

Internet/Web-Based Courses

Policy 215

1 Purpose

This policy is adopted in order for the University to ensure that the student who registers in a distance or correspondence education course or program at the University is the same student who participates and completes the course or program and receives the credit.

2 Scope

This policy applies to all the faculty, staff, and students of the University registering for, enrolled in, and receiving credit for a distance or correspondence education course or program, wherever located or however delivered by the University.

3 Definitions

3.1 Course-building

All web-based courses must be created in Banner in the University-adopted student information system with an appropriate activity code. The activity types are:

1. **WEB (Entirely Web-Based)** – This course is 100 percent online. Formal presentation and interaction occurs only through online communication of information via the internet. Presentations may incorporate elements of lecture, lab and other activity types. Flexibility of time and location for delivery are key factors that distinguish entirely web-based courses from traditional course types.
2. **WEM (Web-Based Majority)** – This course is 90 – 99 percent online. Formal presentation and interaction occurs primarily through online communication of information via the internet. Presentations may incorporate elements of lecture, lab and other activity types. The course may on occasion meet face-to-face in a traditional classroom setting for initial organization, testing, or other purposes; however flexibility of time and location for delivery are key factors that distinguish web-based majority courses from traditional course types.
3. **WEH (Web-Based Hybrid)** – This course is 50 – 89 percent online. Formal presentation and interaction occurs partially through online communication of information via the internet. Presentations may incorporate elements of lecture, lab and other activity types. The course meets face-to-face in a traditional classroom setting up to 50 percent of the time. A web-based hybrid course provides some flexibility of time and location for the majority of course meetings.

4 Policy Statements

1. Course Requirements

Regardless of mode of delivery, all courses offered at the University must meet the SACSCOC and University credit hour requirements that specify that students should spend two to three hours preparing for class for every hour in class.

2. Equivalence

- Web-based courses must be equivalent to similar courses taught in the traditional format (ie. Face-to-face lectures, labs, studios, etc.).
- Web-based courses must be approved through the curriculum process in the same way as new traditional courses.
- The processes and procedures for offering web-based courses are the same as for traditional courses.
- Departments offering web-based courses should be prepared to document that the courses have student learning outcomes that are equivalent to those for traditional courses.

3. Copyright

Faculty teaching web-based courses are expected to be familiar with and abide by all applicable copyright laws. See the University of North Carolina's policy on copyright.

4. Intellectual Property Rights

See University's policy regarding Intellectual Property Rights (IPR). Materials developed for web-based courses are subject to the IPR policy; section 4.2 is especially relevant.

4.1 Standard Components and Quality Assurance for Web-based Courses

Learning Technology Services (LTS) provides consultation, training, technology assistance, and instructional design services to faculty. Web-based courses are subject to the same requirements for departmental review as are traditional courses. Units offering web-based courses must monitor the impact and efficacy of the technology used to deliver the course.

4.2 Policy on Faculty Training

The University provides appropriate faculty development and support services through LTS and other units. Prior to offering a web-based course, a department must assure that the faculty member offering the course possesses the technological skills to effectively deliver the course.

Supported Software: LTS will specify a list of software to be used in developing and offering web-based courses to be supported by LTS personnel. Exceptions will be made on limited, case-by-case basis. LTS will make decisions regarding software in consultation with faculty and technical consultants. When software changes are made, faculty will be notified well in advance and assisted in making the transition.

Unsupported Software: Faculty who choose to use software or services that are not supported by LTS must take appropriate measures to comply with applicable laws and standards, including but not limited to FERPA, ADA, and record retention requirements. Unsupported software must not significantly interfere with students' ability to participate in web-based courses.

Workshops and Training: LTS provides training for faculty on LTS-supported software as well as pedagogical and managerial support for various aspects of web-based instruction.

4.3 Student Support

Students enrolled in web-based courses will have access to administrative, financial, technical, and academic support services equivalent to those provided for students in traditional courses.

4.4 Evaluation of Internet Courses

Students will have the opportunity to evaluate web-based courses in ways equivalent to evaluations for traditional courses. The Student Assessment of Instruction (SAI) for web-based courses will be securely administered to students through a supported University system. Faculty members, department chairs and college deans will have access to the results after the end of the semester.

4.5 Evaluation of the Medium of Instruction

For all web-based courses, LTS will provide appropriate means of assessing the use of technologies for instruction. A primary means of assessment will be questions on the SAI. Faculty teaching web-based courses in Distance Education will have an annual opportunity to provide feedback on their teaching experiences.

4.6 Student Identity Verification and Privacy Protection

Student identity will be established at the time of admission via required official transcripts and other supporting documentation and will be verified for the purpose of examinations and assessments, when needed, via the official University-issued Student ID. A unique identification number (SID) is assigned to each student to protect information and privacy. The assigned SID must be entered to set up the log-in and password required to access University information and instructional systems. No fees will be charged to students to verify identity.

4.7 Hardware and Software Support

The University will provide the necessary support, hardware and/or supported software for faculty members who have been assigned to develop and offer Internet based courses. The necessary hardware and software includes an acceptable computer, any supported client software needed for content development, appropriate network access and server space on the University's streaming servers. LTS and Information Technology Services (ITS) will provide support for faculty developing and/or teaching web-based courses in compliance with University's Policy on Web-based Courses. Resource constraints may cause LTS and ITS to prioritize assistance based on factors such as the number of students to be served, programmatic and organizational needs, and resources required.

5 Contact Information

Vice Provost for Faculty Policies and Development | Academic Affairs | 828-262-2643

6 Original Effective Date

August 30, 2012

7 Revision Dates

January 26, 2022