



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SACRAMENTO UNIVERSITY POLICY MANUAL

e-Learning Policy

Policy Administrator: Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs

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e-Learning Policy

Introduction

This policy shall apply to all matriculated e-Learning courses and degree/certificate programs offered by California State University, Sacramento.

Part of the challenge of all modern universities is to responsibly align information technologies as a positive force for encouraging creative pedagogies for faculty and expanding instructional options for students. The overriding intent of this policy is to enrich the campus teaching and learning environment. By locating academic decision-making within academic departments or divisions, the policy reinforces the belief that those closest to curriculum implementation best understand which courses and programs are suited for conversion to an e-Learning format.

For purposes of this policy, e-Learning is defined as a formal educational process in which 20% - 100% of the instruction takes place when the professor and students are not in the same place at the same time. Instead, the interaction between professor and students is mediated using audio, video and/or computer technologies.

Three methods are utilized to deliver e-Learning to California State University, Sacramento students. These include video-based, web-based and mixed media (video and web) delivery. Cable television, two-way compressed video, microwave, satellite, videotape, CD-ROM, web-based conferencing systems and video streaming are current video-based methods of delivery. Web-based courses typically use a variety of technologies to deliver instruction and engage students.

e-Learning formats: online and hybrid. An online course is a course with no regular on-campus class meetings. However, at the discretion of the instructor, an online course may have occasional organizational, assessment-related and/or on-campus class meetings. A hybrid course is a course in which 20% or more of course activities, including class meetings, are delivered electronically. Through the use of a variety of technologies, actual seat time is reduced and replaced with activities, discussions, and assignments completed at a distance.

e-Learning technology and pedagogy continue to evolve. In addition, each new student cohort brings a stronger set of information technology skills to the campus and has the expectation that information technology will inform and enrich their educational experience. This policy allows the University to meet the demands of student expectations as well as continue to provide broad based high quality educational opportunity to all its students.

1. General Guidelines

1.1 Through their respective departments or divisions, the faculty are responsible for deciding which courses as well as which degree/certificate programs will be offered in an e-Learning format. Programs in which less than 50% of the coursework consist of online courses require no special approvals. Any department or faculty group proposing e-Learning programs in which 50% or more of the courses are "online courses" (as defined below in Section 4) should follow the approval process described in Section 2 below.

1.2 Standard course evaluation processes currently used by academic units to assess face-to-face courses will be used to assess e-Learning courses. If it is not feasible to utilize standard processes to administer student

be used to assess e-Learning courses. If it is not feasible to utilize standard processes to administer student evaluations, then the department or college will develop an alternative process that can be utilized in order to insure that the department or college meets the requirements of existing policies regarding the student evaluation of instruction. Academic Technology and Creative Services, a Division of Academic Affairs, will provide consulting services to those academic units and faculty who wish to develop supplementary course evaluation tools for their e-Learning offerings. Faculty of record for a specific e-Learning course, department chairs, and/or faculty evaluation committees are charged with utilizing student evaluation data in a manner consistent with extant departmental policies and procedures related to the maintenance of quality instruction.

1.3 Departments and divisions have their own distinct method of selecting offerings for each semester. Hybrid and online courses require significant investments of both time and resources to both develop and sustain. In selecting courses to be delivered in these modalities practical factors such as on-going demand, faculty commitment and curricular need, must be considered. However, the overarching reason to offer e-Learning courses is to expand educational opportunities for our students by offering courses with the same quality of education as face-to-face courses, but with greater convenience and flexibility.

1.4 Each semester Academic Technology and Creative Services (ATCS) will compile a list of all courses that are designated in the course schedule as either hybrid or online courses. This list will be sent to department chairs for any corrections, additions, or deletions. After review and/or revision, this list will be posted on the ATCS web site. Courses in which more than 50% of the instruction takes place when the professor and students are not in the same place shall be so designated.

1.5 Prior approval by the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs is required for any individual, department or program to contract with any private or public entity to design, transport, and/or produce content for e-Learning courses or programs on behalf of California State University, Sacramento.

