Faculty Handbook for
Alternative Delivery Classes

2011-2012

Learning Technologies Department
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Overview for All Alternate Delivery Classes

Delivery Methods
NWFSC offers several different modes of delivery including:

- E-learning
  - Online/web-based instruction
  - E-mail instruction
- Blended instruction
- Technology-Enhanced on-campus classes
  - Web-supplemented instruction
  - Web-required instruction

Enhancement and Tools
The Learning Technologies Department has several resources (software programs and hardware tools) to help the faculty teach courses. These tools include (but are not limited to):

- The Tegrity software program, which records video and audio on the computer for display back to the students.
- The Elluminate software program, which allows for Web conferencing over the Internet.
- Personal response systems or clickers, which allow the students to anonymously answer questions in class.
- Faculty websites, which support instructors’ courses with additional information.
- TurnItIn
- Desire2Learn
- Other internet based tools

Steps for Initiating a Class in an Alternative Delivery Format
These guidelines are designed to assist faculty members who want to implement a class in any of the following formats: online/web-based, or blended. (Note that web-supplemented classes require only the approval of the department chair or division director.) These steps are sequenced and should be completed in order. Please note that this process must be completed before the schedule is built for the first semester in which the course will be offered.

- For fall classes, the approval process must be completed by the previous February.
- For spring classes, the approval process must be completed by the previous July.
- For summer classes, the approval process must be completed by the previous November.
Initiating Any Type of Non-traditional Course Format

The following items apply to online, and blended classes. Before pursuing the specific steps associated with offering a course through an alternate delivery method, the instructor must commit to five college-wide standards.

1. The faculty member must meet the qualifications for teaching non-traditional/alternate-delivery courses.

| Qualifications for teaching courses in the online distance learning format | • Must meet minimum subject area qualifications  
| • Must demonstrate the technological skills needed for successful interaction with students (e.g. participate in NWFSC workshops, complete coursework in instructional technology, complete one-on-one LTech orientations, complete online tutorials, attend Faculty Fridays in the DL lab, etc.)  
| • Must be a full-time faculty member or full-time instructional supervisor; adjunct faculty members are eligible to teach DL classes only after successfully teaching a semester of classes at NWFSC and must be locally available to students and the department  
| • Must agree to observe the college’s policy of required orientations for DL students, employ a course design that includes all the learning objectives of the traditional course, and commit to a course design with multiple student feedback points |

| Qualifications for teaching courses in the blended format | • Must meet minimum subject area qualifications  
| • Must demonstrate the pedagogical skills attendant to quality blended format instruction (e.g. complete blended course design workshop or tutorial, work with experienced faculty mentor, be experienced in DL format, etc.)  
| • Must agree to observe the college’s policy of required number of in-class meetings, employ a course design that includes all the learning objectives of the traditional course, and commit to a course design with a variety of student feedback points |

2. If the alternate delivery course is new course (i.e. the course has never been taught at the college in any format), both the standard new course approval process and the process for initiating a distance-learning or blended class must be followed.

3. The student learning outcomes for the non-traditionally formatted course must be the same as those established for the traditional version of the course.

4. The same textbook must be used for all the delivery methods of the given class.

5. All web-based instruction, whether for online delivery or blended classes must use the college’s standard online platform.
Initiating an Online Distance Learning Class

1. The instructor receives approval for his/her idea from the chair/division director.

2. The instructor contacts the Learning Technologies (LTech) Department (or consults the LTech website http://ltech.nwfsc.edu/) for copies of the Alternate Delivery Handbook for Faculty and the online course review form, both of which provide extensive development information.

3. The instructor obtains, completes, and submits to the chair/division director the appropriate form(s) from the following:
   a. New Course Syllabus (required if the course is being offered for the first time in any format)
   b. The Proposal for Distance Learning/Non-traditional Class Delivery (required).
   c. The Addendum to the Proposal for Distance Learning/Non-traditional Class Delivery (required).

