course and can be used to help you complete student evaluations.



- **Knowledge:** arrange, define, duplicate, label, list, memorize, name, order, recognize, relate, recall, repeat, reproduce state.
- **Comprehension:** classify, describe, discuss, explain, express, identify, indicate, locate, recognize, report, restate, review, select, translate,
- **Application:** apply, choose, demonstrate, dramatize, employ, illustrate, interpret, operate, practice, schedule, sketch, solve, use, write.
- **Analysis:** analyze, appraise, calculate, categorize, compare, contrast, criticize, differentiate, discriminate, distinguish, examine, experiment, question, test.

- **Synthesis:** arrange, assemble, collect, compose, construct, create, design, develop, formulate, manage, organize, plan, prepare, propose, set up, write.
- **Evaluation:** appraise, argue, assess, attach, choose compare, defend estimate, judge, predict, rate, core, select, support, value, evaluate.

What you are trying to accomplish is the following:

Initially, a student needs to show that they understand the material. What are the facts? Can the student explain what they have learned in their own words? Can they apply what they have learned? This is done through the first three levels of Bloom's taxonomy:

- **Knowledge – who, what, when and where:** Define, list, tell, describe, recognize, show, label, examine, tabulate, quote, name. Knowledge represents the lowest level of learning outcomes in the cognitive domain.
- **Comprehension – grasp the meaning in the student's own words:** Discuss, summarize, interpret, explain, associate, distinguish, estimate, differentiate. Comprehension is defined as the ability to grasp the meaning of material.

- **Application – use the information:** Apply, classify, translate, demonstrate, calculate, complete, illustrate, show, solve, modify, relate, change, classify, experiment, discover, debate. Application refers to using learned material in new and concrete situations.

You want the students to show they can think critically about the material so they can successfully incorporate and consider new information. How does the student structure their argument? What are the boundaries of what s/he is examining? What is their conclusion? Can the student justify their conclusion or hypothesis?

Critical thinking is used when you organize your ideas to show patterns and meaning, resolve conflicts between differing views, recognize and relate to different value systems within the material and between the material and your values, and judge what you have learned. These are components of levels four through six in Bloom's taxonomy:

- **Analysis – identify components and find patterns.** Analysis refers to the ability to break down material into its component parts to understand its organizational structure. The student should be able to identify the motives, reasons, and/or causes, reach a conclusion based on evidence, inference, or generalization, and specify what is being examined and what is not. Keywords: Analyze, separate, order, explain, connect, classify, arrange, divide, select, explain, infer, distinguish, differentiate, compare and contrast, organize.
- **Synthesis –creative use of old ideas to create new ones.** Synthesis refers to the ability to put parts together to form a new whole. The student should be able to generalize from individual facts to identify commonalities and meta-patterns, relate knowledge from different areas, make predictions or solve problems.
 - **Keywords:** Predict, combine, integrate, modify, plan, propose, assess, rearrange, substitute, create, design, invent, compose, formulate, prepare, generalize, rewrite, produce, design, develop, synthesize, construct, how can we ..., what if...
- **Evaluation – compare and discriminate between.** Evaluation is concerned with judging the value of material for a given purpose. The student should be able to make a value judgment about the material, offer an opinion, and recognize subjectivity and underlying assumptions. Keywords: Assess, decide, rank, measure, recommend, convince, select, judge, explain, discriminate, support, conclude, compare, summarize, evaluate.