UW-Platteville Faculty Handbook: Teaching Policies

Title*:* Course Instructional Mode Policy

Keywords: Hybrid, Course Instructional Mode, Video Conference, Face-to-Face, Print-Based

Policy Approval Date: April 12, 2016

Policy Source and Authority for Approval: University Undergraduate Curriculum Committee and Faculty Senate

Policy Statement:

Course Instructional Mode Policy

Guiding Principles

1} Exploring novel teaching methods is an important tradition in higher education. Online technologies provide enhanced opportunities for communication among instructors and students, and instructors have been using them for over a quarter century. However, using them to replace traditional classroom instruction is relatively new. Vigilance is necessary to ensure learning outcomes continue to be met.

2} Academic freedom is an important right that is affirmed by both campus policies and the Board of Regents. However, faculty as a whole have both the right and responsibility to oversee curriculum. Such oversight is consistent with established definitions of academic freedom as expressed by the American Association of University Professors and the Association of American Colleges and Universities.

3} In response to abuses at other institutions, the Federal Government has mandated that institutions clearly label courses that involve a significant amount of online content in place of traditional classroom instruction.

4} Additionally, the federal government has defined the academic unit of the credit hour as: an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that reasonably approximates not less than one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-ofclass student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time. (34 CFR 600.2)

This policy defines a variety of instructional modes and establishes practices for administering courses offered in non-traditional ways and timeframes.

Instructional Modes and Definitions

Face to Face Courses:

1. **Traditional, synchronous course:** any course with regularly scheduled, physical face-to-face class meeting. Course content may be delivered in a variety of ways including classroom lectures, laboratories, and discussion sessions or some synchronous and/or asynchronous online technology based learning.

2. **Flipped (Inverted) course:** a course using a pedagogical approach wherein direct instruction is "flipped," often by moving lecture content outside the class meeting (lectures, videos, documentary clips, project resources, learning support to prepare for the analysis and discussion of the application of the content), with face-to-face class time spent on learning activities.

3. **Video Conference course**: a course which allows live video and audio to be available at both the receiving and sending sites (synchronous delivery.) Typically both students and instructors can see and hear all audiences. This can be accomplished in a group setting (i.e. through a distance education classroom with multiple cameras) or individually through a web conferencing system (i.e. blackboard collaborate, Skype, etc.). This allows for the maximum amount of real-time interaction when classes have multiple locations. Approval is required for delivery of video conference courses.

Regardless of the pedagogy, (i.e. flipped, Socratic method, etc.) the class will physically meet with the instructor at the same time 76%-100% of the scheduled class time.

Compressed Timeline Courses:

Any course offered for less than a 14-week timeframe including winterim and summer school. Approval is required for delivery of compressed courses.

Distance Courses:

1. **Online course**: asynchronous distance course in which 100% of the content, student support and instructional infrastructure is delivered electronically. There are no physical face-to-face meetings. Current policy limits asynchronous delivery to degrees offered at a distance.

2. **Print-based/correspondence course:** distance, self-paced course that is completed via interaction (postal mail, electronic mail) with an assigned instructor within a semester or 12 month timeframe. Students receive a course manual that details assigned readings, papers, and projects as well as instructions for submitting their work and requesting exams. Current policy limits print/correspondence delivery to courses offered in the Business Administration distance degree program.

3. **Streaming Video Course:** a course which transmits either synchronously or asynchronously. Streaming video courses may or may not include physical face-to-face contact with an instructor or assistant. Approval is required for delivery of streaming video courses.

4. **Hybrid (Blended, Mixed Face-to-Face) Instructional Delivery:** A course in which 25% to 75% of the course is face-to-face, with the rest of class time conducted by synchronous and/or asynchronous online learning. Approval is required for delivery of hybrid courses.

Policies for courses using Video Conference, Compressed Timeline, Streaming Video and/or Hybrid Instructional Formats

Administration

a) Any course offered, during any period, utilizing video conference, compressed, streaming video, or hybrid delivery is to be identified in PASS prior to student registration.
b) TBA (to be arranged) is acceptable to indicate the number of class or seminar meeting dates. The dates, times, and location must be posted for the students in the course within one week after the first class session is held. Regardless, class time must meet 45 hours face-to-face for a 3 credit class and course planning must include 90 hours for out of class learning time as mandated by the federal definition of a credit hour.
c) Resources for training instructors of distance classes will be provided by the university.

Assessment

a) If a class offered during a standard 15-16 week semester is also offered in a distance format and/or compressed timeline, the instructor must demonstrate that student learning in the alternate mode is equivalent to student learning in the standard semester. Statements of similar student learning outcomes on course syllabi and course grades are not considered acceptable evidence for achievement of learning outcomes. Maintenance of documentation of equivalent student learning is the responsibility of the program in which the course is offered.
b) All distance courses must include student evaluations of technology and delivery method each time the course is offered. If the questions are built into the departments/schools evaluation forms, those subsections will be reviewed, or if the technology and delivery method questions are not included, as separate supplemental survey of students can be conducted.
c) In addition to the instructor, the evaluation results will be provided to the department chair or designee for courses so that the chair can make determinations about future delivery options for the course.