

## ARTICLE 16 - DISTANCE EDUCATION

Distance education facilitates access to education and provides a path to completion of academic and career objectives for college students and community members. Recognizing this, Faculty shall be expected to participate in teaching in alternate formats and master the skill of successfully teaching online. The College seeks to provide: (a) the community with programs which increase access to educational services; (b) students with intellectually stimulating courses which have a standard commensurate with those taught via successfully established delivery modalities; and (c) Faculty with opportunities to develop programs/courses and delivery systems. Last, the College and Faculty agree to work jointly to protect the integrity of TSC programs and course offerings.

1. **Distance Education.** Distance education is a teaching modality whereby all or the majority of instruction and student interaction occurs via electronic media or equivalent mechanisms with the Faculty and students physically separated from each other. This includes courses that are fully online as well as hybrid, flipped, computer based courses and other alternate delivery methods.
2. **Course Development.**
  - A. Course development is recognized as either 1) creating a new online course, 2) converting an existing online course to the appropriate TSC online or Quality Matters format, or (3) significant redesign of an existing online course.
  - B. The Academic Dean will initiate the process for online course development. Online offerings are based on student need and are offered at the sole discretion of the College.
  - C. Textbooks should be the same for online courses as face-to-face. Textbook decisions for online courses follow the same procedures outlined in Article 17 of this Agreement.
  - D. An online course is the property of the College, and as such will be held in repository for other qualified Faculty to utilize.
3. **Class Size.** Determination of class size for online classes is at the discretion of the College.
4. **Faculty Responsibilities.**
  - A. **Online Course Shells.** Each section of every course at the College will have an online course shell pre-built. All Faculty are expected to utilize the course shell to facilitate timely feedback and communication with students. Canvas shells must have a home page that contains the following items: Instructor Name, Contact Information, Student Support Hours and the Link to Student Support Hours Location (office location or College approved platform such as Zoom, InSpace or Teams), Course Name and Number, Course Welcome, and the Getting Started Link that directs students to the modules. Canvas shells must have modules that contain course content.

- B. Online Teaching Assignments.** Assignments to teach an online course shall be voluntary. Assignments may be initiated by the Dean or at the Faculty member's request. Additionally, verification of the Faculty member's online certification/training, and/or demonstrated proficiency in online instruction as well as student engagement, success and course retention rates in current courses shall be reviewed prior to assigning Faculty members an online course(s).
- i. The Faculty member who developed the original course shall be given primary consideration to develop and teach the online course contingent upon satisfactory evaluation by the Dean. However, the College has the right to seek other qualified Faculty members or entities to develop and teach the course(s).
  - ii. The College has the right to use and/or modify through established procedures the online learning materials developed under by a Faculty member for instructional, educational, or administrative purposes.
  - iii. Prior to the development of an online course, the College and the participating Faculty member(s) shall agree on the extent and type of technical support needed and all required professional development that must be successfully completed.
  - iv. The College reserves the right to enter or monitor Faculty course shells at any time and for any reason.
  - v. Faculty agree to maintain currency in teaching and learning pedagogy and technologies that facilitate student engagement, and success in an online environment.
  - vi. Due to the speed of technological change in our society, the College and the Faculty should expect to engage in ongoing discussions and training regarding online learning issues, contractual and otherwise.
  - vii. The College shall determine which courses will be offered online, and reserves the right to schedule online and/or any alternate delivery courses to best serve student needs.
5. **Evaluation of Online Faculty.** The College shall evaluate Faculty members involved in online instruction using College-approved evaluation instruments suited for this delivery modality. The College shall grant course access to the supervising Dean at the onset of instruction.
- A. The Dean may enter an online course at any time to assess instructional quality.
  - B. Continued online teaching assignments are contingent upon but not limited to student completion rates, success rates, and student course evaluation information.
  - C. All College online courses shall be evaluated by the Dean per the following timeframe:
    - i. First semester of the launch of a new course.

- ii. Every two (2) years for existing courses, or if circumstances warrant, sooner and with greater frequency.

**6. Online Course Requirements.** Regular and substantive interaction (RSI) is the distinguishing feature of distance education versus correspondence courses and informs the amount of financial aid for which a student is eligible according to the United States Department of Education. Regular substantive interactions are interactions that are scheduled and on a predictable basis. Every RSI activity has these three distinctions:

- RSI is initiated by the instructor
- RSI is frequent and consistent
- RSI is focused on the course content

All online asynchronous courses must meet the following requirements.

Substantive interactions engage students in teaching, learning and assessment relevant to the subject matter, and must include at least two of the following actions. Activities that will meet the requirement for each action will be approved by the Vice President for Academic Affairs/Provost upon recommendation by the appropriate Academic Dean for Faculty teaching distance education courses.

Substantive interaction includes the following actions:

- Provide direct instruction;
- Assessing or providing feedback on a student's coursework;
- Providing information or responding to questions about the content of a course or competency;
- Facilitating a group discussion regarding the content of a course or competency;
- Other instructional activities approved by the institution's or program's accrediting agency.

Faculty must use the College's learning management system and other College supported technologies. Using third-party software (including textbook software) that is not accessible by the College will not meet the RSI requirement.

**7. Location of Faculty teaching online classes (asynchronous and synchronous) (standard teaching load and extra class assignments)**

The instructional hours and student learning hours for online classes (asynchronous and synchronous) within the standard teaching load and as extra teaching assignments may be requested to be conducted virtually at alternative locations including locations off-campus. Faculty must be highly engaged with their students during the online

instructional hours. Highly engaged activities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Faculty must respond to any student questions or concerns within 24 business hours, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and shall receive the same response from Administrators.
- Faculty must be available in Microsoft Teams, Zoom, or InSpace with cameras on when contacted by the College during business hours (8 am to 5 pm) within 30 minutes of the outreach during instructional class time as listed on the teaching schedule.

Faculty must make a written request and be approved each semester to conduct instructional hours and student support hours virtually at alternative locations, including locations off-campus. An approved request may be rescinded at any time.