4. The chair/division director takes the above document(s) to the Curriculum Committee for review and action.

5. Once a class has been approved, the instructor creates class content:
   a. For online classes, the instructor finds publisher's e-content or develops his/her own content for delivery through the college’s online delivery platform, Desire-to-Learn (D2L). Instructors creating an online class should refer to the online course review form (http://ltech.nwfsc.edu/dlforms.cfm) for detailed quality criteria to help construct an efficient, high quality class in which students will master the same learning objectives as their peers in a traditional class.
   b. It is recommended that instructors begin constructing online classes in a development class shell in the semester before that in which they plan to teach the class. Accordingly, instructors can request development class shells from LTech prior to course approval, but working with a development shell does not guarantee approval. Throughout development and beyond, the instructor may obtain training in both online pedagogy and technology by contacting LTech.
   c. The instructor commits to in-person student course orientation sessions. Ideally the orientation is conducted in a computer lab during the regularly scheduled distance learning orientation dates. However, individual student orientations may be conducted by the instructor in his/her office or computer lab or via software such as Camtasia, Tegrity or Eluminate.
**Initiating a Blended Class**

1. The instructor receives approval for his/her idea from the division director.

2. The instructor contacts the Learning Technologies department (or consults the LTech website) for a copy of the *Alternate Delivery Handbook for Faculty*.

3. The instructor obtains, completes, and submits to the chair/division director the appropriate form(s) from the following:
   
   a. New Course Syllabus (if the course is being offered for the first time in any format)
   
   b. The Proposal for Distance Learning/Non-traditional Class Delivery (required).

4. The division director takes the above document(s) to the Curriculum Committee for review and action.

5. Once the course is approved, the instructor develops course policy handouts for the class that include all required and course-specific information for students, including assignments, grading practices, exam policies, due dates, information on learning support services, methods for contacting the instructor, etc. Required course policy elements can be found online at [http://ltech.nwfsc.edu/dlforms.cfm](http://ltech.nwfsc.edu/dlforms.cfm) or in the *NWFSC Faculty Handbook* at [http://www.nwfsc.edu/FacultyResourceRoom/](http://www.nwfsc.edu/FacultyResourceRoom/).

6. The instructor should also consult the mini-tutorial on blended classes at [http://ltech.nwfsc.edu/about-ist.cfm](http://ltech.nwfsc.edu/about-ist.cfm) for guidance.

   If the independent learning sections are online, the instructor should follow the same quality criteria specified for the online learning format per the appropriate review form at [http://ltech.nwfsc.edu/dlforms.cfm](http://ltech.nwfsc.edu/dlforms.cfm).
Distance Learning Overview

This handbook provides general information and guidelines for Northwest Florida State College (NWFSC) faculty who use alternative delivery methods for enrichment of on-campus classes or to teach distance learning classes. Additional information and current semester class listings are available on the NWFSC Learning Technologies website: http://ltech.nwfsc.edu/. This handbook does not replace the NWFSC Faculty Handbook intended for instructors teaching all NWFSC classes; it provides information specific to or especially important to distance or technology-enhanced classes.

Distance learning at Northwest Florida State College is guided by the College’s mission statement and two key principles: quality and access. The mission of Northwest Florida State College is to provide quality educational programs and services whereby students may achieve their goals and the community is enhanced through academic, vocational, cultural, economic, and personal development opportunities. The mission of distance learning and technology-enhanced instruction at NWFSC is to help the College achieve its goals relating to access and quality instruction. Specifically, distance learning helps the College achieve the following goals:

- To provide an environment that promotes equity and access to college programs for all members of the community.
- To provide student services and activities that enhance student success.
- To provide programs of study at the high school, certificate, associate and baccalaureate levels.
- To provide certificate and degree programs that prepare students for employment and careers in the public and private sectors.
- To provide leadership and support for economic and workforce development.
- To provide college preparatory and basic skills instruction, literacy programs, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), adult secondary education and vocational preparatory instruction.
- To provide social, cultural and co-curricular opportunities.
- To provide a variety of continuing education, professional development, and leadership training opportunities.
- To promote the understanding, application, and use of technology.

Academic quality in NWFSC distance learning classes is ensured in the following ways:

The Distance Learning Committee:

- Gives input on distance learning issues, procedures and standards
- Establishes the quality criteria, procedures and standards that incorporates the alternative delivery classes in division program reviews
The Learning Technologies Department:
- Provides technical and organizational support
- Trains online distance learning faculty and faculty using technology regularly on technical and pedagogical enhancements
- Maintains, upgrades and purchases new technologies designed to improve the learning environment and support for distance, blended and web-supplemented students
- Uses instructional design principles to develop and assist with class materials

The Faculty:
- Is qualified to teach the class or classes in question and develops, modifies, and/or reviews the class materials
- Gives timely and frequent feedback on and assesses student work
- Undergoes a process to be qualified to teach the class or classes in question to distance learning students

Other NWFSC actions:
- Approval of distance learning, blended and web-required classes by the appropriate division director and the Curriculum Committee
- Careful monitoring of student performance outcomes in distance learning classes (as compared with the same classes taught in a traditional format

**E-learning**

E-learning is a strategy for reaching students, especially those who are unable to come to campus or those whose work schedules preclude enrollment in traditional classes. E-learning classes are delivered over the Internet and include a mandatory face-to-face orientation.

