CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, BAKERSFIELD
ACADEMIC SENATE

Distributed Learning Policy
RES 1213028

EC

RESOLVED: that the Academic Senate recommend to the President the attached Distributed Learning Policy

Rationale: In February, 2012 the Academic Senate approved the appointment of a "Distributed Learning Task Force." The newly appointed Task Force was charged with reviewing a received draft policy and to send to the Senate at a future date a proposal for a final policy. The Task Force has now completed its work on the policy and the senate now proposes its adoption as university policy.

Distribution List:

Approved by the Academic Senate on June 6, 2013
Sent to the President for approval on June 17, 2013
Approved by the President on June 19, 2013

California State University, Bakersfield
Distributed Learning Policy

The central tenet of this document is to ensure the consistent academic quality of all online/ hybrid courses and programs offered through California State University, Bakersfield. Online and hybrid instruction may allow the University to more fully achieve its mission by addressing such factors as the large service area, diverse student population, expected enrollment growth and limited space on campus. The faculty has a collective responsibility to ensure the academic quality and integrity of all courses, programs and degrees. In all circumstances, excellence in academic instruction is the clear responsibility of the University and should both inform and guide all administrative decisions.

<u>Definitions</u>

- **Face-to-Face Course** - A course in which an instructor delivers all course content in real time with students present in the same location. .
- **Web Facilitated Course** – A Course that uses web-based technology to supplement what is essentially a face-to-face course. No scheduled face-to-face class sessions are normally replaced with online activities.
- **Hybrid (Blended) Course** - Course that blends online and face-to-face delivery in which students attend class session on campus and in an online class.
- **Online Course** - Course where most or all of the content is delivered online. There are commonly no face-to-face meetings.

<u>Application</u>

This policy shall apply to all credit-bearing courses, concentrations, minors, majors, and certificate programs offered by CSUB through online and hybrid instruction, as defined above. Any academic department or faculty group offering credit-bearing courses, concentrations, minors, majors, and/or certificate programs <u>must meet</u> the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) requirements and be guided by all applicable policies, including this policy, established by the University. All asterisk (*) indicates either language or guidelines specified by WASC (Western Association of Schools and Colleges, 2009).

Basic Principles

1. Because CSUB values academic freedom and encourages instructional innovation, the faculty has the collective responsibility of ensuring academic quality and integrity for all courses, programs and degrees.

2. Online and hybrid courses and programs shall be consistent with the educational mission of CSUB.*

3. Online and hybrid instruction represents an <u>optional</u> mode of instruction that may be considered by an individual faculty member, a faculty group, and/or academic department. Nothing in this policy shall imply that online and hybrid instruction is the preferred mode of instruction.

4. If a faculty member or faculty group is interested in moving a traditional course to a hybrid or online mode, permission from the department should be obtained.

5. The Dean has the responsibility to determine the maximum amount of online instruction assigned to each faculty member each quarter, taking into account the best interests of the department.

6. Faculty and students have the right to be informed about the modes of delivery and technological requirements for each course offered by CSUB. Students will have timely access to this information.

7. The University will offer appropriate training and support services to faculty who choose to teach online and hybrid courses.* In particular, faculty will be given sufficient time to design, assess, and modify course materials and methodology for the online and hybrid courses. All classes offered through online and hybrid instruction will be approved, assessed, and evaluated in accordance with University policy for traditional modes of instruction.

8. The University shall offer appropriate support services to students taking online and hybrid courses (Allen & Seaman, 2010).

Curriculum and Instruction:

1. The faculty of a given academic program will assume responsibility and exercise oversight of its online and hybrid courses ensuring both the quality and integrity of instruction.* These responsibilities includes selecting monitoring and evaluating all faculty teaching online and hybrid courses. Courses satisfying GE University requirements or requirements in other majors need also be approved by relevant curriculum committees. In the event course visits are utilized as part of the evaluation, evaluators are reminded that the individual faculty shall be provided a notice of at least five (5) days that a course visit is to take place (Collective Bargaining Agreement, Article 15.14, 2012). Also, consultation between the faculty member being evaluated and the individual who visits his/her course is required. In addition, faculty

must adhere to best practices for online instruction (e.g., Palloff, R., & Pratt, K., 2011) and use technology that assures ADA accessibility.

2. All online and hybrid courses will provide the opportunity for substantial and timely interactions between faculty and students, between students and students, as well as students and course content.

3. Ownership of all intellectual property shall be governed by the Collective Bargaining Agreement (Article 39) and the "Academic Senate of the CSU Policy on Intellectual Property, Fair Use, and the Unbundling of Ownership Rights". It is assumed that faculty members have ownership of their work products unless a prior written agreement exists. In addition,

4. The University shall not contract with any private or public entity to deliver online and hybrid courses or programs without consultation of the relevant faculty, program, and dean. Neither will the University deliver that entity's online and hybrid courses or programs in place of, or in addition to, CSUB courses without consultation of the relevant department or program

Faculty Support:

For courses offered through online and hybrid instruction, the University shall ensure that:

1. The development and utilization of online and hybrid instruction must not be used to reduce or eliminate tenure-track faculty positions.

