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Title: Distance Learning	Page: 1 of 9
	Effective Date: 5/19/16
	HCC Rule: N/A
	HCC Procedure: N/A

Approval Signature(s):

[signature]

Vice President of Academic Affairs   **Date**

PURPOSE

This document provides guidelines for academic rulings at Hillsborough Community College not covered or partially covered in other policy or procedural documents.

PROCEDURE

1. **Distance Learning and Hybrid as Delivery Methods**

   As defined by the HCC President's Cabinet, distance learning and hybrids are recognized as delivery methods offered by the college. As such, distance learning and hybrid courses are bound by the same guidelines and administration as all other courses at the college. Likewise, students and faculty in distance learning and hybrid courses are supported by the college's resources to every extent possible.

2. **Types of Distance Learning Delivery Methods**

   The Center for Innovative Teaching and Technology (CITT) provides technology and instructional design support to two specific delivery methods and web enhanced courses. The two distance learning delivery methods and web enhanced courses are outlined below.

Delivery Method	Percent of Instruction Delivered only via Technology**	Instructional Minutes Delivered via Technology*** (Based on a 3 credit hour course)
Distance Learning – Online	80 - 100%	1,800 – 2,250 minutes
Distance Learning - Hybrid	30 - 79%	675 - 1,799 minutes
Web Enhanced*	1 - 29%	Less than 674 minutes

   For the remainder of this document, the terms "distance learning" will refer to both online and hybrid courses, unless otherwise stipulated.

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*Web Enhanced courses are not considered to be a distance learning delivery method as defined by the college.
**As outlined by the State of Florida and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.
***Based on 750 instructional minutes per credit hour as required by the State of Florida. The minimum amount of time scheduled for the face-to-face portion of a hybrid course is 451 minutes for a 3 credit hour course.

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> **Florida Statutes 1001.64, 1004.68, 1007.25**
>
> For purposes of calculation and monitoring, credit hours will be measured as Carnegie units. Traditional lecture discussion courses must be scheduled to meet Carnegie units.
>
> 1 Credit Hour (50 minute Carnegie Unit) x 15 Clock Hours = 750 minutes in Classroom
> 2 Credit Hours (50 minute Carnegie Unit) x 30 Clock Hours = 1,500 minutes in Classroom
> 3 Credit Hours (50 minute Carnegie Unit) x 45 Clock Hours = 2,250 minutes in Classroom
> 4 Credit Hours (50 minute Carnegie Unit) x 60 Clock Hours = 3,000 minutes in Classroom
>
> Courses offered in alternative formats such as hybrid, online, independent study, cooperative education, internship and practicum must be identified as such in the schedule of classes, must meet the same student learning outcomes as the traditional format course and must be scheduled to provide adequate time to achieve student learning outcomes.

Distance learning courses are defined as those course sections in which at least 80 percent of instruction occurs in the absence of direct face-to-face instructional presence.

Distance learning courses that require on-campus and/or synchronous online meeting dates/times must be advertised in the course written comments during scheduling and be clearly outlined in course documents (e.g. syllabus, schedule, etc.). While it is recognized that each course will have different demands and needs, the college encourages development of distance learning courses that may have no restrictions on time or place. Any required on-campus meetings or attendance should be pedagogically supported and justified. Alternatives to on-campus or synchronous meetings are highly encouraged in order to allow for flexibility and prevent undue travel burden for students who do not live in close proximity.

Distance learning courses should utilize a variety of instructional approaches that can be facilitated online. Instructors should include opportunities for student-to-student and faculty-to-student interaction such as discussion boards, group work/projects, feedback, lectures, etc. If publisher materials are used, these materials must be used in conjunction with other instructional content, activities, and/or assignments developed by the instructor.

