

eLearning (Changes proposed to original Policy)

Policy Administrator: Vice President for Academic Affairs

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Effective Date: 1/27/95 Revised 4/26/01. Draft Revision 4/16/09, 4/27/09, 5/12/09

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## **Introduction**

This policy shall apply to all matriculated eLearning courses and degree/certificate programs offered by California State University, Sacramento.

Part of the challenge of all modern universities is to responsibly align information technologies as a positive force for encouraging creative pedagogies for faculty and expanding instructional options for students. The over-riding intent of this policy is to enrich the campus teaching and learning environment. By locating academic decision-making within academic departments or divisions, the policy reinforces the belief that those closest to curriculum implementation best understand which courses and programs are suited for conversion to an eLearning format.

For purposes of this policy, eLearning is defined as a formal educational process in which 20%-100% of the instruction takes place when the professor and students are not in the same place at the same time. Instead, the interaction between professor and students is mediated using audio, video and/or computer technologies.

Four methods are utilized to deliver eLearning to California State University, Sacramento students. These include: audio-based, video-based, web-based and mixed media (video and web) delivery. Cable television, podcasting, two-way compressed video, microwave, satellite, videotape, CD-ROM, web-based conferencing systems and video streaming are current video-based methods of delivery. Web-based courses typically use SacCT, Locus, and/or virtual classroom and presentation technologies, such as iMEET/Elluminate, as a means of delivering instruction and engaging students.

eLearning formats: online and hybrid. An online course is a course with no regular on-campus class meetings. However, at the discretion of the instructor, an online course may have occasional organizational, assessment-related and/or on-campus class meetings. A hybrid course is a course in which 20% or more of course activities, including class meetings, are delivered electronically. Through the use of a variety of technologies, actual seat time is reduced (using the facility code WEBONLINE in the meeting pattern) and replaced with activities, discussions, and assignments completed at a distance.

eLearning technology and pedagogy continue to evolve. In addition each new student cohort brings a stronger set of information technology skills to the campus and has the expectation that information technology will inform and enrich their educational experience. This policy allows the University to meet the demands of student expectations as well as continue to provide broad based high quality educational opportunity to all its students.

1. General Guidelines	1. General Guidelines
<p>1.1 Through their respective departments or divisions, <i>the faculty are</i> responsible for <i>deciding which courses as well as which degree/certificate programs will be offered in an eLearning format.</i> Programs in which 50% or less of the coursework is offered in a face-to-face or hybrid mode require no special approvals. Any department or faculty group proposing eLearning programs in which more than half of the courses are offered through on-line courses should follow the approval process described in section 2 below.</p> <p>1.2 As in the case of courses offered through the traditional face-to-face modality, <i>the faculty have the collective responsibility to ensure both the rigor and integrity of all courses offered as well as the quality of instruction.</i> Standard course evaluation processes currently used by academic units to assess face-to-face courses will be used to assess eLearning courses. Academic Technology and Creative Services, a Division of Academic Affairs, will provide consulting services to those academic units and faculty who wish to develop supplementary course evaluation tools for their eLearning offerings. Faculty of record for a specific eLearning course, Department Chairs and/or Faculty Evaluation Committees are charged with utilizing student evaluation data in a manner consistent with extant Departmental policies and procedures related to the maintenance of quality instruction.</p> <p>1.3 Departments and divisions have their own distinct method of selecting offerings for each semester. Hybrid and online courses require significant investments of both time and resources to both develop and sustain. In selecting courses to be delivered in these modalities practical factors such as: on-going demand, faculty commitment and curricular need must be considered. However, the overarching reason to offer eLearning courses is to expand educational opportunities for our students by offering courses with the same quality of education as face-to-face courses, but with greater convenience and flexibility.</p> <p>1.4 <i>Prior approval by the Vice President for Academic Affairs is required for any individual, department or program to contract with any private or public entity to design, transport, and/or produce content for eLearning courses or programs on behalf of California State University, Sacramento.</i></p> <p>1.5 <i>Prior approval by the relevant department or program is required for the University to contract with any private or public entity to design, transport, and/or produce content for eLearning courses or programs.</i></p> <p>1.6 Courses and Programs delivered via eLearning modalities must satisfy the</p>	<p>1.1 <i>The faculty are responsible for deciding which courses and/or programs will be offered in a distance education format.</i></p> <p>1.2 <i>The faculty have the collective responsibility to ensure both the rigor and integrity of all courses offered as well as the quality of instruction.</i></p> <p>1.3 <i>Prior approval by the Vice President for Academic Affairs is required for any individual, department or program to contract with any private or public entity to design, transport, and/or produce content for distance education courses or programs on behalf of CSUS.</i></p> <p>1.4 <i>Prior approval by the relevant department or program is required for the University to contract with any private or public entity to design, transport, and/or produce content for distance education courses or programs.</i></p> <p>1.5 For programs in which required courses have been traditionally provided in a non-</p>

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California State University (CSU) Executive Order 926, reflecting the CSU commitment to provide access to information resources and technologies to all students, including individuals with disabilities.