2. A faculty member may offer office hours electronically after consultation with and approval of the department chair and dean. The promptness and level of student interaction should be comparable to face-to-face office hours. Office hours will be in accordance with Faculty Handbook Section 303.1.3.

3. Class size and faculty workload will be determined following University and departmental standards after consultation with the faculty member, the department chair and the Dean, and must take into account the level of interaction between faculty and students. All hybrid and online courses must provide for appropriate and personal interactions between faculty and students.

4. Because online and hybrid instruction involves the use of technologies and teaching methods which requires specialized training, instructors wishing to offer online and hybrid courses will either successfully complete training or demonstrate proficiency in teaching online or hybrid courses.

Facilities and Resources Support:

1. The University shall provide appropriate information, support and training to faculty for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

2. Faculty choosing to use non-university-supported resources (e.g. third-party servers, non-university-supported software) must state in their syllabus that the University will not provide technical support for those resources. These faculty are responsible for compliance with all principles of this policy, including reasonable, technical support for students and ADA compliance. Faculty who use University supported resources will be provided with technical support of these resources and have the responsibilities to secure the support.

3. The notification process for online and hybrid courses will identify the course mode (online or hybrid) in the class schedule in order to assist in resource planning.

Student Support

For courses offered through online and/or hybrid instruction, the University shall ensure that:

1. Students have access to appropriate facilities and equipment necessary to support online and hybrid courses.*

2. Students will have sufficient access to library resources and necessary support in the use of those resources, including research techniques.

3. Students are provided with necessary technical support, during evenings and weekends as well as "regular" operating hours in conjunction with the university's posted hours, to resolve problems encountered with University supported technologies while enrolled in online and hybrid courses.*

4. Students in online and hybrid instruction programs have access to accurate and necessary information such as program goals, requirements, academic calendar, and faculty.

5. Students are provided with adequate access to the range of student services appropriate to support the online and hybrid courses offered by the University, including outreach and pre-admission advising, application for admissions, enrollment/registration, financial aid and payment arrangements, academic advising, tutoring, career counseling and placement, personal counseling, and disability services.*

6. Students are provided with adequate bookstore services for securing books, course-packs, course-related supplies and materials.*

7. Students are provided with an adequate means for resolving student complaints and grievances.*

8. Students are provided with reasonable and cost-effective ways to participate in the institution's system of student authentication.*

9. Students have unrestricted access to an online syllabus that is available 24/7.

Evaluation and Assessment

1. The Program Review process at CSUB shall be used to evaluate the educational effectiveness of online and hybrid instruction courses and programs. All academic program reviews will assess the achievement of student learning outcomes by mode of delivery.

2. The review and evaluation process will compare the outcomes from online and hybrid courses with those from similar campus-based courses.*

3. The review and evaluation process will assure that the online and hybrid courses at CSUB conform to prevailing quality standards in the field of online and hybrid instruction.*

4. The University will develop or provide systems for online course evaluation. In accordance with University policy and the faculty collective bargaining agreement, student evaluations shall be required for all classes taught by faculty.

Academic Integrity

1. Even though the academic integrity of a course is ultimately the responsibility of the faculty member teaching the course and their department, the University will provide training in the best practices for promoting academic integrity in online and hybrid instruction environments. The University through the Faculty Teaching and Learning Center (FTLC) will inform faculty involved in online and hybrid instruction about the variety of assessment tools, the relative level of security of these assessments and methods for limiting students' use of unauthorized resources. The University will provide criteria for ensuring student identity.

2. Consistent with the University policy on academic integrity, reasonable safeguards shall be in place to prevent academic dishonesty.

3. Faculty are responsible for adhering to CSU's Intellectual Property Policy and CSUB's Acceptable Use Policy (California State University, 2003).

Distributed Learning Committee

1. The University will create a Distributed Learning Committee to monitor the policies in this document.

2. The Distributed Learning Committee will have the following characteristics:

a) Membership: The Distributed Learning Committee will consist of the following members: (1) 1 faculty member elected from each of the academic schools; (2) 1 faculty member, appointed by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs; (3) the Director of Instructional Development; (4) 1 Dean elected by the Council of Deans; and (5) an undergraduate and graduate student selected by ASI (see CSUB Senate Resolution 2011-

2012 RES009). The majority of the faculty members on the committee will have experience in online teaching and learning.

b) General Duties: The Committee will monitor issues that arise with regard to the University Policy on online and hybrid instruction and shall, as it considers appropriate, (1) refer a particular issue to the Academic Senate for the development of policy or (2) develop a policy on a particular issue itself and then refer the proposed policy to the Academic Senate. The Distributed Learning Committee shall monitor and report annually to the Academic Senate on online and hybrid instruction trends and issues on the campus. Most importantly, the committee will determine how to certify faculty wishing to teach online and hybrid courses.

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