Hybrid courses are defined as course sections that utilize technology in place of a percentage of in-class seat time. Hybrid course sections operate in the absence of direct face-to-face instructional presence between 30 to 79 percent of the scheduled seat time; therefore, hybrid courses are not classified as distance learning. The goal of a hybrid course is to combine the best features of face-to-face teaching with the best features of online learning to promote active, independent student learning. All required on-campus and/or synchronous online meeting dates/times must be advertised in the course written comments during scheduling and be clearly outlined in course documents (e.g. syllabus, schedule, etc.).

Hybrid courses should utilize a variety of instructional approaches that can be facilitated online and face to face. Instructors should include opportunities for student-to-student

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and faculty-to-student interaction for the online portion of the course such as discussion boards, group work/projects, feedback, lectures, etc. If publisher materials are used, these materials must be used in conjunction with other instructional content, activities, and/or assignments developed by the instructor.

Note: Course format, meetings, and modality are subject to approval by the scheduling academic Dean. If requested by the dean, faculty must justify the meeting structure and base their choices in distance learning course best practices, discipline need, and content demands.

3.   **The Learning Management System (LMS)**

A.   The college recognizes an official Learning Management System (LMS). Any evaluation of the college's LMS will be conducted by faculty, Academic Administration, and the Instructional Technology Services department. With justification, faculty may choose to use other internet-based platforms, but the college only supports the official LMS.

B.   Access to the LMS is restricted to faculty, staff, and students of the college. Any request for external parties to be provided access to the LMS will need express written permission from the Director of Instructional Technology. Administrative access to the LMS is also restricted to college personnel as determined by Instructional Technology Services.

C.   In certain situations, faculty may choose to use a system other than college adopted LMS to facilitate Web Enhanced, Hybrid, or Distance Learning courses at the college. The college will not provide support for these third party systems. Faculty using other systems should be able to justify their use and should

(1) Use the college adopted LMS to provide initial access to the third party system and to provide information about accessing technical support for the system.

(2) Assist their Dean to demonstrate proficiency in the third party system prior to being evaluated in these distance learning courses.

(3) Ensure that students are notified of the third party system in and directed from the official LMS.

4.   **Roles and Definitions**

A.   **Center for Innovative Teaching and Technology (CITT)**

The mission of the Center for Innovative Teaching and Technology is to provide an environment that fosters the development and delivery of engaging, innovative instructional strategies and technologies promoting successful student learning opportunities.

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In particular, for distance learning courses, CITT
- Maintains an environment that is conducive to student and faculty success in the delivery of distance learning offerings.
- Manages the college recognized and supported learning platform.
- Provides recommendations regarding any policies and processes involving use of the platform.
- Provides training and ongoing support for full-time and adjunct faculty who are teaching or developing distance learning courses using the LMS and/or other instructional technologies and delivery methods supported by the college.
- Certifies and may provide compensation to Faculty Trainers who have been recommended by Faculty Instructional Technology Committee (FITC) as experts in the LMS and/or discipline-specific technology.
- Certifies faculty who are proficient in the use of the LMS and other methods of instructional delivery as a result of training by CITT staff or Faculty Trainers.
- Certifies that Deans and program managers have an appropriate level of proficiency in the use of the LMS prior to the Dean's evaluation of faculty using distance learning.
- Coordinates the Distance Learning Implementation Plans filed by full-time and adjunct faculty.
- Compiles data as they relate to student success and efficient management of the distance learning program at the college.
- Uses the data to recommend changes in existing policies and processes, and as a tool to manage the administration and scheduling environment of distance learning course offerings.
- Serves as a resource for the Faculty Instructional Technology Committee (FITC).
- Serves as a resource to faculty for developing ADA compliant content.

B.   The Faculty Instructional Technology Committee (FITC)

It is the mission of FITC to provide input, advice and direction to the Vice President for Information Technology, the Vice President of Academic Affairs and to the Director of Instructional Technology; to establish faculty priorities for instructional technology at HCC; and to address the actual impact of technology decisions on faculty, students and teaching.

In particular, for distance learning courses, the FITC
- Serves as the primary college advisory committee dealing with distance learning courses.