**Online/Web-Based Instruction** Currently, NWFSC is using Desire2Learn (D2L) as its class management system for online instruction. D2L ([http://ltech.nwfsc.edu/](http://ltech.nwfsc.edu/)) facilitates the instructor's design of classes and offers pedagogical and student management features, i.e., a class outline, testing, chat rooms, threaded discussions, posting areas, an assignment drop box, and student tracking. Other distance technologies, such as web conferencing, audio/video downloads, and screen capture software, may also be used to enrich the learning experience. Online classes allow for frequent contact with students, and instructors should expect such contact and respond promptly. A face-to-face orientation is required.
**Blended Instruction**

In blended instruction, students’ seat time is reduced. At least 50% of the class sessions must be face-to-face, and structured, assessed individual or group work substitutes for other class meetings. This out-of-class work may be facilitated through D2L. Because students must be aware of the reduced seat time to plan their trips to campus, the in-class sessions must be published in the NWFSC class schedule each semester. Instructors of blended classes receive the same technical and pedagogical support from the Instructional Technology/Distance Learning department as do online distance learning instructors.

**Technology-Enhanced**

**Web-supplemented Instruction** Web-supplemented instruction enriches classes that meet face-to-face. In this model, there is no reduction of seat time for students. The class management system is used to store class materials, URLs, and other references; to e-mail students between class meetings; and to provide interactive enrichment activities, such as group projects, online chats or threaded discussions. Grades may also be posted and calculated through the online classroom. Other distance technologies, such as web conferencing, audio/video downloads, and screen capture software, may also be used to enrich the learning experience. While online assignments can be made, it is important to note that alternate arrangements must be offered for students for whom online work is difficult. Students in these sections have enrolled in a traditional class, and online work may be impractical for them. Instructors of web-supplemented classes receive the same technical and pedagogical support from the Learning Technologies department as do online distance learning instructors.

**Web-required Instruction** Web-required instruction requires students to access the web to participate or to complete assignments. Web-required classes meet face-to-face; there is no reduction of seat time for students. In this model the class management system can be used to store class materials, URLs, and/or other references. Also, other technologies can be used, including e-mail and interactive enrichment activities, such as group projects, online chats or threaded discussions. Grades may also be posted and calculated through the online classroom. Distance technologies, such as web conferencing, audio/video downloads, and screen capture software, may also be required as part of this type of learning experience. Instructors of web-required classes receive the same technical and pedagogical support from the Learning Technologies department as do online distance learning instructors.
Instructor Responsibilities

Remaining flexible and accessible is essential in teaching at a distance. In addition, the instructor should be an active, engaged participant in the teaching/learning process. Particularly in technology-delivered or enhanced classes, student success and instructional effectiveness of the class depend in large measure on the instructor’s active participation. Instructors can promote their students’ success by diligently meeting their responsibilities in the following areas:

- Class design
- Communication with students
- Class rosters
- Assignments, tests, and grading
- Office hours
- Orientation and exams
- Class evaluation

Class Design

Clear, organized, complete class design is crucial for distance students’ success. SACS’ Best Practices For Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs (http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/commadap.pdf) recommends that “…the institution provides a coherent plan for the student to access all courses necessary to complete the program, or clearly notifies students of requirements not included in the electronic offering.” In online classes, clear navigation and a well-organized website is crucial; instructors should use the template provided by the Learning Technologies department, including a link to the class syllabus/policies on the top navigation bar, and should avail themselves of support by this department. In addition, instructors should make sure that they provide students with course policies covering all the points described in the College Course Policies Guide at http://ltech.nwfsc.edu/faculty-DL-documents.cfm.

Students should be provided with as many resources as possible to increase the likelihood of their success. Distance students have access to student services and library resources, so instructors may include such resources in their classes. In online classes, class packets should include sample tests and assignments as well as syllabi, deadlines, instructor contact information, and study guides and should be posted in the online classroom. When creating classes and documents, instructors should remember that such materials fall under NWFSC’s copyright and intellectual property policies.

