

POLICY ON TECHNOLOGY-MEDIATED COURSES AND PROGRAMS

I. Rationale

Faculty may use instructional technology tools to facilitate effective instruction, to enhance student learning, to supplement or replace face-to-face instruction, and to extend access to students. Courses and programs using instructional technology are termed technology-mediated. Technology-mediated courses might be synchronous (broadcast, video conferencing, web conferencing), asynchronous (online) or a blend.

The following principles guide this policy:

- The faculty is responsible for the academic content of the curriculum.
- Student learning outcomes of technology-mediated courses are similar to those of traditional courses.
- Learning outcomes of technology-mediated courses are evaluated as part of a student learning outcomes assessment plan.
- Technology-mediated courses support student-faculty and student-student interaction.

II. Responsibilities

The faculty in each department are responsible for ensuring that technology-mediated courses retain the characteristics that have gained them special approval as general education or service-learning courses. Technology-mediated instruction courses and/or programs shall meet established standards for quality and student learning outcomes, as well as best practices for technologically-mediated instruction.

Each faculty member shall be responsible for determining how information is disseminated to the students in this or her courses in accordance with university regulations (including ADA requirements). The instructor of record will determine the level of control exerted over access to the instructional materials in a course by their students. For example, a faculty member will determine whether or not instructional materials may only be viewed on-line, downloaded, or accessed in a format permitting students to manipulate the materials.

The university will ensure a process is in place to verify the identity of students taking examinations in online courses

It is important that library and other student services be available to all California State University, Fresno students, including those at remote locations.

III. Courses

A. Definitions

1. Synchronous courses: broadcast, video conferencing, or web conferencing that enables face-to-face interaction between the instructor, located at one site, and students, attending class elsewhere.

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2. Web Facilitated: Course that uses web-based technology to facilitate what is essentially a face-to-face course. Typically has the syllabus and assignments posted online. 1-29% of course content is delivered online.
3. Hybrid: Course that blend online and face-to-face delivery. Substantial portions of the content (30-79%) are delivered online.
4. Online - A course where most or all of the content (80-100%) is delivered online. Typically there may be no face-to-face meetings.

Definitions 2-4 are consistent with national standards see Learning on Demand: Online Education in the United States, 2009. see hyperlink <http://sloanconsortium.org/publications/survey/pdf/learningondemand.pdf>

B. Approval Process:

Existing courses can be converted to web facilitated courses with departmental approval. When more than 29% of the course content is delivered online (hybrid or online) school/college approval is required along with a technical review. Approval initiated by an individual instructor will apply only to that instructor, but the department may initiate approval for offerings of a course independent of a particular instructor. When online delivery exceeds 79% of the course content, university level approval is needed. School/college and University level approvals are secured through the normal curricular review processes and will include consideration of academic content, student learning outcomes, and budgetary and other considerations. Review by technical staff will focus solely upon whether the proposed mode of delivery for the course or program meets current guidelines for online learning. The technical review is to be considered advisory to the school/college review process.

Courses being offered more than 29% online before adoption of this policy have one academic year to complete the approval process.

C. Syllabi:

Syllabi for hybrid or online courses shall explain the role that technology plays in achieving student learning outcomes. Syllabi of courses in which online instruction replaces part or all of in-class time shall describe how learning activities will be scheduled, including a distinction between synchronous and asynchronous activities. Pursuant to APM 241, a print copy of the syllabus and any amendments shall be on file in the department office.

D. Courses Originating off Campus:

Credit-bearing courses originating off campus shall be reviewed through normal curricular processes. The university shall not contract with any private or public entity to deliver credit-bearing courses or programs to off-campus entities or to California State University, Fresno students without prior approval.

IV. Degree Programs

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~~The university has a well established history of facilitating education through the use of technology. Successful instruction of students at a distant site requires additional resources and collaboration among many campus units.~~

As courses and degree programs are made available through technology-mediated instructionTM, arrangements must be made to provide necessary support and appropriate student services such as academic advising, financial aid, career services, library services, and tutoring. Proposals to offer new courses or degree programs through technology-mediated instructionTM should address these issues.

Any degree program that is offered more than 50 percent online or at a distant site requires substantive change approval from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. Consult the University's Accreditation Liaison Officer for assistance in preparing a substantive change proposal.