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- Formulates strategic planning and policy recommendations, provides guidance for training considerations, and recommends quality standards for distance learning delivery.

- Collaborates with CITT to identify Faculty Trainers as well as develop and implement a faculty training certification program which will be delivered through a combination of the college's LMS and traditional activities.

C.   Full-time Faculty

In Distance learning courses, faculty maintain the rights and responsibilities as defined in the bargaining agreement agreed to by the college.

In particular, for distance learning courses, the faculty
- May teach an existing college course through distance learning delivery or request additional sections of distance learning courses as needs are identified.

- Will file a Distance Learning or Hybrid Implementation Plan (access the form online) with their Academic Dean and CITT prior to developing

    i.   A distance learning approach for an existing HCC course.

    ii.   A distance learning approach for a new HCC course.

    iii. A distance learning course re-design.

- Will use the college supported learning management system for distance learning, hybrid or web-enhanced courses.

- Must demonstrate proficiency in the use of the LMS or chosen course delivery system as certified by CITT or a designated Faculty Trainer.

- May participate in a team to develop distance learning course tools and resources for use by faculty credentialed in the discipline.

- Will select textbooks and E-Packs for distance learning courses in accordance with the FUSA contract.

- May be compensated for developing a distance learning course as stipulated in the FUSA contract.

- Will be expected to meet their classes at times and locations as advertised in the schedule. The Dean must be notified of any change, and appropriate leave forms must be completed.

- May grant course access to other faculty members by submitting a Help Desk ticket to CITT for a course copy request.

Course templates created by full-time faculty with the intention of being given to the college shall be reviewed by administration for approval before compensation

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is given. Full-time faculty who are compensated for training, certification reviews, or other professional development activities related to enhancing distance learning knowledge, skills, and abilities shall retain all intellectual property rights. This does not include compensation for the purpose of developing course templates to be owned by the college.

Program Managers who evaluate adjunct faculty members teaching distance learning courses are required to participate in professional development courses and/or training that cover the pedagogical approaches to and demands of distance education.

D. Adjunct Faculty
- May teach distance learning courses created by full-time faculty at the college through one of three avenues:

    i.   Course tools and resources within the LMS provided for adjunct faculty.

    ii. Course templates created by full-time faculty but owned by the college.

    iii. Course templates owned by faculty to be used by adjuncts with the express permission of the full-time faculty member.

- Are expected to uphold the quality and integrity of college distance learning courses as developed, and are bound by applicable training certification processes (e.g. LMS training through CITT, Distance Learning teaching strategies, etc.).

- When an HCC course template is not available for use, adjunct faculty may develop their own distance learning course template by completing a Distance Learning Course Implementation Plan in collaboration with and after final approval from a committee of one full-time faculty member in the discipline (or closely related discipline) with distance learning course design and teaching experience, or one full-time faculty member in the discipline (or closely related discipline) and one other full–time faculty or CITT staff member with distance learning course design and teaching experience.

E. Administration
- All academic administrators are encouraged to participate in professional development courses and training that cover the pedagogical approaches to and demands of distance education.

- Administrators who evaluate faculty members teaching distance learning courses are required to participate in professional development courses and/or training that cover the pedagogical approaches to and demands of distance education.

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- The Vice President for Academic Affairs and the CITT will coordinate with Academic Deans to facilitate the coordinated and managed enrollment growth of distance learning courses and programs.

F. Academic Deans

- Provide administrative support and encouragement whenever possible to faculty in distance learning courses.

- Are responsible for scheduling distance learning courses.

- Are responsible for assigning, compensating, and evaluating faculty in distance learning courses as outlined in the FUSA Contract or in College policy

- Are responsible for approving that a need exists for new or existing distance learning courses, and should collaborate with other campus Deans, VP of Academic Affairs, and/or CITT regarding needs analysis. Enrollment trends/data across all campuses and demand within the campus service area should show that additional distance learning sections are needed.

- Demonstrate proficiency in the LMS and/or other delivery methods prior to evaluating full-time faculty in distance learning courses.