1.6 Prior approval by the relevant department or program is required for the University to contract with any private or public entity to design, transport, and/or produce content for e-Learning courses or programs.

1.7 Courses and programs delivered via e-Learning modalities must satisfy current CSU policy dealing with accessibility to information resources and technologies to all students, including individuals with disabilities.

1.8 Departments or colleges are not precluded from adopting additional guidelines relating to the creation or scheduling of online courses that are part of their curriculum. These guidelines must be consistent with existing University curricular policies.

2. Program Approval Guidelines

2.1 Departments or colleges that wish to offer an e-Learning degree/certificate program shall designate a faculty e-Learning curriculum group who will develop a plan that includes the items described in 2.1.1 - 2.1.4.

2.1.1 The role of full-time faculty in developing and implementing the proposed e-Learning degree program.

2.1.2 Student learning outcomes for the program and the plan for assessing these outcomes. While e-Learning often offers students a different experience from traditional face-to-face instruction, an existing program adapted for e-Learning must be equivalent in terms of learning outcomes to the program offered on campus. The proposal must include a description of course activities that indicate how course objectives for all e-Learning classes will be met.

2.1.3 The means for providing the methodologies/strategies for providing interaction between faculty and students as well as interaction between students.

2.1.4 A faculty development plan for providing pedagogical and technical training to teach through video-based and/or web-based technologies.

2.2 Once the program plan is developed it needs to be approved by both the department/division and the college dean in consultation with the appropriate curriculum committees employing the "Procedures for Submitting Substantive Program Change Proposals" and utilizing Form B.

2.3 The program plan must be reviewed and granted approval by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) prior to implementation. The guidelines for preparing such a proposal are consistent with the guidelines contained in this policy. Academic Affairs will assist departments in the preparation and submittal of such proposals.

3. Hybrid Course Approval

3.1 Courses in which 20% - 67 % of the in-class instruction scheduled for a traditional section of the same

course is replaced by instruction that takes place when the professor and students are not in the same physical location are termed "hybrid" courses.

3.2 An existing course that is re-designed as a hybrid so that 50% or less of the instruction takes place when the professor and students are not in the same place shall require no additional approvals.

3.3 Hybrid courses in which over 50% but no more 67% of the in-class instruction scheduled for a traditional section of the same course is replaced by instruction that takes place when the professor and students are not in the same physical location require approval as described below.

3.4 An existing course that is re-designed so that it falls into the hybrid range specified in 3.3 needs to be approved through the curricular process of the department or division offering the course. As part of this process the faculty member will submit a syllabus that includes the items described in 3.4.1 - 3.4.2.

3.4.1 Student learning outcomes for the course and the plan for assessing these outcomes. While a course formatted for e-Learning often offers students a different experience from traditional face-to-face instruction, an existing course adapted for e-Learning must be equivalent in terms of learning outcomes to the course offered on campus. The syllabus must include a description of course activities that indicate how course objectives for will be met.

3.4.2 The methodologies/strategies for providing interaction between faculty and students as well as interaction between students. This would include the types and forms of interaction expected.

4. Online Course Approval

4.1 An online course is defined as a course in which more than 67% of the in-class instruction scheduled for a traditional section of the same course is replaced by instruction that takes place when the professor and students are not in the same physical location.

4.2 An existing course that is re-designed as an online course needs to be approved through the curricular process of the department or division offering the course. Before the course can be scheduled, the academic unit must demonstrate the demand and academic need to convert the course to an online format. For example, courses that have been traditionally offered in lecture format can be modified to provide greater ease and flexibility for students meeting core degree requirements would generally be seen as strong candidates for conversion to an online format. In addition, faculty must be willing to staff the course and undergo any requisite training necessary to teach an effective online course

As part of the course approval process the faculty member will submit a syllabus that includes the items described in 3.4.1 - 3.4.2 described above.

5. Faculty Training and Development

Academic Technology and Creative Services (ATCS) , the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), working in collaboration with Information Resources and Technology (IRT) as well as the University Library regularly offer a wide range of both workshops, discussion groups and other training opportunities in the area of e-Learning. Faculty who teach or plan to teach e-Learning courses are encouraged to attend those training sessions necessary for them to acquire the pedagogical knowledge and technological skill set required for quality e-Learning.

