

Departmental eLearning Policy

Definitions

This policy follows the University eLearning Policy regarding definitions and criteria to distinguish traditional face-to-face, hybrid, and online courses.

I/ General

1. Ensuring compliance with this policy shall be the joint responsibility of the Curriculum, the Assessment Committee and the Department Chair.
2. The Department's annual teaching workshop shall be partially dedicated to ensuring that instructors remain aware of evolving best practices for hybrid and online courses
3. E-learning courses must comply with all University and Campus requirements for online courses. In the case of a conflict with Department requirements stated in this document, University and Campus requirements shall be understood to supercede Departmental requirements.
4. The requirements outlined in this document shall be understood to apply to ordinary circumstances when face-to-face courses are being offered on campus in accord with customary practices and expectations. The Department Chair is charged with keeping instructors informed concerning any temporary modification of these requirements, e.g., in response to an emergency suspension of face-to-face courses and subsequent conversion to universal online instruction.

II/ Best Practices for Course Design

The Philosophy department recommends the adoption of best practices for course design and implementation, including:

1. **Online Course Quality** All fully online courses offered though the Philosophy Department should be the best quality understood in terms of design for student learning, engagement, and success. To this end, the following resources are available to instructors to use in developing or revising their online courses or online course components for hybrid courses:
 - a. [Quality Matters](#)
 - b. Rubric for Assessing Course Quality (requires creating an individual account)
 - c. [Supporting Literature for the Rubric](#)
 - d. Quality Matters Self Review for courses (requires creating an individual account).
 - e. Comparison of QM rubric to best practices ([report by Ronal Legon, 2006](#))
 - f. Department Checklist – required submission for course approval (see attached or link here).
2. **Student and peer communications** should be prompt and complete. According to best practices, prompt communications with students in online courses supports their engagement with the material. All instructors teaching online and hybrid courses will be required to

- i. Indicate clearly on their syllabi when they will or will not be available for student advisement and consultation, and the best medium for that communication.
 - ii. Respond to inquiries from students and peers within the day for working days, and by the earliest resumption of the working day (expected M-F, 9:00am-5:00pm).
 - iii. to hold online (typically Zoom) office hours commensurate with the proportion of their courses that are being offered online.
3. ***Student Feedback*** shall be prompt and thorough. Under no conditions will it be acceptable to provide online students with less attention, care and respect than face-to-face students.
4. ***Early, Frequent and Constant student assessment*** is expected of all online course implementations.
5. ***Instructor Virtual Presence*** All courses must contain regularly updated instructor created content, e.g.: screen casts or synchronous engagement, which would fulfill the function normally satisfied by activities performed in a physical classroom.
6. ***Universal Design for Learning*** All course material (syllabi, instructions, assignments, course content, etc) should be prepared for universal accessibility. In the course of developing an online or hybrid course, the instructor should be attentive to the likelihood that students with various disabilities (not limited to learning disabilities) will be interested in the course. Designing the course, from the beginning to end, to be universally accessible will benefit everyone. We recommend visiting these sites:
 - a. National Center for Universal Design for Learning [here](#)
 - b. Access Project from Colorado State University [here](#)
 - c. CSUS IRT Captioning services [here](#)
7. ***FERPA Compliance*** All course material must comply fully with FERPA requirements, and assure privacy for all students in the course.
 - a. If video recordings of in-class activities are used in a different section of the course, in a later iteration of the course, or for a different course, then faculty must obtain permission from the students in the recorded class to use their participation in another course. Dissenting students must not be recorded.
 - b. If students can be identified in the video recording, then it cannot be used beyond the original course use without express written consent of the students. Dissenting students must be removed or made unrecognizable in the recording.
 - c. The possibility of in-class recordings, as well as the option not to be recorded without academic penalty, must be explicitly stated on the course syllabus.
 - d. The department strongly recommends not using in-class recordings beyond the duration, extent, and purpose of the original course section.

III/ Faculty eligibility and course assignment

1. All faculty shall be considered eligible to offer elearning courses in the areas of their professional competence.
2. Faculty members are assigned to offer elearning courses at the discretion of the Department Chair.

IV/ Evaluation and assessment of elearning courses

1. All elearning courses will be evaluated according to the current departmental procedures for evaluating face-to-face course offerings with the following exceptions:
 - a. fully online courses shall be evaluated using the current dedicated online visitation form;
 - b. fully online courses must be evaluated during the first semester in which they are offered;
 - c. fully online courses taught by a particular instructor shall be evaluated at least once during any three semester span in which they are offered;
 - d. Faculty whose e-learning course is rated Competent or less in any given semester shall be reviewed by Curriculum Committee and shall not be offered in the following academic year unless approved by the Curriculum Committee. Approval may require faculty member to submit planned improvements, and course will be subject to independent Curriculum Committee review in the next semester that it is offered.

V/ Faculty eLearning Workload

The opportunity to conduct courses in an eLearning format may be appealing to many instructors for a variety of reasons. It also bears considerable risk for increasing instructional faculty workloads unless some clear expectations are articulated.

1. **Proportion of instructional load** devoted to eLearning formats may vary.
 - a. For Hybrid courses, there is no limitation on the proportion of a faculty member's instructional workload which may be conducted in hybrid format.
 - b. For fully online courses, there is a cap of no more than 75% (3 course equivalents, 9 WTU) of an instructor's instructional workload. This means that over any two consecutively taught semesters, a faculty member's workload will normally not consist of more than 75% fully online courses.
 - c. Exceptions which require no additional authorization are limited to summer and winter intersession, where 100% of instructional workload may be conducted fully online.
 - d. Exceptions requiring additional authorization are treated on a case-by-case basis and will require substantial justification, as well as approval by Department Chair and College Dean.
2. **Maintain Departmental Duties** All tenure-track faculty members are expected to continue to perform their departmental and university functions, participate in regular departmental business, and maintain an on-campus office with regular office hours for student advising and to

contribute to departmental collegiality, regardless of the proportion of their teaching load is conducted in an eLearning mode.

3. **Maintain office hours** of at least one hour per course per week. Generally, this will entail 3-4 hours availability for teaching-related student consultation and advisement. The proportion of online to face-to-face hours is at the discretion of the instructor with the provision that:
 - a. students in online courses may not be required to attend face-to-face office hours.
 - b. advisees and students in face-to-face courses must be offered the opportunity to attend face-to-face office hours.

VI/ Online Course Density

1. All below 150 courses (except 89, 127 and 128) shall be eligible for development in an online format.
2. No course shall be offered in an exclusively online format in any given academic year. (This entails that any course that is typically offered only once a year shall not be administered online.)
3. During any given semester, the total enrollment (measured by class enrollment caps) in online courses shall not exceed the total enrollment in face-to-face courses.