### 2. Program Approval Guidelines

2.1 Academic Units that wish to offer an eLearning degree/certificate program shall designate a faculty eLearning curriculum group who will consult with Academic Technology and Creative Services (ATCS). Together ATCS and the academic curriculum group will develop a plan that includes the items described in 2.1.1-2.1.7.

2.1.1 *The role of full-time faculty in developing and implementing the proposed eLearning degree program.*

2.1.2 *Student learning outcomes for the program and the plan for assessing these outcomes.* While eLearning often offers students a different experience than traditional face-to face instruction an existing program adapted for eLearning must be equivalent in terms of learning outcomes to the program offered on campus. The proposal must include a description of course activities that indicate how course objectives for all eLearning classes will be met.

2.1.3 *The means for ensuring the academic integrity of student work.*

2.1.4 *The means for providing the methodologies/strategies for providing interaction between faculty and students as well as interaction between students.*

2.1.5 *The means for providing the required academic support services and resources (including library, general advising, financial aid, counseling, social support services, etc.).*

2.1.6 *A faculty development plan for providing pedagogical and technical training to teach through video-based and/or Web-based technologies.*

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distance education mode of delivery, a change in any of these required courses to a distance education mode of delivery shall also provide students in the program a pathway to completing the major through non-distance education courses.

NOTE : Per President's memo of 8/1/01: "The Division of Nursing is exempted from provision 1.5 in view of ongoing programs. Other academic units may be exempted upon request, approved by the appropriate dean and the Provost."

### 2. Program Approval Guidelines

2.1 A New Program Proposal in which a student can complete the program with 50 percent or more of the program being provided through distance education courses must include the information indicated in subsection 2.3.

2.2 A Program Change Proposal must be prepared and the University's current "Policies and Procedures for Initiation, Modification, Review and Approval of Courses and Academic Programs" (as specified in the Bluebook) followed for any program where additions or changes of any courses in the program can result in a student completing the program with 50 percent or more of the program being provided through distance education courses.

2.3 Program Proposals should include the following information:

2.3.1 *The role of full-time faculty in developing and implementing the proposed distance education degree program.*

2.3.2 *Student learning outcomes for the program and the plan for assessing these outcomes.*

Note : An existing program adapted for distance education must be equivalent to the program offered on campus. The proposal must demonstrate how course objectives for all distance education classes will be met as effectively as on-campus course sections.

2.3.3 *The means for ensuring the academic integrity of student work.*

2.3.4 *The means for providing the methodologies/strategies for providing interaction between faculty and students as well as interaction between students.*

2.3.5 *The means for providing the required academic support services and resources (including library, general advising, financial aid, counseling, social support services, etc.).*

2.3.6 *A faculty development plan for providing pedagogical and technical training to teach through video-based and/or Web-based technologies.*

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2.1.7 *The means whereby faculty and students will access needed technical support.*

2.2 Once the program plan is developed it needs to be approved by both the Department/Division and the School or College Dean in consultation with the appropriate curriculum committees.

Note: Any department or faculty group offering existing degree/certificate programs in an eLearning format in which more than half of the courses are offered online is expected to meet Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) requirements and be guided by other relevant curricular policy established by the University.

### 3. Hybrid Course Approval

3.1. A hybrid course is defined as a course in which 20%-67% of the in-class instruction scheduled for a traditional section of the same course is replaced by instruction that takes place when the professor and students are not in the same physical location.

3.2. An existing course that is re-designed as a hybrid course shall require no additional approvals. Prior to offering a hybrid course faculty are encouraged to consult with ATCS staff to assist with the transition from a face-to-face to a hybrid format. In order to support the utilization of best educational practices for hybrid offerings, within two semesters of offering a hybrid course, the faculty member shall meet with ATCS staff and create a course development plan that *includes* the items described in 3.2.1-3.2.5.

3.2.1. *Student learning outcomes for the course and the plan for assessing these outcomes.* While a course formatted for eLearning often offers students a different experience than traditional face-to-face instruction, an existing course adapted for eLearning must be equivalent in terms of learning outcomes to the course offered on campus. The plan must include a description of course activities that indicate how course objectives for will be met.

3.2.2. *The means for ensuring the academic integrity of student work.*

3.2.3. *The methodologies/strategies for providing interaction between faculty and students as well as interaction between students. This would include the types and forms of interaction expected.*

3.2.4. *The means for providing the required academic support services and*

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2.3.7 *The means whereby faculty and students will access needed technical support.*

Note : New distance education programs or existing programs converted to distance education must be reviewed and granted approval by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) prior to implementation. The guidelines for preparing such a proposal are consistent with the guidelines contained in this policy. Academic Affairs will assist departments in the preparation and submittal of such proposals.

