Memorandum of Understanding
For Development of Regent's Online Degree Courses
East Tennessee State University

Department: _____

RODP Internet-Based :Course Name and Number:_____

Faculty Member: _____

I. This memorandum of understanding is to verify the nature of the Regent's Online Degree Internet course listed above, as developed by the faculty member named. This faculty member's Internet version of the course or set of courses listed will be considered in as indicated below:

This faculty member's Internet version of the course or set of courses listed has been or will be developed by the faculty member as part of his/her assignment at East Tennessee State University and will be the joint property of the faculty member and the university and the Tennessee Board of Regents. The faculty member retains the right to future use of any materials in the Internet-based course that are his/her creations; if multiple faculty contribute materials to the course, each retains the right to future use of his/her contributions. The department, on behalf of the university, retains the right to the Internet-based course materials, to have access to them, to give other instructors access to them, to schedule and offer the course at any time, to let other instructors modify and add to it, and to let other instructors teach the course or sections of it.

II. Neither the faculty member nor the university shall sell, or allow to be used by any outside entity, a version of an Internet course, or any parts thereof, without first establishing the mutually agreed terms of such a sale or use.

III. The faculty member developing this course shall receive $ 5000, inclusive of fringe benefits and employer taxes, following approval and confirmation of completion by the RODP staff. The faculty member developing the course must teach one section of the course the first semester of offering as part of normal load.

Faculty members entering this agreement agree to:
    1. Meet all ETSU and Regent's Online Degree standards for online instruction. These standards are outlined below.
    2. Complete official training provided by the RODP development team in the use of the standard online course management software, currently Desire2Learn.
    3. The Online Course must be fully developed within the Online Course Management software used by the RODP Program.
    4. Participate in professional development related to online teaching and learning and become part of a continuous assessment team with fellow online teachers in the program. The continuous assessment team will meet periodically throughout the year to address teaching and learning issues related to the program.

STANDARDS FOR A REGENT'S DEGREE COURSE

Courses submitted for acceptances to the Regent's Degree Program must meet the following standards.

1. The course must include a syllabus or prologue that includes the items listed below.
    a. *Course objectives or intended learning outcomes.* The course objectives should be stated clearly so that they can be related to the expected learning outcomes in each section or module of the course and to the goals of the overall assessment process.

b. *Course description*. A *brief* statement describing the nature of the course, what the student can expect to learn, and an overview of course activities such as teamwork, group projects, student web pages, etc.
c. *Prerequisites for the course*. A list of all course prerequisites with a statement of why the prerequisites are deemed necessary.
d. *Course instructor*. A biographical sketch of the instructor of record and any other participants in the course if, for example, the course is a team-taught course.
e. *Virtual office hours*. A statement indicating the online office hours of the instructor and that physical office hours are available by appointment.
f. *How to contact the instructor*. A listing of the instructor's e-mail address, fax number, office telephone number, pager, etc.
g. *Timing of instructor response*. A statement that the instructor will make every attempt to respond to course e-mail within 24 or 48 … hours during the work week though it may not be possible in all cases. Student will be notified when the instructor is not available to meet the stated response time.
h. *Textbook*. A list of textbooks with the author, title, publisher, edition, date, and ISBN number.
i. *Supplementary material*. A list of other published material the student is required to purchase for the course including lab manuals, lab kits, software, etc.
j. *Specific course requirements*. A description of any special course requirements, such as knowledge of specific software, and why it is necessary for successful completion of the course.
k. *Course topics*. A suggested sequence of course topics, perhaps noting that students should complete certain *core* modules prior to moving to elective or more advanced modules.
l. *Assignments and Projects*. A sequenced list of assignments and projects arranged by course section or module with due dates if applicable.
m. *Punctuality*. A statement of course milestones to keep the students on track in an asynchronous environment. A listing of any synchronous events such as chat sessions, audioconferences, or physical meetings.
n. *Class participation*. A statement that students must participate in all interactive aspects of the course if interaction is part of the course design. For example, students must communicate with other students in the chat room, students are expected to communicate with the instructor as a learning resource, students must check the course bulletin board frequently for announcements, and students must actively participate in threaded discussion events.
o. *Grading procedure and grading scale*. A detailed statement of how grades are related to or reflective of the expected learning outcomes. A statement of what constitutes high achievement in the course.
p. *Course ground rules*. A reiteration and emphasis of certain rules and course expectations. For example,
    i. Participation is required
    ii. Expected to communicate with other students in team projects
    iii. Learn how to navigate in Desire2Learn
    iv. Keep abreast of course announcements
    v. Use the *assigned* college or university e-mail address as opposed a personal e-mail address
    vi. Address technical problems immediately
    vii. Observe course *netiquette* at all times. Instructor guidelines for communication by email, discussion groups, chat, and the use of web resources. Some **examples** are:
        1) Email
            a. Always include a subject line.
            b. Remember without facial expressions some comments may be taken the wrong way. Be careful in wording your emails. Use of emoticons might be helpful in some cases.
            c. Use standard fonts.
            d. Do not send large attachments without permission.
            e. Special formatting such as centering, audio messages, tables, html, etc. should be avoided unless necessary to complete an assignment or other communication.
            f. Respect the privacy of other class members.
        2) Discussion groups