Online classes facilitate interaction between the instructor and students and among students, and such interaction should be evident in the class design. SACS’ Best Practices (http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/commadap.pdf) stresses the importance of appropriate, carefully structured, effective interaction between instructor and students and among students, including the timely response and feedback on student assignments.
Following are specific instructor responsibilities relating to class design:

- Distance classes must have the same learning objectives as traditional sections of the class.
- Classes should meet NWFSC’s quality criteria for distance learning classes, specified in the Program Review document.
- Instructors should preview textbooks, study guides, e-content, online resources, and other class material before using them.
- NWFSC strives for distance student success outcomes comparable to or better than student success rates in traditional sections of the course. SACS’ Principles of Good Practice states that “Classes offered will ensure that classes offer comparable student learning outcomes to classes offered in the traditional format (on campus).”
- Each semester, the instructor should provide updated student materials, including sample tests and study help.

**Communication with Students**

Because distance learning students do not attend regular classroom sessions and therefore lack regular face-to-face contact with their instructor, they need to know that their instructor monitors their progress closely and promotes their success. The success of distance learning students is closely tied to the quality of communication between instructor and students. Statistics clearly indicate a high correlation between the frequency of faculty-initiated contact with the distance learning student and the rate of successful class completion; therefore, instructors are encouraged to contact students regularly. Following are specific instructor responsibilities relating to communication with students:

- Conduct an orientation for students at the scheduled times.
- Initiate regular communications with students, providing class feedback, reminders, etc.
- Respond promptly to inquiries by students, preferably within 24 hours, excluding holidays, weekends, and school closures.
- Provide feedback on assignments within a time period stated in course handouts.

**Class Rosters**

At the end of the schedule adjustment period and periodically throughout the semester, instructors must check their online class rosters within the class management system (D2L) against the official NWFSC roster. Although the enrollment and un-enrollment process with the class management system is automated, the instructor check is a back-up to ensure accuracy.

Students are not officially registered at NWFSC unless their names appear on the official Nexus roster. Students missing from this roster but appearing within the D2L classroom must be notified and instructed to register; if registration is impossible, students must be denied access to the online classroom. The Learning Technologies department will assist with this process and can be contacted if support is needed.
Assignments, Tests and Grading As with all aspects of teaching at a distance, instructors should allow reasonably flexible accommodations for testing. Also, distance students will fare better if all assignments, quizzes, and exams are returned to them promptly so that they can better gauge their progress. Students, especially those at a distance, become frustrated and discouraged by delays in feedback. The instructors should post his/her policy on turnaround of assignments and keep to this policy. Instructors should provide students with advisory feedback prior to the end of the drop period.

Testing at a distance presents special concerns. If students cannot take tests on the scheduled dates, it is their responsibility to notify the instructor prior to scheduled test dates, and instructors should then provide an alternate testing date. Proctoring arrangements can be made with other instructors, the Academic Success Center, the Learning Technologies department, or suitable individuals not employed by NWFSC. An appropriate non-NWFSC proctor is someone currently employed in a professional or managerial occupation, preferably academic support or administrative personnel from a university, college, or school. If the student is military, a suitable proctor can be found in the educational office on the base at which he/she is currently located. The proctor may be asked to provide the instructor with written confirmation on business letterhead that he/she agrees to proctor the exam, to return the completed exams promptly to the instructor, and to provide a secure testing environment. The Academic Success Center or the Learning Technologies department can assist in determining an appropriate test site; however, it is the instructor's responsibility to coordinate and schedule all proctored exams. (See the link to proctor forms in the Appendix.)

For online students, tests may be administered at midterm and final exam dates at the Niceville campus or may be delivered online. To ensure the integrity of online tests, instructors should consider using a test bank and timed tests and preventing the student's printing the exam. In addition, assessments other than online tests should be used, such as papers and group projects. Testing should not constitute the largest part of the final course grade in such a class.

Office Hours Research indicates that contact with instructors outside the classroom promotes student persistence in college; therefore, students should be encouraged to visit with instructors during office hours. Instructors must maintain published office hours and make them known to students; some office hours should include alternative times to accommodate the full-time working student. For these office hours especially, instructors may consider using a chat tool or web conferencing software.
Orientation  The Learning Technologies department schedules the dates, times, and places for mandatory face-to-face orientations for distance learning classes. Each class must have two orientation opportunities for students. Orientations are scheduled at the Niceville Campus, usually on the first weekend (Friday nights and Saturday morning) after the first day of classes. The Learning Technologies department also schedules the dates, times, and places for midterm and final examinations. Like orientations, these are scheduled at the Niceville Campus.

