

# **Eastern Oklahoma State College**

## **Distance Learning Policy**



# Distance Learning Policy

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Distance learning is the acquisition of knowledge and skill using electronic technologies such as computer- and Internet-based courseware and local and area-wide networks. The Distance Learning Policy of Eastern Oklahoma State College (EOSC) specifies guidelines and broad policies to promote and inform the development of and use of distance learning. It provides a basis for standardised and structured approach to the use of this medium.

### **Policy Objectives**

The objectives of EOSC's Distance Learning policy are to:

- Expand effective learning opportunities through enhanced, hybrid and online courses, using the most appropriate technologies and approaches to fit the learners' circumstances.
- Monitor latest developments in distance learning to help promote what could be useful in reaching additional learners and improving the teaching-learning processes.
- Support and perform limited pilot course deliveries to test the use of technologies and approaches in reaching program objectives.
- Provide a technological infrastructure that may be used to support course development, design and delivery.
- Develop and provide the training necessary for EOSC faculty to gain the skills to develop, design and deliver course materials using the institution's course management system.

### **Technical Support Services**

Eastern Oklahoma State College is committed to quality distance education and will present numerous support services for all aspects of any course as defined above. The primary support for technical assistance for all distance learning will be provided through the *Computer Services Department*. Primary support for design related issues will be facilitated by Eastern's *Instructional Designer*.

### **Faculty Qualifications**

The same faculty qualifications will be applied to distance education courses/programs as to all other conventional courses/programs. In addition to this, all faculty (including those already teaching online courses) scheduled to teach online courses will be required to successfully complete an online orientation to teaching using online course management software. Follow-up sessions, both on-line and face-to-face will be provided as needed (updates to course management software, new software, etc.).

### **Faculty Professional Development Plan for in-service online workshops and online Blackboard courses**

Faculty developing, designing and instructing courses at Eastern Oklahoma State College will be required to attend and master Eastern's in-service professional development workshop series for online faculty and the Blackboard online courses which will be delivered across the institution's learning platform. The faculty member may also be grandfathered through a combination of previous online teaching experience, previous training in the Blackboard Learn 9.1 platform, approval of the Division Dean and Vice President for Academic Affairs, and a

completed *Eastern Course Review* in which the first semester course design meets all best practice standards on the course review.

The workshop series will be designed to facilitate faculty developing course content and designing online courses based upon the following criteria:

**Criterion 1: Multimodal Instruction.** Multimodal instruction incorporates a variety of instructional delivery methods, accommodating multiple learning styles and allowing for a variety of ways for learners to demonstrate knowledge.

**Criterion 2: Application of best practices in online instruction.** The standard behind the best practices in online instructions will be driven by the essential standards of the Quality Matters Rubric.

## Course Development and Compensation

### Development and Design Requirements for Online Courses:

Faculty developing course preparations for online course delivery will be required to:

1. Submit an application to and receive approval from both Division Dean and VPAA to teach the online course. *See Appendix A*
2. Develop content and design a course syllabus using Eastern's adopted standardized format which will open in the institution's adopted learning platform
3. Include in the syllabus and online course, course-level learning objectives which are measurable and aligned with the learning materials and student activities of the course
4. Include in the online course, unit/module-level learning objectives which are measurable and aligned with the course-level learning objectives
5. Develop and design course content which should include instructional materials, learning activities and assessments which align with the learning objectives
6. Facilitate student's access to tutorials on how to use Blackboard.
7. Develop and design communications requirements that are either synchronous or asynchronous for instructor/student interaction

### **Faculty Compensation for Development and Designing of Online Courses will be based on the following criteria:**

Criterion 1: The course being developed and designed must meet the following criteria to be considered for faculty compensation

1. The faculty instructing the course must do the course design
2. The course must be the instructor's course development and design or a significantly redesigned prepackaged course
3. The course is a new content development and a new design for first-time offered online courses to receive a \$1,200.00 compensation for course development and design       **-or-**
4. The course must be a new content development and a re-design of a previously offered online course to receive a \$750.00 compensation for course development and design. The redesign must be driven by substantial changes to the course.

Criterion 2: Faculty member must complete the following professional development workshop for online faculty before course content development and design compensation will be considered:

1. Basic Blackboard Course Part 1 and Part 2 (Getting Started with Blackboard and Building Courses) which also incorporates the application of the QM rubric.