            a. Review the discussion threads thoroughly before entering the discussion. Be a lurker then a discussant.

            b. Try to maintain threads by using the "Reply" button rather starting a new topic.

            Do not make insulting or inflammatory statements to other members of the discussion group. Be respectful of other's ideas.

            d. Be patient and read the comments of other group members thoroughly before entering your remarks.

            e. Be cooperative with group leaders in completing assigned tasks.

            f. Be positive and constructive in group discussions.

            g. Respond in a thoughtful and timely manner.

        3) Web Resources

            a. *Columbia Guide to Online Style* by Janice R. Walker and Todd Taylor

            b. *Citation Styles Online*
              http://www.bedfordstmartins.com/online/cite6.html

    q. *Course syllabus changes.* A statement that any *necessary* changes to the course syllabus will be sent to the student by e-mail and posted on the bulletin board.

    r. *Sources of technical assistance.* A listing of contacts to help resolve technical problems with e-mail addresses, telephone numbers, fax numbers, pagers, etc.

    s. *Special needs.* A statement of accommodation for students with special needs such as voice recognition software or special hardware.

2. The textbook used in the course must be one that is recognized by the discipline as being authoritative, timely, comprehensive, written clearly, and designed for the level of the particular course in which it is to be used. The instructor**s** who regularly teach the course will select the textbook(s). The TBR Curriculum Committee will periodically review the textbook selection process.

3. The course may include study guides, lecture summaries, presentation slides, audio, and/or streaming video that summarizes and enhances the textbook material, making it more understandable to the distance learners. This material should be arranged in weekly modules or other sequences that clearly relate to the course's expected learning outcomes.

4. All assignments should clearly state how they achieve or contribute to achieving the module's or course's anticipated learning objective(s) or outcome(s). Assignments should emphasize active student involvement in the learning process and the building of learning communities. Students should be provided with opportunities for projects that foster interactive communication through chat sessions, threaded discussions, and/or audioconferencing.

5. The option for synchronous class meetings should be available if needed to achieve the course's learning outcome.

6. Learning outcomes should be assessed on a continuous basis through timed quizzes, proctored examinations, take-home tests, open book examinations, and/or other assessment means applicable to the particular course. The quizzes and examinations should clearly indicate the learning objectives that are trying to be achieved and focused on the cognitive level of the material being assessed.

7. The grading scale should emphasize assignments, projects, and student participation in the learning community as well as timed quizzes and periodic examinations.

8. All courses should include *written* assignments. Such assignments may be in the form of evaluative essays, case analyses, term papers, book reviews, film reviews, summaries and critiques of journal articles, etc.

9. Links to library materials (such as electronic journals, databases, interlibrary loans, digital reserves, dictionaries, encyclopedias, maps, and librarian support) and Internet resources needed by learners to complete online assignments and as background reading must be included in all courses.

10. Individuals with special needs will be accommodated in whatever way is necessary so that they might achieve the learning objectives of the course.

11. Course instructors must meet the minimum SACS competency criteria for teaching the course subject matter.

12. Course instructors must assure that the course material is current;i.e., having been reviewed within the last six months.

Additional Guidelines Update:

1. Course Designers must attend the RODP Course Development Training sponsored by the RODP Staff. This includes a one and one half day (1 ½) Orientation Training Session in which you will receive your RODP Template, Desire2Learn ID and Password, and the RODP Book Form. This required training will focus on the pedagogy and best practices for teaching and learning online which will assist you in developing and designing your course. You will also be exposed to the latest innovations in online course development, software, and the multimedia (streaming video, Wimba Voice Board, Respondus, etc.) and alternative assessments for your students.

   (Orientation is waived since you have previously developed a course but I would recommend that you attend additional training to learn about some of the newer innovations in online learning such as podcasting. Training is available from the RODP Staff.)

