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TCC Online Learning Department - Guidelines for Online Courses

Purpose Statement
The purpose of this document is to record the current guidelines and processes of the Online Learning (OL) department as it applies to online courses.

Online Learning Sub-council
Functions
- Is a sub-council of the Academic Council.
- Provides input regarding Guidelines and Processes that Online Learning courses and programs adhere to.
- Makes recommendations regarding TCC Online Learning Department Guidelines for Online Courses to the Academic Council.
- Can recommend processes and procedures that OL should follow without further approval of the Academic Council.
- Is made up of faculty and administrators who have a direct involvement with Online Learning at Tulsa Community College.

General Online Learning Processes
Adding Courses to the Schedule
- Online course scheduling is a collaborative process between all campuses. Adding additional sections after the schedule is built should be done with consideration and/or consultation of the affected divisions on all campuses.
- Online Learning monitors online courses added to the semester schedule to verify that certified instructors are teaching online courses. All online courses taught by certified online instructors must use content developed by certified developers who have developed and previously taught the course being offered.

Scheduling a New Online Course
- New courses can only be added to the semester schedule if the course content has been developed by a Certified Course Developer.

Protected Sections
- A protected course is one in which the faculty who developed the course is guaranteed one section of the course.
• **Criteria for a "Protected" Course:**
  1. applies only to courses developed in the old proposal process
  2. only one section of a course is protected
  3. first time a unique course was offered college-wide
  4. developed by a full-time faculty member
  5. Only sections that are part of full-time load can be protected.
  6. Once a faculty retires or leaves the college, the course is no longer protected.

**Faculty Assignments**

• Faculty assignments to online courses are made by individual divisions and may require Provost’s approval.

• An instructor who has Online Instructor Certification may teach any online course within their discipline that has content developed by a certified online developer.

• Online Learning reviews faculty assignments to verify that all faculty teaching online, full-time and part-time, have Online Instructor Certification.

• Faculty must be instructor certified before they can teach their own sections.

• Online Learning provides the Deans or Associate Deans a list of all instructors certified to teach online. The list is available via Bb’s Welcome tab.

• Part-time instructors hired by the divisions to teach online have no residency requirements.

• Compensation for developing an online course must be prearranged between instructors, their Dean/Associate Dean and approved by the campus Provost.

**Bb System Access**

**System Administrator Access**

• TCC limits System Administrator access to the Learning Management system (Blackboard) due to security and privacy issues. Currently, System Administrator access is limited to staff in the IT and OL departments, as well as Blackboard technical support.

**Bb Course Site Access**

• Instructors must be assigned and students must be enrolled via the student information system (Banner) in an online course to gain access to the course site. A request for a user to be manually added to a course must be approved by the lead faculty listed on the course.
Course sites are created on Blackboard (Bb) with a default setting of ‘unavailable to students’. Faculty must manually make the site available for student access.

TCC currently uses the Blackboard Learning Management System for Online classes. All TCC staff and students have access to the Bb system as per license provided by Blackboard.

Support Access

- Employees providing user support (Client Services and OL support staff) have access to faculty assignment and student enrollment data in Bb. They do not have administrative access to course sites.
- Contracted after-hour support through Blackboard has additional support access to Bb courses.

Scheduled Blackboard Maintenance

- Routine maintenance is scheduled Wednesday mornings from 12:15 a.m. to 3:00 a.m. Faculty should add this information to their syllabus. It is also posted to the Welcome page on Bb.
- Major Bb maintenance is scheduled at the end of each semester. Typically, this maintenance is scheduled for the Wednesday and Thursday after grades are due. All faculty are reminded via email at least one week prior to the maintenance period.

Unscheduled Blackboard Outages

- In the event of a lengthy unscheduled outage, attempts are made to notify faculty of the cause of the outage.

Course Site and User Management in Blackboard

- Faculty course assignments and student enrollment in courses are automatically made based on the assignments/enrollments in the Banner.

Course Sites Added to Blackboard

- Course sites are generally created when student enrollment opens. However, fall course sites are often not created until the scheduled maintenance window at the end of the spring semester.

Course Site Deletion

- Courses will be kept on Blackboard for a full 16-week semester after the course ends.
  - Fall courses will be deleted at the end of the spring semester.
  - Spring and Summer courses will be deleted at the end of the fall semester.
Master Course Sites

- Master course sites are manually created for faculty use to keep and update course content. These sites will not be deleted. Course content can be copied to semester-based sections for use as needed.
- A master course site may be requested by using the form available on the Faculty tab in Blackboard.

Merged Course Sites

- Online Learning will merge enrollments by request. (Merged course sites are an enrollment merge that allows instructors to teach multiple sections of the same course from a single Blackboard course site.)

More information and the request form can be found on the Blackboard Faculty tab.

Faculty Development and Certification

Faculty Support

- The instructional designers provide technical and pedagogical support for online and blended faculty. They also provide training for all faculty and interested parties via workshops with priority support given to online faculty. The instructional designers conduct live training sessions that address Blackboard changes and updates. On-demand workshops are available for groups of 5 or more. Send requests to bbsupport@tulsacc.edu.

Online Instructor Certification

- Instructors must complete the Online Instructor Certification workshop to be certified to teach an online course that has already been developed.
- There may be exceptions in unique situations. All exceptions must be approved by the Director of Online Learning in advance.

Online Developer Certification

- Full-time faculty who wish to develop online content are required to complete the Online Developer Certification workshop. Once completed, the faculty may develop any online course for which they are credentialed to teach.