6. Evaluation and Approval of e-Learning Courses Established Prior to the Approval of this Policy

The Program Review process will be used to review and evaluate courses established prior to the implementation date of this policy. The course and program approval guidelines specified in this policy will be used to verify compliance commencing with Academic Program Reviews conducted after Fall 2013.

7. Institutional Support

7.1 Basic Student Support Services. All regularly matriculated University students receiving instruction through e-Learning shall be provided equivalent access to the basic student support services offered on this campus. These shall include admission, course registration services, academic advising and orientation, textbook purchasing, financial aid, career development and other special program accommodations as applicable (for example, EOP, Veteran, and Reentry students). For departments or colleges that are proposing to offer an existing degree/certificate programs in an e-Learning format in which more than half of the courses are offered online, the University shall provide support so that the following programmatic services are available before the program is implemented.

7.1.1 The means for ensuring the academic integrity of student work.

7.1.1.1 The means for ensuring the academic integrity of student work.

7.1.2 The means for providing the required academic support services and resources (including library, general advising, financial aid, counseling, social support services, etc.).

7.1.3 The means whereby faculty and students will access needed technical support.

7.2 Library Support. The Library shall provide equivalent support for e-Learning courses and programs. Effective and appropriate library services and access to library collections for e-Learning may differ from those services offered on campus but they should be designed to meet a wide range of information and research needs. The requirements of academic programs should guide the Library in its response. Elements of library support available to students taking e-Learning courses may include courier and electronic document delivery, electronic reserves, electronic journals and books, full-text databases, end-user searching, reference assistance and instruction, remote access to networked resources, library resource management services, reciprocal borrowing and interlibrary loan services, cooperative arrangements with other libraries for collection access, and other strategies that emphasize access, evaluation, effective use and management of resources.

7.3 Technology Support. In order to facilitate instruction that is appropriate for selected technologies, professional support in the use of the technology is necessary. Such support shall include:

7.3.1 Training in the use of e-Learning tools, applications, and transport systems.

7.3.2 Development and production of online and mediated materials.

7.3.3 Ongoing consultation with Academic Technology and Creative Services, Information Resources and Technology, University Library, and/or College Instructional Technology (IT) staff.

7.4 Pedagogy Support. In order to facilitate instruction that is pedagogically effective, faculty members teaching e-Learning courses shall have access to pedagogy support from faculty and staff involved in e-Learning. Such support shall include:

7.4.1 Instructional design.

7.4.2 Effective pedagogical uses of specific technology.

7.4.3 Assessment strategies.

7.4.4 Ongoing consultation Academic Technology and Creative Services (ATCS) and Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) faculty staff.

7.5 Faculty Support. The University shall provide appropriate faculty support services specifically related to e-Learning. It is easy to underestimate the effort and skill required of faculty to convert from a conventional classroom format to an e-Learning format. It is even easier to underestimate the effort and skill required of faculty to change from professor-centered classroom activities to the genuinely learner-centered activities made possible by technology. Consequently, workload calculations for e-Learning courses should reflect the additional effort and skill required of faculty. The workload calculations should be uniform and consistent with guidelines currently used to determine assigned time for excess enrollment, for differences in course classification, and for faculty to make use of support available for both technology and pedagogy.

8. Copyright, Patent and Ownership Policy

Ownership of materials, faculty compensation, copyright issues, and the utilization of revenue derived from the creation and production of software, telecourses, or other media products shall be agreed upon by the faculty and the University in accordance with the University's Copyright and Patent Policy and guidelines (UMC02750).

9. Review Process

Commencing with the approval of this policy, every three years the Curriculum Policy Committee of the Faculty Senate shall initiate a review process to ascertain the need for updates or modifications to the e-Learning policy. The committee conducting this review, the majority of whom will be faculty, will consist of representatives from Academic Technology and Creative Services (ATCS), the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), the faculty who teach hybrid and online courses, the University Library and the Faculty Senate.