Criterion 3: Complete an application to teach an online course which will be approved by the Division Dean and the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

## Quality Control

All distance education online courses will be developed and designed in accordance with Best Practices as defined by the Oklahoma State Regents of Higher Education and Eastern Oklahoma State College. *The Instructional Designer, Department Chair, Academic Deans, and Vice President of Academic Affairs* will ensure that all courses meet suitable standards and practices. Periodic internal course reviews using a rubric based on Quality Matters (QM) will be conducted by the Instructional Designer or other qualified QM certified peer reviewers. In the event a course fails to meet the essential standards of the Quality Matters Rubric, the faculty member will be given an opportunity to improve the course design to meet the essential standards. If the faculty member wants to continue to teach the course online the standards will have to be met by the next time the course is offered. Courses will not be offered that continue to fail best practice standards in course design.

## Grievance Procedure

If the faculty member feels their course was incorrectly reviewed by the Course Reviewer, the initial appeal will begin with a formal defense submitted in writing, by the faculty member, to the Course Reviewer. If no resolution is reached, the next level of appeal goes to the Division Dean. If resolution is still unattainable, the faculty member can appeal to a three member faculty committee, appointed by the Vice President of Academic Affairs (in the same procedure as outlined in the Eastern Oklahoma State College Faculty Handbook as for the Tenure Committee).

## Compensation for exceeding student enrollment limits of 20 students

EOSC faculty shall be compensated for instruction of any online course which exceeds the institutions enrollment standard of 20 based on the following: Student Enrollment (post "no show" date)	Results in pay
Up to 20	Full load
21-25	No additional pay
26-50	Full load as new section for the faculty member

## Assessment

The comparable assessment measures will be applied to distance education courses/programs as to all other conventional courses/programs, with two exceptions:

1. Assessment of communications which are either synchronous or asynchronous for instructor/student interaction
2. A course evaluation will be administered to all students enrolled in online courses. This survey will include, but not be limited to, instructor performance, content, and technical concerns.

## Ownership

### Definitions

**Author** – Full time or adjunct faculty at Eastern Oklahoma State College. This policy and definition does not pertain to courses created by third parties

**College** – Eastern Oklahoma State College

**Course** – Any material that has been uploaded to any online learning platform or server used by College or previously used by other institutions of higher education.

**Course Content** – The layout, language, and required expertise that make up the Course

**Course Design** – The creative process involved in creating the Course Content for electronic delivery

**Course Use** – A situation in which the College offers credit and allows enrollment for a Course that was previously developed either for College or for another institution of higher education.

### General Policy Rules

- When an Author has designed an online Course on their own volition without a contract for Course Design, compensation from College, or with compensation from a previous employer, then the Author retains exclusive rights to and ownership of the Course and all Course Content.
- When College and Author enter into a contractual relationship with compensation specifically earmarked for online Course Design or Course Use, the contractual language determines ownership. If the contract is one for general employment with no payment specifically earmarked for online Course Design or Course Use, the Author retains exclusive rights to and ownership of the Course and all Course Content.
- If the Author has created a Course under a contract with a clause giving dual ownership to College, then the Course is dually owned and over-rides the above cases. In this situation both College and Author retain full rights to the Course. The Author is free to use the Course and Course Content outside of their scope of employment with College and College retains the right to use the Course for future online sections even after the Author is no longer an employee of College.

### Exceptions to the General Rules

The following situations are deemed exceptions that are to be carved out of the

#### General Rules:

- death or disability (inability to perform instructional duties) of Author under online Course Design or Course Use contract,
- death or disability (inability to perform instructional duties) of Author teaching a current online class without Course Design or Course use contract
- Author is unable to perform work duties for a period of over two weeks,

- o a change in employment duties that would prevent the author from teaching the class they developed, or
- o leaving the employment of the College

If one or more exception to the **General Rules** is applicable the College has the following recourse:

The intent of this exception is that under extenuating circumstances a Course could be needed and the Author is unavailable to teach it. The College can use the Course and have it taught by another Author, including making slight modifications to it. The College can use the Course for a maximum of two consecutive semesters, including summer session. At this time, all Course Content with the exception of the general layout must be significantly changed or adapted as the new Author sees fit.

### Copyright

Faculty will ensure that course development and design comply with fair use policies for educational materials and course content.

### Accessibility to Distance Learning Policy

The Distance Learning policy will be made available on the Eastern Oklahoma State College website, and in the Eastern Oklahoma State College Faculty Handbook.

