

Online Instructor Qualifications

Prepared by the Educational Technology Committee October 2005

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College of the Canyons

- *Innovation should always serve the best interests of students*
- *Innovation should be initiated by faculty when it enhances student success*

State Academic Senate position paper "Distance Learning in California Community Colleges" (1993)

In the interest of promoting innovation, ensuring continued quality of instruction, and enhancing student success, the Educational Technology Committee recommends that instructors who wish to teach online courses must meet the following qualifications.

Pedagogical Readiness:

1. Prior to teaching online, online instructors must have completed formal college-level coursework or training in online teaching and learning from an accredited college or university, or the equivalent. This coursework or training should include instruction in best practices for online teaching and learning, Section 508 compliance, and the College's course management system.
 - **Examples** of such formal college-level coursework or training in online teaching and learning include the COC *Certified Online Instructor* series, Cerro Coso College's *Certificate in Online Teaching* (8 units), UCLA's *Online Teaching for Academic and Business Professionals* program (16 units), or CSU East Bay's *Certificate in Online Teaching and Learning* (12 units).
 - **Equivalencies** include:
 - two semesters of teaching in a predominantly online format, or
 - a teaching demonstration in an online format, showing evidence of effective student-instructor and student-student contact, assessment of student work, Section 508 compliance, and familiarity with the College's course management system.

2. **Determination** of whether an instructor meets the requirement described in #1 will be made by the relevant department chair in consultation with the Dean of Distance Learning. In the absence of a department chair or designee, the appropriate Division Dean shall make the determination in consultation with the Dean of Distance Learning.
3. An **Appeals Process** will be developed that will rely primarily on the guidance of the Educational Technology Committee or its designee(s). The appeals process will recognize the discipline expertise of the department chair.
4. Instructors teaching online for the first time must document previous experience teaching in the discipline in a face-to-face format.
5. During a semester prior to teaching online for the first time, online instructors must have supplemented face-to-face classes with at least one of the following:
 - Online syllabus
 - Online office hours
 - Online discussion board
 - Online textbook supplements
 - Online quizzing/assessment tools
6. In order to ensure that all students are able to benefit from online education, online instructors must have completed a workshop or other training on accessibility guidelines (Section 508). Online instructors will make all course materials accessible to persons with disabilities.

Technical Readiness:

In recognition of the added technical challenges involved with online instruction, and online instructors are expected to be able to:

1. Operate within a standard operating environment (e.g., Windows or Macintosh) and be able to:
 - Manage files, and
 - Maneuver among multiple applications.
2. Use the standard word processing application(s) (e.g., Microsoft Word) and be able to:
 - Use various formatting techniques,
 - Select and save document in various file formats (e.g., rtf, html).
3. Use the campus email application(s) (e.g., MS Outlook) and be able to:
 - Use the contacts,
 - Create groups,

- Create and use folders, and
 - Select and send attachments in appropriate formats.
4. Use the Internet and be able to
 - Make use of research techniques,
 - Download files,
 - Save websites as Favorites/Bookmarks, and
 - Use different browsers and search engines.
 5. Upload and manage content in the current College-supported Course Management System
 6. Modify course content and self-created Web sites to provide access to users with disabilities (Section 508 compliant).
 7. Use automated grading systems (e.g., Micrograde or Blackboard's Gradebook function).