2. In addition, you should meet with your campus trainer for additional help on-site.

3. The syllabus must be in the RODP html format and the course must be in the RODP template with all of the course lessons and units developed using the Desire2Learn Content Modules Module files created in either html (Front Page, DreamWeaver) or pdf format. *This is the manner in which we are able to track and monitor the students online and to verify financial aid. All fonts must be either Arial or Verdana. PowerPoint presentations should be saved using Impatica.

4. You are not to develop your course around a specific book! *Book editions are constantly changing and there is no way to control when a publisher will stop printing a certain edition or will update to a newer version.
   *Your course will not be approved if it is developed around a book or if you use an E-Pack or a commercially made "can course." *You are able to use supporting CDs, websites, etc.

5. You must adhere to the RODP Course Guidelines and Menu in designing your course. This also includes a Class Discussion Board, Desire2Learn E-mail tool, etc.

6. RODP does not use "plus or minus" grades. The standardized grading scale must be used for graduate courses. (It is listed in your syllabus template.)

7. You are expected to develop the course with the same rigor and content as courses on-ground. You are also expected to design assignments and quizzes using "higher order thinking skills" which require "application of the learning concepts" (examples: case studies, projects, etc.) and to use a variety of assessment techniques to determine student progress and grades.
   *Using numerous assessments and assignments that incorporate class activities and discussions have proven to reduce incidents of cheating and will increase the amount of participation in the class.

8. Due to the fact that RODP is an asynchronous program (courses available 24 hours – seven days per week (24 x 7) you can not require students to meet online with you or the class at scheduled times and you can not require students to attend on-campus events or classes or state wide activities (we have students enrolled in the programs from over twenty-six states and fourteen countries)

9. You are required to include library assignments as appropriate in your course using the RODP Virtual Library and / or the campuses' online library resources. The Peer Review Team will check your course for library assignments. *All students will have a

password to access the TBR Campus Libraries. If you need an orientation to the Virtual Library please e-mail Dr. Peter Nerzak at pnerzak@pstcc.edu

11. Student must be referred to the RODP Virtual Bookstore for their textbook. You will need to notify Ms. Lisa Hall lhall@tbr.state.tn.us as soon as possible regarding all of the required and suggested books that students will need to purchase for your course. *RODP is not responsible for incorrect purchases from other bookstore companies (example: Amazon, etc.)

    *You are responsible for obtaining your free instructor copy of the textbook and related materials from the publisher. You may e-mail or phone the publisher.

12. You must complete the RODP Course Development Self-Evaluation in order for the RODP Course Review Team to start evaluating your course. Your course must be approved by the committee in order to offer the course for RODP. *Your campus can not compensate you for developing the course until the official RODP approval form has been sent to your Chief Academic Officer with all of the noted recommendations completed.

13. You are expected to teach the course the first time it is to be offered in order to assess the design and content organization of your course.

14. Part of your contractual obligation is to (1) maintain and update the master copy of your course each semester (this includes updating the dates for the calendar, quizzes, and assignments), (2) to assist other TBR instructors that teach a section of your courses regarding the course design and content, and (3) to complete the annual Course Review & Update Form (during the spring semesters).

15. After the approval of your course you will be required to attend a face-to-face training session regarding the "Pedagogy of Teaching and Learning Online" which will focus on teaching skills and techniques for online teaching.

    *You must demonstrate the appropriate competencies and skills for teaching online by successfully completing the online RODP-Desire2Learn Application of Skills Assessment.

16. You must attend a yearly on-site update course development meeting with the RODP staff and attend one E-Learning Activity or Event within two years (TBR E-Learning Academy or an E-Learning event on your campus, system, State, national, international, etc.) *RODP will fund (based on incoming revenues) your travel and lodging for the TBR related E-Learning Academies.

17. Students in the MPS will use APA Style for all of the research papers. Also remember that all graduate schools do not use the "D" grade. Therefore, include the phrase (not available at all universities) after the "D" on the grading scale.

V. Signatures

Faculty Member: _____ **Date:** _____

University Legal Counsel (only if items are listed in IV. above)**:**_____   **Date:** _____

Department Chair: _____   **Date:** _____

College Dean: _____   **Date:** _____

**Associate Dean For
Distance Education:**   _____   **Date:** _____

Associate Vice President for Research: _____   **Date:** _____

Provost: _____   **Date:** _____

VI. The Associate Dean for Distance Education will retain a copy of this document and return signed copies to the faculty member and all signatories.