### 3. Course Approval Guidelines

3.1 A New Course Proposal in which a majority (50 percent or more) of instruction takes place when the professor and students are not in the same place at the same time must include the information indicated in subsection 3.4.

3.2 A Course Change Proposal must be prepared and the University's current "Policies and Procedures for Initiation, Modification, Review and Approval of Courses and Academic Programs" (as specified in the Bluebook~ followed for any existing course modified for distance education - where the majority (50 percent or more) of instruction occurs without face-to-face interaction between professor and students.

3.3 Approval of transfer credit for distance education courses taken at other institutions is the responsibility of the appropriate department or program. Such courses will be reviewed and evaluated as to both curriculum content and the Course Approval Guidelines specified in this policy.

3.4 Course Proposals should *include* the following:

3.4.1 *Student learning outcomes for the course and the plan for assessing these outcomes.*

Note . An existing course adapted for distance education must be equivalent to the same course taught on campus. The proposal must demonstrate how course objectives for distance education sections will be met as effectively as the on-campus course.

3.4.2 *The means for ensuring the academic integrity of student work.*

3.4.3 *The methodologies/strategies for providing interaction between faculty and students as well as interaction between students. This would include the types and forms*

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*resources (including library, general advising, advising in the major, financial aid, counseling, social support services, etc.).*

3.2.5. *The skill level and technology experience as well as the hardware and software a student will need to take the course.*

3.3. An existing course that is re-formatted so that 20% or less of the instruction takes place when the professor and students are not in the same place shall require no additional approvals.

### 4. Online Course Approval

4.1. An on-line course is defined as a course in which more than 67% of the in-class instruction scheduled for a traditional section of the same course is replaced by instruction that takes place when the professor and students are not in the same physical location.

4.2. An existing course that is re-designed as an online course needs to be approved through the curricular process of the Department or Division offering the course. Before the course can be scheduled, the academic unit must demonstrate the demand and academic need to convert the course to an online format. For example, courses that can service more students or provide greater ease and flexibility for students meeting core degree requirements would generally be seen as strong candidates for conversion to an online format. In addition, faculty must be willing to staff the course and undergo the requisite training necessary to teach an effective online course.

4.3. Once a course and faculty are identified, the faculty member must meet with ATCS staff and create a course development plan that includes items 3.2.1-3.2.5 described above. In addition the faculty member must demonstrate competency in the use of a campus-supported learning management system.

### 5. Faculty training and development.

Academic Technology and Creative Services (ATCS) and The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), working in collaboration with Information Resources and Technology (IRT) regularly offer a wide range of both workshops, discussion groups and other training opportunities in the area of e-Learning. Faculty who teach or plan to teach eLearning courses are encouraged to attend those training sessions necessary for them to acquire the pedagogical knowledge and technological skill set required for quality e-Learning.

6. Ongoing Assessment of eLearning courses: Each semester ATCS in conjunction with the Center for Teaching and Learning will conduct an assessment of both

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*of interaction expected.*

3.4.4 *The means for providing the required academic support services and resources (including library, general advising, advising in the major, financial aid, counseling, social support services, etc.).*

3.4.5 *The skill level and technology experience as well as the hardware and software a student will need to take the course.*

### **4. Evaluation and Approval of Distance Education Courses Established Prior to the Approval of this Policy**

The Program Review process will be used to review and evaluate courses established prior to implementation of this policy. The Course and Program Approval Guidelines specified in this policy will be used to verify compliance.

student satisfaction with and the level of interactivity in all online and hybrid courses. The results will be used to both validate the pedagogy utilized in e-Learning, as well as to provide a foundation for improvements in eLearning delivery. Each academic year, ATCS will prepare an eLearning assessment report that will be submitted to Academic Affairs.

7. Evaluation and approval of eLearning courses established prior to the approval of this policy. The Program Review process will be used to review and evaluate courses established prior to the implementation date of this policy. The course and program approval guidelines specified in this policy will be used to verify compliance commencing with Academic Program Reviews conducted after Fall 2012.

