

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, EAST BAY

Designation Code: **06-07 BEC 5** (*revised*)

Date Submitted: December 6, 2006

TO: The Academic Senate
FROM: Executive Committee
SUBJECT: Policy on Online (and Hybrid) Instruction
PURPOSE: Action by the Academic Senate

ACTION

REQUESTED: That the Academic Senate approve the attached Policy on Online Instruction; effective upon the signature of the President

BACKGROUND

INFORMATION: At its meeting on December 5, 2006, the Executive Committee voted to send the Online Instruction Policy to members of its curriculum and faculty affairs standing committees for feedback, and then to place the policy on the Senate agenda as a BEC document. The document was written by a Special Online Task Force appointed by ExCom in the Fall and has had broad consultation, including the Deans, the CIO, John Charles, and standing committee members in both FAC and CIC. Passage of this document will give structure to online teaching growth and will provide common ground for online/hybrid instruction in all disciplines.

With the passage of this policy by the Senate and approval by the President, the Committee on Instruction and Curriculum (CIC) and the Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC) are charged with reviewing the documents in their domain (such as, but not limited to, the PT&R document and the Curricular Procedures Manual and New Course/Course Modification forms) to include language that is necessary to comply with this policy and further define issues of relevance to online and hybrid instruction. It is hoped that these document revisions will come before the Academic Senate before the end of this fiscal year. Cross-references to approved faculty governance documents may be added to the Online Instruction Policy by the Senate Office, as they are adopted.

POLICY ON ONLINE INSTRUCTION

I. Preamble

The purpose of this policy is to provide continuity in the quality and climate of the educational environment as we move to incorporate online learning and other forms of academic technology into the mainstream of instruction at California State University, East Bay. This policy shall apply to all credit-bearing courses, course sections, and programs offered through online learning by California State University, East Bay.

II. Definition of Online Instruction

Online learning in this document means any mode of electronically mediated instruction where either (a) some (or all) class section members are not, nor are expected to be, in the same physical location as the instructor during the regularly scheduled class time, and/or (b) some (or all) class section members do not meet at the same time as other members of the class.

III. Principles for Online Instruction

A. Student Support and Information

1. Online instruction courses and programs shall provide an opportunity for interaction between students and the faculty member responsible for the course section, so that students can receive prompt responses to their questions. Faculty should respond to student queries and requests in a timely manner, in most cases within two instructional days.
2. The Class Schedule shall clearly and in a uniform manner identify course sections with a significant online component through the use of footnotes and symbols or in other appropriate ways so that students have access to this information before enrolling in a course or program.
3. Criteria for student success in online instruction courses and programs shall be as rigorous and comprehensive as those used in classroom-based courses and these criteria shall be clearly communicated to students.
4. Students enrolled in online course sections are subject to the same university policies and procedures applicable to students attending courses on campus. Academic standards regarding cheating, plagiarism, and appropriate behavior shall be clearly communicated to students in online instruction courses and programs. [See Policy on Academic Dishonesty]
5. Each student enrolled in an online instruction course section or program shall be informed of available instructional support, student services, library resources, and support services for students with disabilities. Faculty should work closely with the

library and student services staff to ensure adequate access and training for online instruction students.

6. Technical support consistent with that available to on-campus students shall be made available to students in online course sections and programs.

B. Faculty Support Rights and Responsibilities

1. Faculty shall have the same control and ownership of the substantive and intellectual content of their online instruction course-related materials that faculty have with respect to classes offered in classroom format, at the time of production, at any time during their use, and thereafter, in accordance with the provisions of the CSU/CFA Collective Bargaining Agreement and CSU and CSUEB policies.

2. Faculty are to avail themselves of University Library resources for copyright clearance and provision of online articles and books.

3. In courses where classes are offered in online and in classroom sections, online sections shall meet all course objectives normally covered in the classroom-based sections.

4. In online course sections, the department chair is responsible for ensuring that the student evaluation of instruction forms are administered. Because of the online nature of the course, the procedures for evaluating the faculty may be different from those used by the institution for the evaluation of faculty teaching classroom-based courses, but the overall standards shall be equivalent.