Bb Handouts and Tutorials

- Blackboard handouts and tutorials can be found on the Faculty tab in Bb. All TCC faculty have access to this material regardless of certification.
Faculty Meetings for Online Instructors
- In the fall and spring semesters, Online Learning conducts informational meetings for online faculty at each campus.

Content Development, Ownership, and Sharing
- TCC faculty are responsible for the development and maintenance of their course content. Online Learning does not provide, manage, distribute or share course content.

Approved Content
- Approved course content is content that was developed under TCC’s old course approval processvi or developed and taught at least one term by a Certified Course Developer.

Third-Party Course Content
- Faculty using course content or course components from third party vendors are responsible for integrating the course content into their Bb course sites and for providing technical support for their students.
- Online Learning does not provide support for third-party content.

Course Content Development

Online Developer Workshop
- The Developer Certification workshop focuses on principles of online course design based on the Quality Matters (QM™) rubric.vii

Intellectual Property
- Online course content falls under the TCC Intellectual Property Policy.
- Faculty-owned course content (content that was not developed as a result of a work for hire contract) may be shared with other faculty.
- It is the sole discretion of the faculty developer as to whether or not the course content will be shared and with whom.

Faculty Enrolled in Online Courses of Other Faculty
- Faculty should not enroll in an online course taught by another TCC faculty without permission from the lead instructor.

Proctored Testing
- Online Learning has developed a process for distributing testing directions and backup copies of exams using TCC testing centers. Contact bbsupport@tulsacc.edu for more information.
- For options regarding remote proctored testing, please refer to the High-Stakes Testing Options module on the Faculty tab of Blackboard.
• For options regarding remote proctored testing, please refer to the High-Stakes Testing Options module on the Faculty tab of Blackboard.

Class Size, Faculty Course Load

Class Size
• Online courses at TCC are typically capped at 20.
• Deans/Associate Deans may approve course overloads or give faculty authority to accept overloads depending on each division’s individual needs.

Faculty Course Load
• OL guidelines do not limit faculty load. There are program and campus issues that may require faculty to teach a split load between online/on-campus. These decisions are to be made programmatically between Deans/Associate Deans and Faculty.

Course Management Models and Practices

Single Instructor - Single Sections
• One instructor is assigned to a single section.
• Merged Course Sections (single instructor or team-teaching, same Bb site)

Team-teaching (same Bb course site)
• Team-teaching is defined as more than one instructor assigned to a Bb course site. For example, the course site may be a single section of 20 or merged course sections.
• In the team teaching model, instructors should communicate with each other to establish clear grading standards and practices that are consistently applied and communicated to the students.
• In the team-teaching model, the lead instructor is responsible for division of the teaching responsibilities between the instructors.

Compensation

Teaching
• An online course is treated for pay purposes the same as an on campus course for full-time professors, according to regular load, overload, or summer teaching or for part-time instructors at the part-time rate.
Course Development

• Currently, compensation for developing online courses is only available as a work for hire, contractual agreement between the instructor, AD and campus provost. All other course development is performed as noted in the TCC faculty employment contract.

Course Content Sharing (Content Mentor)

• There is no compensation for sharing course content and acting as a content mentor for the receiving faculty. Faculty who developed the course content outside of contract or work for hire agreement has authority regarding the sharing of their content. Course content is not to be copied without the faculty’s permission.

Evaluation

Student Evaluation of Online Courses

• The college issues course evaluations to all students each semester via SmartEvals and results are emailed to faculty at the end of the semester. For more information, please visit http://www.tulsacc.edu/courseevaluations

Student Support

Online Learning Orientation

• An Online Learning Orientation is provided to all first time online students and addresses the features of an online class as well as an overview of the learning environment they will work in. Students are encouraged to take the orientation prior to starting an online class and are notified via postcard and telephone a few days before the start of the semester or second 8 week term.

Student Support Services

• Online Learning maintains a consolidated listing of student support services beneficial to online students at https://bb.tulsacc.edu/bbcswebdav/institution/DL/student_support.htm and is also available via the Student Resources tab in Blackboard.

Student Resources Tab in Blackboard

• The Student Resources tab contains modules pertinent to student support issues in Bb and other Online Learning services.

Student Email

• All students have email accounts provided by the college. All TCC email addresses use the email domain of @tulsacc.edu
Technical Support

• Technical support is provided by TCC Call2000. Students access Call2000 via phone at 918-595-2000.

Exceptions to Stated Operations

Exceptions to Online Learning operations will be considered by the Director of Online Learning on a case by case basis.

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i A Certified Instructor is a full or part-time faculty member who has successfully completed the TCC Online Instructor Certification.

ii A Certified Developer is a full-time instructor who has completed the TCC Online Instructor Certification and TCC Online Developer Certification.

iii Protected course sections were established under the old Online Learning process of Course Proposals which was discontinued in 2006. However, the protected course idea is still in effect for only a single section each semester in which the original instructor plans to offer the course for which they were approved and was considered to be the first course in a specific discipline to be offered online.

iv Master Course sites are not part of the TCC schedule and therefore will not be removed from Blackboard unless requested by an instructor.

v Exceptions to certification involves receiving an exemption from the Dean of Online Learning (usually a single semester exception).

vi TCC originally used an RFP to request that instructors write a proposal for each course they wished to develop and teach online. The proposals went through a review process and were approved to be offered by the developing instructor.

vii The QM™ Rubric is available at [http://www.qmprogram.org/rubric](http://www.qmprogram.org/rubric)