



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Office of the Chief
Information Officer

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TO: Agency Heads

FROM: *f* Lou Gallegos, *John Gallegos*
Assistant Secretary for Administration

for Scott Charbo
Chief Information Officer *Scott Charbo*

JUN 26 2003

JUN 24 2003

SUBJECT: USDA To Purchase Online Courseware Libraries from GoLearn.gov

In support of USDA's eLearning Initiative, key members of your training staffs recently completed an analysis of the Department of Agriculture's (USDA) requirements for learning management system (LMS) services. We appreciate your staffs' help with this effort.

The analysis identified a need to give USDA employees access to business, leadership and technical courses. Large selections of these courses are now available through the President's government-wide eTraining Initiative and its Web-based online learning center, GoLearn.gov. By using GoLearn.gov, USDA can acquire high quality online courseware libraries at significant savings. This memorandum transmits USDA's policy regarding the purchase and delivery of online courseware libraries and LMS services.

BACKGROUND

A key goal of the President's Management Agenda for expanding electronic government is to simplify and unify government-wide operations and leverage investments to eliminate unnecessary redundancy and duplication. The President's eTraining Initiative will provide all government agencies with a consolidated source for online courseware and LMS services at reduced overall costs. USDA also looks to the eTraining Initiative and specifically GoLearn.gov, as an important vehicle to offer training in support of our Human Capital Initiative.

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is serving as the managing partner for the President's eTraining Initiative. OPM and the Department of Transportation established GoLearn.gov as the Government's consolidated source for online courseware and supporting LMS services. GoLearn.gov now has many free online courses as well as online courseware libraries available for purchase. Through this mechanism, USDA employees and their partners have access to thousands of courses that were purchased through government-wide contracts that offer significant economies of scale savings. In many cases, the courses are available at 25% savings when compared to the identical online courses purchased by USDA organizations last year. The Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) and the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) manage the USDA eLearning effort jointly.

Agencies and staff offices are reminded of the Deputy Secretary's August 6, 2002, moratorium on making investments that overlap or duplicate the President's or USDA's eGovernment Initiatives. This moratorium applies to purchasing services from any source until the USDA-wide eLearning Initiative is completed. This effort is in its final stages. Access to USDA-wide LMS services is anticipated in the near future.

Policy for Acquiring Online Courses

USDA has entered into an interagency agreement with GoLearn.gov to acquire the online courseware libraries they currently have available as well as additional courses that will be added to their inventory in the future. The agreement specifies that OHRM will serve as USDA's exclusive ordering agent for online courseware libraries available from GoLearn.gov. The following policies will apply to the purchase of online training and related services:

- Agencies and Departmental Staff Offices will establish a point of contact for their eLearning initiatives. This point of contact will be the liaison between OHRM and OCIO on all matters related to the procedures outlined in this memorandum. Only OHRM will work directly with GoLearn.gov. OHRM's eLearning coordinator is Jeffrey Shen at 202-720-0102 or Jeffrey.Shen@usda.gov.
- Requests for access to the courses are to be sent to OHRM. Purchases and billing will be done through a centralized mechanism. OHRM will supply detailed procedures to your Personnel Officers, Training Officers, and your points of contact. Departmental staff office purchases will be coordinated by OHRM.
- At this time, all agencies must use GoLearn.gov, unless courses in which you are interested are not offered through this site. Purchase of online courseware libraries from other sources may be made only with the written approval of the Director, OHRM and the Chief Information Officer (CIO). Such approval may be granted only in those instances where courses desired by agencies are not available through GoLearn.gov.
- Procurement offices should discontinue processing requests/actions for online courseware or LMS services unless the action is accompanied by written approval from the Director, OHRM and the CIO. Agency heads are responsible to ensure that this process is followed.

USDA's eLearning Project Manager in the OCIO is Cynthia Bezz at 202-690-0683 who can assist agencies and staff offices as we begin our partnership with GoLearn.gov. If you have questions on the overall eGovernment Initiative, please contact Chris Niedermayer, Associate Chief Information Officer for eGovernment at (202) 690-2118. We appreciate your support of this initiative and look forward to providing you quality products that meet your agencies' needs.

cc:

Deputy Administrators for Management
Mission Area Personnel Officers
Head of Contracting Activity Designees
Agency CIO's
USDA Training Officers