5. The University shall offer appropriate training and support services to faculty to prepare and support them in developing and teaching online instruction courses. The faculty should avail themselves of these services and training. The University shall similarly offer appropriate support, and training as required, for department chairs with respect to online courses, including ways and means of administering student evaluation of instruction forms for online students.

6. The University shall offer appropriate training and support services to faculty to prepare and support them in ensuring that all online materials conform to the requirements of the CSU Accessible Technology Initiative. In accordance with this initiative, accessible design will be incorporated into the creation of all new online course sections offered beginning Fall 2008. Existing online course content will be made accessible as online materials are redesigned or modified or when a student with a disability enrolls in the course.

7. All online courses listed in the Class Schedule shall normally be hosted on California State University servers or other servers approved by the Dean and the Chief Information Officer.

8. Any course that uses online instruction shall indicate so in the course syllabus/outline. In addition to information specified in the Policy on Course Requirement Information, the following information shall be included in course outlines for online instruction courses:

- a) How participation in online activities will be assessed and graded (e.g., participation in chat sessions, frequency of web access, postings, etc.);
- b) Whether and how the instructor will track student online activities, for example, by maintaining a copy/log of online discussions and chat session, etc.;
- c) Weekly deadlines for posting and due dates need to be stated (dates and times);
- d) How students may contact the instructor;
- e) Technical competencies expected or required of the students;
- f) Minimum computer hardware and software specifications, and course website access requirements;
- g) Who to contact in case of technical problems; and
- h) On-campus meeting requirements, if applicable.

IV. Approval of Online Instruction Courses and Programs

A. New Online Programs

New online degree programs or program modifications (including majors, minors, options, certificates and subject matter preparation programs) shall be reviewed in accordance with procedures outlined in Chapters 3, 4 and 5 of the Curricular Procedures Manual and the provisions of this document. Any department or program offering online instruction programs in which more than half of the units required for the program will be offered through online learning shall be required to meet California State University (CSU) and Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) requirements. [See <http://www.wascweb.org>]

B. New Online Courses

1. New online courses proposed for degree credit shall be reviewed in accordance with procedures outlined in Chapter 2 of the Curricular Procedures Manual and the provisions of this document. Programs submitting such proposals shall indicate how these courses adhere to the principles of this policy.
2. New online courses proposed for general education credit shall be reviewed and approved, in accordance with the policies and procedures outlined in Chapter 6 of the

Curricular Procedures Manual, by the General Education Subcommittee of the Committee on Instruction and Curriculum (CIC) (the Critical Thinking and Cultural Groups/Women G.E requirements have their own subcommittees which must first approve), CIC itself, the Academic Senate, and the President. Programs submitting such proposals shall indicate how these courses meet the relevant general education criteria for approval and how these courses adhere to the principles of this policy.

C. Converting Existing Courses or Sections to an Online Format

1. When a course has been approved in accordance with the appropriate provisions of the Curricular Procedures Manual and one or more sections of the course are redesigned using an online format, the department proposing to offer the course through online learning shall provide evidence to the college curriculum committee, including a Course Modification Request and a revised course syllabus, that the objectives and content of the course are comparable to the classroom-based course and adhere to the principles of this policy. The college curriculum committee shall review the documentation and forward a recommendation to the dean. Existing courses that were approved as classroom-based courses shall not be offered as online courses without appropriate curriculum review and approval.

2. When a course has been approved for General Education credit and one or more sections of the course are redesigned by replacing at least one class session/lab with an online component, the department shall submit a new request for general education approval, in accordance with the policy and procedures outlined in Chapter 6 of the Curricular Procedures Manual, by the General Education Subcommittee of the Committee on Instruction and Curriculum (CIC) (the Critical Thinking, and Cultural Groups/Women G.E requirements have their own subcommittees which must first approve), CIC itself, the Academic Senate, and the President.

D. Compliance of Existing Courses and Sections

Extant courses or sections that fit the definition of an online course as delineated in Section II shall not be offered after Fall Quarter 2008 if they do not comply with this policy and have not received the appropriate approvals required by this policy, including approval for General Education credit where applicable. Each college curriculum committee shall be responsible for ensuring compliance.

(Revised 2/6/07)