### Operational Definitions

<p><b>Conventional Course:</b> Any course, in which instructor and students meet collectively (face-to-face) in one physical location at a set date and time.</p>	<p><b>Distance Education Course:</b> Any course offered to students remotely through non-conventional modalities, including but not limited to World Wide Web, two-way interactive video, CD Rom, or text.</p>
<p><b>E-Packs:</b> Publisher provided content, including entire courses or partial content</p>	<p><b>Hybrid Course:</b> Regularly scheduled classroom time is replaced consistently throughout the semester by required activities completed at distance and managed online using Eastern's adopted course management system. The seated time for students must be between 40% and 60% of the total course hours.</p>
<p><b>Online Course Management Software:</b> A web-based portal application, such as Blackboard Learn 9.1.</p>	<p><b>Enhanced Course:</b> Any conventional (face-to-face) course utilizing non-traditional delivery methods to enhance instruction.</p>
<p><b>Activity</b> - Any form of student participation that serves to reinforce the content, and that provides an opportunity for students to further their attainment of the learning objectives</p>	<p><b>Assessment (the process of)</b> - An ongoing systematic process that 1) sets clear expectations of student learning in the form of learning objectives, 2) provides sufficient opportunities for</p>

and expectations. Typically, an activity allows for practice, discovery, and trial-and-error in a low-stakes, non-graded setting.	students to achieve these expectations, 3) gathers evidence of student learning, and 4) uses this information to improve teaching and learning. (The QM concept of 'alignment' refers to this overall process.)
<b>Assessment (strategies)</b> - An instrument used to identify what students have learned. An instrument used to measure the match between the learning objectives and students' attainment of those objectives. (This definition of the word 'assessment' should be considered when interpreting QM standards 3.1 and 3.4)	<b>Criteria</b> - The qualitative or quantitative guidelines, rules, principles, or statements by which student responses, work, products, or performances are evaluated.
<b>Evaluation</b> - A judgment regarding the quality, value, or worth of a response, work, product, or performance based on established criteria. The evaluation of a student's work is typically reflected in the numeric or alphabetic grade assigned.	<b>Feedback</b> - Specific comments, guidance, and information provided in response to an activity or assessment. Feedback should be tied to the established criteria, and should provide reasons for the accompanying evaluation and the resulting grade. Effective feedback provides opportunities for students to learn about how they can improve, is meaningful and understandable to the student, and is timely.
<b>Objective (learning)</b> - A statement of the specific and measurable knowledge, skills, attributes, and habits that students are expected to achieve and demonstrate as a result of their educational experiences in a program, course, or module.	<b>Grading</b> - The act of assigning an alpha or numeric value to students' work which reflects, at least in part, the quality of the work. Grades provide an indication of students' overall mastery of content. By themselves, however, grades do not provide information about which aspects of the content students have or have not mastered, or the criteria that were used in assigning the grade. Grades are not necessarily a true indicator of student learning, as they may be influenced by other factors such as attendance, late work policies, or test anxiety, to name a few.
<b>Course Content Development</b> Constitutes instructional materials, learning activities and assessments.	<b>Course Design</b> The creative process involved in creating the Course Content for electronic delivery.

Appendix A

**Application for Approval to Teach Online Course(s)**

Form used by faculty to seek approval to teach online course(s)



**Course / Instructor Information**

<b>Course Prefix &amp; Number:</b>	<b>Course Title:</b>
<b>Instructor:</b>	<b>Semester to be offered:</b>
<b>Reason for Course to be Delivered Online:</b>	

Is the above course taught as a conventional course? YES  NO  (check one)

**Faculty Training**

*Faculty teaching online courses at Eastern Oklahoma State College must complete the required professional development workshops which include instruction in the use of Blackboard Learn 9.1 and the application of the Quality Matters Rubric for best practices in course design. This professional development workshop is presented online under the title **Eastern's Blackboard Basic Training Parts 1 and 2: Getting Started with Blackboard and Building Courses.***

**Training Requirements**

Have you completed <i>Eastern's Blackboard Basic Training Parts 1 and 2</i> ? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> (check one)	
If Yes, when was training completed (attach documentation)?	Date:
If no, when will the training be completed?	Date:
If trained at another institution, attach previous training documentation and course review documentation.	

**Course Design Plans**

*Eastern faculty are considered course experts in the content to be developed for online course design and delivery and therefore are solely responsible for course content development. Faculty are also to be the designers of the course content using Blackboard Learn 9.1. Eastern's instructional designer provides assistance to faculty during the design process. Technical support is not provided for faculty using outside vendors, for example, McGraw Hill's Connect or Pearson's My Math or My English labs.*

Will you design your own course using Blackboard Learn 9.1? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> (check one)
If NO, please briefly explain:

**Required Signatures**

<b>Faculty Member</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Instructional Designer</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Division Dean</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>VPAA</b>	<b>Date:</b>