

### Distance Education Pedagogical Readiness for Faculty

#### Rationale:

As an essential part of our commitment to student success in all areas of learning, distance education courses at Pasadena City College should provide high quality, innovative instruction that maintains the highest standards and best practices in the teaching and learning environment delivered electronically. Furthermore, "Institutions are expected to control development, implementation, and evaluation of all courses and programs offered in their names, including those offered electronically" (*Accreditation Reference Handbook*, 2008).

The Distance Education Committee recommends that faculty who wish to teach online be proficient in basic online pedagogical skills (competencies) in order to assure that online course quality translates into student success. With these skills in mind the objective of the Distance Education Pedagogical Readiness Recommendation is to provide prospective online instructors with best practices to be used in converting face-to-face courses or creating new online courses into successful online courses.

**WASC Red Flag** – Face-to-face courses directly translated into a distance education course may indicate inadequate consideration of distance education pedagogy (Walton, James-Hanz, North, and Pilati, 2008).

"It is easy to put content online but the effort comes in crafting work flow, and activities to guide the learning process and produce the learning outcomes one wants" (Lemire, 2008).

In her presentation, "Quality Online Programs Begin with You!" (Session - Learning by Distance) given at the California Community Colleges Academic Senate Curriculum Institute in 2004, Pat James-Hanz, co-director of @ONE -Technology and Pedagogical Training for California Community College Faculty and Staff, and Dean of Libraries and Technology at Mt. San Jacinto College points out that in distance education courses, methods of instruction and evaluation change, NOT content or objectives.

But it is also true, as pointed out in "Nine Principles for Excellence in web-based Teaching," a recent research article from the *Canadian Journal of Learning and Technology* (2008), written by experts in the field of online learning, that it is not sufficient to be a content expert or a technology savvy individual. The author/educators go on to point out that "It is not even sufficient to be an excellent traditional classroom teacher. Because the online world is a categorically different environment [and] a particular blend of skills and knowledge is necessary if success is to be found in this domain.... this blend includes an understanding that the online world is a medium unto itself and that the delivery of content requires action; that technology must be used wisely and that a sense of community is essential; that many areas of expertise are needed and that an effective web interface must be provided; that ongoing assessment and refinement must be carried out, that little extras often go a long way, and that while

technology is the vehicle for online courses, that vehicle is driven by good pedagogy."  
(Henry 8)

With best practices and student success in mind, the following standards for online pedagogical readiness for Distance Education courses at PCC are recommended:

### **Faculty Standards for Distance Education Pedagogical Readiness**

Prior to teaching online at Pasadena City College, faculty will:

1. 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, including Section 508 compliance, and [familiarity with] the College's course management system.

Examples of such formal college-level coursework with training in online teaching and learning include the *California Community College's @ONE Online Teaching Certification Program* (<http://www.cccone.org/certification/index.php>) or the UCLA *Online Teaching for Academic and Business Professionals* program, or by taking relevant distance education technology offerings through the Office of Academic Support or the New Media Center Training Workshops, and/or other similar coursework at accredited institutions.

**or**

2. Present a teaching demonstration in an online format, showing evidence of pedagogical readiness that includes:
  - a) Showing evidence of effective student-to-faculty, student-to-student, and student-to-content contact
  - b) Assessments designed to support student learning outcomes
  - c) Section 508 compliant curriculum materials
  - d) Familiarity with the College's course management system

The Distance Education Committee further recommends that instructors who wish to teach online courses should complete at least one online course as a student. It is imperative for an instructor to experience this mode of delivery from the student's point of view.

Determination as to whether an instructor meets the pedagogical recommendations will be made by the Dean, or designee of the relevant Division, in consultation with the Dean of the Office of Academic Support and in consultation with the Chair of the Distance Education Committee or designee.

An appeals process will be developed by the Distance Education Committee that will rely on the guidance of the Dean of Academic Support or designee and in consultation with the Dean of the relevant Division.

### **Distance Education Pedagogical Readiness Qualifications:**

The Distance Education Committee recommends that instructors who wish to teach online courses must meet the following online, pedagogical readiness qualifications:

#### **1. Pedagogical Fundamentals**

- Recognize opportunities and challenges of an online learning environment.
- Comprehend distinctive differences between face-to-face and online pedagogy and delivery.
- Understand learner-centered pedagogy where concepts of interactivity, instructor-led facilitation and feedback are core elements.
- Recognize unique needs of the online learner.
- Transition from instructor / content expert to facilitator / resource person.
- Convert face-to-face course content into active learning strategies.

#### **2. Course Interaction**

- Communicate and interact asynchronously and synchronously with students.
- Structure, organize and cultivate learning communities and group activities.
- Practice regular effective instructor – student contact.
- Acknowledge the importance of and provide prompt feedback to students, that helps them understand what is needed to improve their performance.

#### **3. Curriculum Technology Integration**

- Identify the most appropriate technologies for specific subject area and learning outcomes.
- Understand how selected technologies support content presentation, instruction, demonstration, collaboration, active learning, and assessment.
- Recognize how appropriate technologies can be utilized to enhance online instruction and learning.

#### **4. Assessment**

- Use online asynchronous assessment techniques
- Provide multiple opportunities for authentic assessment and demonstration of student learning outcomes.
- Employ multiple assessment strategies to maintain active student engagement
- Integrate an evaluation survey to receive regular constructive student feedback.
- Understand the unique challenges affecting academic Integrity in an online learning environment.

#### **5. 508 Compliancy**

- Create or modify all course content and self-authored web sites to provide access to students with disabilities.

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