### 8. Institutional Support

- 8.1. *Basic Student Support Services.* All regularly matriculated University students receiving instruction through eLearning shall be provided equivalent access to the basic student support services offered on this campus. These shall include admission, course registration services, academic advising and orientation, textbook purchasing, financial aid, career development and other special program accommodations as applicable (for example, EOP, Veteran, and Reentry students).
- 8.2. *Library Support.* The Library shall provide equivalent support for eLearning courses and programs. Effective and appropriate library services for eLearning may differ from those services offered on campus but they should be designed to meet a wide range of informational and bibliographic needs. The requirements of academic programs should guide the Library in its response. Elements of library support available to students taking eLearning courses may include courier and electronic document delivery, electronic journals, full-text databases, end-user searching, reference assistance and instruction, network access, reciprocal borrowing and interlibrary loan services, cooperative arrangements with other libraries for collection access, cooperative development of databases, and other strategies that emphasize access to resources.
- 8.3. *Technology Support.* In order to facilitate instruction that is appropriate for selected technologies, professional support in the use of the technology is necessary. Such support shall include:
- 8.3.1. Training in the use of eLearning tools, applications, and transport systems.

### 5. Institutional Support

5.1 Basic Student Support Services. All regularly matriculated CSUS students receiving instruction through distance education shall be provided equivalent access to the basic student support services offered on this campus. These shall include admission, course registration services, academic advising and orientation, textbook purchasing, financial aid, career development and other special program accommodations as applicable (for example, EOP, Veteran, and Reentry students).

5.2 *Library Support.* The Library shall provide equivalent support for distance education courses and programs. Effective and appropriate library services for distance education may differ from those services offered on campus but they should be designed to meet a wide range of informational and bibliographic needs. The requirements of academic programs should guide the Library in its response. Elements of library support available to students taking distance education courses may include courier and electronic document delivery, electronic journals, full-text databases, end-user searching, reference assistance and instruction, network access, reciprocal borrowing and interlibrary loan services, cooperative arrangements with other libraries for collection access, cooperative development of databases, and other strategies that emphasize access to resources.

5.3 *Technology Support.* In order to facilitate instruction that is appropriate for selected

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8.3.2. Development and production of online and mediated materials

8.3.3. Ongoing consultation with Academic Technology and Creative Services, Information, Resources and technology, and/or College Instructional Technology (IT) staff.

8.4. *Pedagogy Support.* In order to facilitate instruction that is pedagogically effective, faculty members teaching eLearning courses shall have access to pedagogy support from faculty and staff involved in eLearning. Such support shall include:

*8.4.1. Instructional design*

*8.4.2. Effective pedagogical uses of specific technology*

*8.4.3. Assessment strategies*

*8.4.4. Ongoing consultation Academic Technology and Creative Services (ATCS) and Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) faculty staff*

8.5. *Faculty Support.* The University shall provide appropriate faculty support services specifically related to eLearning. It is easy to underestimate the effort and skill required of faculty to convert from a conventional classroom format to an eLearning format. It is even easier to underestimate the effort and skill required of faculty to change from professor-centered classroom activities to the genuinely learner-centered activities made possible by technology. Consequently, workload calculations for eLearning courses should reflect the additional effort and skill required of faculty. The workload calculations should be uniform and consistent with guidelines currently used to determine assigned time for excess enrollment, for differences in course classification, and for faculty to make use of support available for both technology and pedagogy.

9. *Copyright, Patent and Ownership Policy:* Ownership of materials, faculty compensation, copyright issues, and the utilization of revenue derived from the creation and production of software, telecourses, or other media products shall be agreed upon by the faculty and the University in accordance with the University's Copyright and Patent Policy and guidelines (UMC02750).

10. Commencing with the approval of this policy, every three years the Curriculum Policy Committee of the Faculty Senate shall initiate a review process to ascertain the need for updates or modifications to the eLearning policy. The committee conducting this review, the majority of whom will be faculty, will consist of representatives from Academic Technology and Creative Services (ATCS), the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), the eLearning faculty, and the Faculty Senate.

technologies, professional support in the use of the technology is necessary. Such support shall include:

- Training in the use of distance education tools, applications, and transport systems.
- Development and production of online and mediated materials
- Ongoing consultation with Computing, Communications and Media Services (CCMS) and / or College Instructional Technology (IT) staff

5.4 *Pedagogy Support.* In order to facilitate instruction that is pedagogically effective, faculty members teaching distance education courses shall have access to pedagogy support from faculty and staff involved in distance education. Such support shall include:

- *Instructional design*
- *Effective pedagogical uses of specific technology*
- *Assessment strategies*
- *Ongoing consultation with Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) faculty and/or CCMS staff*

5.5 *Faculty Support.* The University shall provide appropriate faculty support services specifically related to distance education. It is easy to underestimate the effort and skill required of faculty to convert from a conventional classroom format to a distance education format. It is even easier to underestimate the effort and skill required of faculty to change from professor-centered classroom activities to the genuinely learner-centered activities made possible by technology. Consequently, workload calculations for distance education courses should reflect the additional effort and skill required of faculty. The workload calculations should be uniform and consistent with guidelines currently used to determine assigned time for excess enrollment, for differences in course classification, and for faculty to make use of support available for both technology and pedagogy.

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