Web Course

Web-Based Courses

an Information Technology Services Policy

Definition:
An Internet/web-based course is any course in which students may complete more than 50% of the requirements through Internet access to the course web site.

Course-building:
All Internet/web-based courses must be created in Banner with an online section number and WEB as the method of instruction. No other courses should be assigned this section number or this method of instruction.

Classification:
All Internet/web-based courses are Distance Education courses.

Statement on Credit Hours:
Credit hours awarded must be determined by sound practice regardless of course delivery method. In accordance with SACSCOC Comprehensive Standard 3.4.6 web-based courses should adhere to the following:

The number of contact hours for courses that meet face-to-face with an instructor is defined by the number of hours spent in classroom; typically 750 minutes in the classroom is required for one college credit. Contact hours in synchronous online environments may be recorded in the same manner as for traditional classes.

However, contact hours in asynchronous learning environments are more difficult to monitor. Therefore, the definition of contact hours in asynchronous learning environments at ETSU is based on the following guidelines:

1. The course syllabus should clearly document that the course covers the same amount of material or course content that would normally be expected if the class were a traditional campus-based course. Clear documentation includes the course objectives covered, the course topics covered, and the stated expectations for readings, projects, and other assignments as well as the stated learning outcomes. It is the responsibility of departmental faculty teaching in an asynchronous environment to determine if the course content delivered in an asynchronous environment is of sufficient scope and rigor.
to ensure the amount of material delivered is comparable to the same campus-based course.

2. During the planning and development of an asynchronous learning environment, faculty should estimate the time a typical student will take interacting with the course content. This should be equivalent to the number of contact hours normally expected in a campus-based course, and should be documented in the course syllabus. Hours for completing homework assignments, working on projects, studying for examinations, etc., should be considered outside the contact hour requirements for the course.

3. Faculty are encouraged to determine class attendance by the evaluation of student participation in scheduled online discussions, required interaction with the faculty as well as other classmates, and the timely submission of class assignments rather than simply by the number of logins provided in the statistics measured by the course management system.

Statement on Equivalence:

Courses taught in the web-based format must be equivalent to the same courses taught in the traditional format.

1. Courses developed specifically for web-based delivery must be approved through the curriculum process in the same way as new traditional courses.

2. The processes and procedures for offering web-based courses are the same as all other ETSU courses.

3. Departments offering courses in web-based format should be prepared to document that the courses have student-learning outcomes that are equivalent to those for courses taught in the traditional format.

Statement on Copyright:

Faculty teaching web-based courses are expected to be familiar with and abide by all applicable or relevant copyright laws. Information about copyright laws can be found on the Sherrod Library Digital Copyright site.

Intellectual Property Rights:

The Tennessee Board of Regents has adopted a Policy on Distance Education and Intellectual Property Rights for faculty developing instructional materials for Distance Education courses. This policy defines ownership of instructional materials for Distance Education courses under varying circumstances. If university resources exceeding $1,000 are used in the development of a course, the university assumes ownership unless otherwise arranged by prior written agreement. If the faculty member wants to establish exclusive intellectual property rights, s/he should, prior to the development of an Internet course, obtain a written agreement with the university that addresses areas such as ownership of materials, use of any or all of the materials by other faculty, who can authorize access to the materials, who can modify or add to the materials, use of the materials if the faculty member leaves
the university, and issues related to selling the course materials to an entity outside the university. These terms will be added to the Memorandum of Understanding for developing a web-based course.

Standard Components for Web-based Courses:

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Synchronous and Asynchronous online courses lists the specific components that are required in any web-based course. Faculty members and departments may offer online courses without completing the MOU. The developing faculty member should contact information Technology Services (ITS) to request an evaluation of the course based on the required components listed in the MOU.

Continued Review:

Approved courses will be reviewed on a three year cycle. Faculty may work out a re-development plan with ITS and receive additional compensation as part of the re-development /re-approval process. Faculty should contact the department before beginning re-development to determine if the course is eligible.

Policy on Faculty Training:

In accordance with TBR policy, all faculty developing and teaching Internet courses must demonstrate competence in the use of the technology for instruction and course development. It is the responsibility Information Technology Services to ensure and document this competence prior to the offering of the Internet course.

1. Supported Software: ITS will specify a limited list of software to be used in developing and offering Internet courses that will be supported fully by ITS personnel. Any exceptions will be made by ITS on a case-by-case basis, based on their best judgment on what can be adequately supported. The decision on what software to use, or to change software, will be made by ITS in consultation with faculty users and technical consultants. If a decision is taken to change the software to be supported and faculty must migrate to a new format, faculty will be notified well in advance and assisted in making the transition.

2. Workshops and Training: ITS will provide workshops and training for faculty on the software applications adopted for Internet course creation, and pedagogical and managerial aspects of Internet instruction.

Student Lab Support:

All open student computer labs will be configured and managed to support student access to the content of Internet courses developed by ETSU faculty.

Evaluation of Internet Courses:

Internet based courses are to be evaluated by the same standards as traditional courses and the areas assessed must be equivalent to traditional courses. The Student Assessment
of Instruction (SAI) for both asynchronous and synchronous online courses will be securely administered to students through the course management system. Faculty members, department chairs and college deans will have access to the results after the semester has ended.

**Evaluation of the Medium of Instruction:**

The evaluation of courses delivered by Internet also must include questions designed to assess the effective use of the medium for instruction. Information Technology Services will conduct this assessment as part of the semester SAI and review the results.

**Higher Education Opportunity Act:**

In compliance with the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA), all students in online courses are required to use their ETSU username and secure password to access the course management system.

**Policy on Electronic Mail:**

The ETSU email policy requires all faculty communication with students regarding ETSU business be conducted via the official ETSU email account.

**Hardware and Software Support:**

The University will provide the necessary support, hardware and/or supported software, for faculty members who have specific feasible plans to develop and offer Internet based courses in a reasonable time frame. 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, and on-going support from Information Technology Services. ITS will consult with faculty and departments to determine if a particular faculty member has, or can acquire, the necessary technical skills, if the faculty member either has or can develop a realistic and feasible plan for developing the Internet course, and if the particular course is suitable for delivery through the Internet. ITS will develop a suitable training plan for the faculty member developing the course. If resources are limited ITS will consult with faculty and departments to set priorities based on factors such as the number of students to be served, programmatic and organizational needs, and estimated time for completing the task.

Synchronous online courses are to be delivered using ITS supported web conferencing software.

Approved: Information Technology Governance Council

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