Class Evaluation  Assessing student achievement and evaluating the quality of classes are critical in determining if distance-learning programs are meeting goals. Also important is overall student satisfaction with classes and students’ continuing motivation to take more classes. The results of these findings can shape the design of new distance classes and yield a better understanding of the online learning process. The following policies outline the commitment of the Learning Technologies department with regard to evaluation and assessment of distance learning:

- During the Program Review process, each department will use the same quality criteria evaluate program and class effectiveness, including student learning outcomes compared to student achievement, and student and faculty satisfaction. The Learning Technologies department will assist the instructor and department as requested.
- The Learning Technologies Department conducts regular assessments of student success in alternative delivery methods.
- The College will conduct ongoing self-evaluation of programs for improvement.
- Students have the opportunity to evaluate distance learning classes, generally on the same schedule as traditional class evaluations. The Learning Technologies department is responsible for conducting evaluations of online classes. The Office of Instruction is responsible for coordinating evaluations of web-supplemented and blended classes’ evaluations, which are handled in the same manner as those of traditional classes.

Impact on Faculty Class Load

Terms: “Load” and “pay” refer to different aspects of faculty contracts. “Load” refers to the number of hours taught. A faculty member is required to teach 15 hours and may teach no more than 24 hours, unless the Vice-President of Instruction approves an increase in load. Thus, an instructor’s supplemental load is usually no more than 9 hours. An online class within the required 15 hours counts as a traditional class does, but all distance learning classes, including online classes, that are part of a supplemental load count the same as a traditional class.

For example, Faculty member A, teaching only 15 hours may have one online class in that load; the class counts for the same number of hours as it would if it were a traditional, face-to-face class.
Faculty member B, teaching 18 hours with three hours distance learning would have the distance learning hours as a supplemental load. Instead of counting as three hours towards maximum load, the distance learning class would count as only two.

“Pay” refers to compensation. Online, blended, web-required, and web-supplemented classes are compensated per the following table.

### CLASS SCHEDULING ISSUES

#### ENC 1101 and ENC 1102
- Multiple sections should not be set up as a means to fragment the student population and increase compensation.
- Each section of a course in this category must be set up in Nexus with a maximum enrollment of either 25 or 50.
- Past enrollment patterns will be used to plan how many sections are established.
- For instructors who normally teach two sections of a given course, we will use one section with the 50 student cap.
- Where only one section of a course is offered or if different instructors are teaching the sections, then the 25 student cap may be used.

#### Non-English Gordon Rule And Other Writing Intensive Courses
- Multiple sections should not be set up as a means to fragment the student population and increase compensation.
- Each section of a course in this category must be set up in Nexus with a maximum enrollment of either 27 or 54.
- Past enrollment patterns will be used to plan how many sections are established.
- For instructors who normally teach two sections of a given course, we will use one section with the 54 student cap.
- Where only one section of a course is offered or if different instructors are teaching the sections, then the 27 student cap may be used.

#### All other Courses
- Multiple sections should not be set up as a means to fragment the student population and increase compensation.
- Each section of a course in this category must be set up in Nexus with a maximum enrollment of either 35, 70, or 99.
- Past enrollment patterns will be used to plan how many sections are established.
- For instructors who normally teach two or more sections of a given course, we will use one section with the 99 student cap.
- Where only one section of a course is offered or if different instructors are teaching the sections, then the 35 student cap may be used.
Appendix

Link to NWFSC’s Distance Learning site at http://LTech.nwfsc.edu/

Links to proctoring forms
- On campus at http://LTech.nwfsc.edu/resources-faculty/Proctoring/ProctorInstructions.rtf
- Off campus at http://LTech.nwfsc.edu/resources-faculty/Proctoring/Proctor-Instructions-Offsite.rtf

Link to faculty support request form at http://Ltech.nwfsc.edu/forms/dlrequest.html

Link to student support request form at http://Ltech.nwfsc.edu/forms/studenthelpform.html

Link to Distance Learning Faculty Resources page at at http://ltech.nwfsc.edu/dlforms.cfm

Link to Proposal for Distance Learning Class at at http://ltech.nwfsc.edu/dlforms.cfm

Links to Quality Criteria for Online Classes (Course Quality Program Review) at http://LTech.nwfsc.edu/resources-faculty/DL_CourseQuality/NWFSC-DL-Prog-Rev-Instructors.rtf

Link to the learning management system, Desire2Learn, at http://LTech.nwfsc.edu/faculty-d2l.cfm
Link to Faculty Webpage Guidelines at http://LTech.nwfsc.edu/resources-faculty/FacultyWebPageGuidelines/webpage_guidelines.rtf