- Are encouraged to participate in professional development courses and/or training that cover the pedagogical approaches to and demands of distance education.

G. Student Services Deans and Staff

- Provide student services support and encouragement whenever possible for faculty and students in distance learning courses.

- Provide online services for advising, registration, and student enrollment, to be comparable to face-to-face services whenever possible.

- Provide on-campus services to meet the needs of distance learning students and faculty.

H. Course Shell

- A space in the LMS associated with a course section that does not contain any content or material
- Course shells are automatically provided for every course section prior to the start of the semester

I. **Course Templates**

- Fully functional distance learning courses developed as outlined by the course approval process.

- Faculty may choose to collaborate with other faculty within their program or discipline or an Instructional Designer from CITT in their development.

- Property of the faculty member(s) who created ~~them~~ the template unless it was developed with the intention of being compensated for and given to the college.

- Are designed to provide consistency in quality and content across ~~adjunct~~ faculty and campuses, and provide assurance that the course content was developed to meet prescribed learning outcomes. They may be designed specifically for adjunct use at the campus or college-wide level.

- Approval of Course Templates for use by adjuncts at one campus will follow the same process as the campus's textbook approval.

- Approval of Course Templates for college-wide use by adjuncts will require approval by a multi-discipline faculty committee.

5. The Distance Learning and Hybrid Course Development Plan

Faculty developing a new distance learning course* will
A. Obtain approval from their Academic Dean (and possibly the Program Manager) that need exists. Enrollment trends/data across all campuses and demand within the campus service area should show that additional distance learning sections are needed.

B. File a Distance Learning or Hybrid course Development Plan with the Director of Instructional Technology. As part of the Course Development Plan, faculty will
   a. Request the Vice President of Academic Affairs approval for course development compensation, if desired.

   b. Research available resources (such as a CITT Instructional Designer, HCC instructors, other institutions, publishers, professional conferences).

   c. When necessary adopt E-packs using the same procedures for textbook selection.

   d. Consult with CITT for technology support and compatibility requirements of E-Packs.

   e. Choose platform for course delivery and consult with CITT regarding system requirements.

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f. Receive certification through CITT or designated Faculty Trainer as having demonstrated proficiency in college supported course delivery platform and course software, if applicable.

g. Develop course syllabus/schedule/assignments which address all course performance objectives and learning outcomes.

h. Be encouraged to have the final version of their course reviewed by an Instructional Designer, Dean, and/or a designated reviewer.

i. Ensure the course content is ADA compliant; otherwise faculty should collaborate and seek assistance from CITT and their campus disability services coordinator.

C. Academic Deans will review the course before the start of the first scheduled semester to ensure that the content and learning outcomes are equivalent to their face-to-face counterparts.

D. Contact Academic Dean or Program Manager for class scheduling.

*Note: Any brand new HCC course must first be approved through the Cluster and Academic Affairs Committee new course proposal process.

6. Web Enhanced Courses

A. **Definition**
Web Enhanced courses are sections that use a variety of technologies to support instruction. Faculty may choose to use the college's learning management system or the college portal as a mechanism to enhance their courses. Note: Web Enhanced courses are not considered to be a delivery method as defined by the College.

B. **Faculty Instructional Technology Committee**
The Faculty Instructional Technology Committee may recommend procedures or policies regarding web enhanced courses as appropriate.

C. **Implementation**
Web Enhanced courses do not require academic administration approval or notification. However, faculty members are encouraged to consult with CITT for support before adopting new instructional technologies.

D. **Alternative Technology Utilization**
Faculty members who web enhance their course typically do so through the college LMS. However, there are other tools, external to the college that are well suited to web enhanced courses. Again, faculty members are encouraged to consult with CITT for support before adopting new instructional technologies.

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E.   Class Meeting Schedule
Faculty members are expected to meet their classes at times and locations as advertised in the schedule. The dean must be notified of any change and appropriate leave forms must be completed.