

Policy Category: General

Effective Date: 04/15/2021

**MOST RECENT CHANGES**

- Version #2: Provides for assessment of eLearning courses.  
Replaces the 'Distance Education' and 'Distance Education Standards' policies.
- Version #3: Adds definitions for online, hybrid, in person and clinical/practicum/independent and a procedure for when and how to list these courses.  
Clarifies the connection between this policy and the General Academic Assessment policy.  
Removes the location of the eLearning readiness module.  
Adds the ability for re-evaluation of the assessment rubric used by the department.  
Renumbers some of the sections to include new sections.  
Add a procedure for re-evaluating the assessment rubric that a department uses to assess their online and hybrid classes.
- Version #4: Incorporates NWCCU's distance education standards.  
Renumbers some of the sections to include new sections.  
Increases the frequency that the Faculty Senate reviews this policy.  
Removes the reference to fund for Quality Matters program participation.  
Removes the description of Quality Matters.  
Clarifies that faculty performance evaluation are not included in online course assessments.  
Defines web remote and adds it as a mode of instruction.  
Replaces the term "online" with "distance education".

**I. POLICY PURPOSE**

- A. This policy represents CSN's commitment to achieving the distance education standards of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities.
- B. This policy is also designed to achieve the following outcomes:
1. Improve student success through high quality eLearning classes,
  2. Facilitate sound pedagogical practices through clear and ongoing professional development,
  3. Define procedure for selecting the mode of instruction for eLearning courses at CSN, and
  4. Define how courses with eLearning components shall be listed in CSN course listings.

**II. POLICY STATEMENT**

- A. CSN offers a blend of in-person, hybrid, web-remote, and distance education courses and programs. Regardless of the delivery method, CSN uses the same process to develop, offer, and evaluate courses and programs since all students achieve the same learning goals, objectives, and competencies. Once a course has been approved by curriculum, the determination to create distance education sections is made by the department.
- B. It is CSN's policy that distance education programs, as all CSN programs are offered in accordance

with its mission and educational objectives. All distance education courses and programs are designed, offered, and evaluated like all programs and courses with the same level of faculty involvement, using the same academic standards. Students enrolled in distance education courses and programs shall have available the same level of student support services as students enrolled in in person or hybrid programs.

- C. CSN course sections shall be listed with one of the following modes of instruction: In person, Distance Education, Web remote, Hybrid and Clinical/Practicum/Independent. See glossary for a definition of each mode of instruction.
- D. The selection of mode of instruction for a particular course shall be assessed by the department and/or faculty member (as defined by the department) teaching the course based on the pedagogical needs of the course content and the needs of students enrolled.
- E. If the instructor is permanently unable to continue to deliver the listed mode of instruction for the rest of the semester, the department chair will make appropriate changes in the best interest of the students, faculty, and institution. Students should be given accommodations as needed to complete the course including, but not limited to withdrawing or being placed in a different section.
- F. All courses and programs, independent of mode of instruction, are assessed under the Academic Assessment Policy. As distance education and hybrid course and program designs are distinctly different from in-person and clinical/practicum/independent course design, this policy requires additional assessment as implemented in Section III. L to Section III.O for all online and hybrid courses to assess the online course design as distinct from content.
- G. As student readiness plays a large role in eLearning success, once an e-learning readiness module is available, students are required to successfully complete it before enrolling in an eLearning course.
- H. Faculty Senate shall review this policy at least every five years or as needed to assess its efficacy in achieving the stated outcomes and revise the policy, as necessary.

### **III. PROCEDURE**

- A. The regular planning processes as required by the Integrated Strategic Planning Policy shall include distance education courses and programs.
- B. Oversight of distance education courses and programs is consistent with the oversight of in person programs and is conducted by the department. Faculty and department chairs are responsible for ensuring that distance education courses and programs meet the same academic standards as courses and programs offered on campus.
- C. On-campus/full-time faculty have a substantive role in the design and implementation of all courses and programs including distance education and courses programs at CSN. Departments will ensure the rigor of the distance education offerings and the quality of instruction through evaluations of its distance education courses and programs, like they do for all courses and programs.
- D. Approval of distance education courses and programs is subsumed by regular course approval in accordance with the Curriculum, Institutional Assessment, Academic Program Review and Academic Assessment policies. Once a course or program has been approved by this standard process, the mode of course or program delivery section by section is a departmental decision.
- E. Departments evaluate the educational effectiveness of each course and program, (including distance education courses and programs) including assessment of student learning outcomes, student retention, and student and faculty satisfaction, to ensure compatibility to campus-based programs in accordance with the Institutional Assessment, Academic Program Review, and Academic Assessment policies.

- F. Students enrolled in distance education courses and programs at CSN have adequate access to and make effective use of learning resources, including library, information resources, laboratories, and equipment.
1. Within Canvas, (the LMS/learning management system), there are different resources connected to all students in the left navigation, including:
    - a. Smarthinking Tutoring: online tutoring for many topics including writing, math, statistics, science, business, and computers/technology. This service is 24/7.
    - b. CSN Library: connect right to the libraries' webpage, access to online chat with a librarian, access to books/articles/databases/films.
    - c. My Coyote Plan (Personal Learning and Advising Network): facilitates meaningful engagement between students and the campus community by providing students with access to a comprehensive support network to achieve their academic goals. This includes online appointments with advisors, instructors, and tutors.
    - d. My Coyote Success: online workshops to help students with their success including: orientation to distance education classes, learning to learn, personal management, and academic & career exploration.
    - e. Centers for Academic Success: this connects students to on-campus tutoring.
- G. The registrar will ensure that definitions of the mode of instruction included in the glossary of this policy are included in any print or electronic course listings.
- H. When listing a course in the distance education course enrollment system, departments must select the mode of instruction that conforms to the definitions in the glossary of this policy.
- I. When listing a course, department shall include:
1. Any regularly scheduled meeting times (either in-person or distance education).  
If the distance education course enrollment system cannot support the details of the meeting schedule in the "Days & Times" section, this information must be clearly listed in the notes section and in the class syllabus. See Appendix A for example notes.
  2. Any online requirements for in-person, hybrid, or clinical/practicum/independent courses. See Appendix A for example notes.
  3. Any in-person requirements for distance education courses. See Appendix A for example notes.
- J. Instructors of distance education courses shall include any in-person requirements in the syllabus of their course.
- K. Instructors of in-person, hybrid or clinical/practicum/independent courses shall include any online requirements in their syllabus and announce these requirements to their class in the first in-person session of the semester.
- L. Training for full-time faculty who teach distance education or hybrid courses and programs: Departments will select one of these options: 1. Quality Matters certification (QM certification), or 2. Independent rubric creation, with individual faculty given the opportunity to opt out of option 2 and instead participate in nationally recognized QM certification.
1. Departments, through a majority vote of the full-time faculty, may choose to work with the Office of eLearning to adopt the Quality Matters training and certification process.
    - a. The Office of eLearning will maintain QM certified facilitators to assist these

departments.

- b. Office of e-Learning will offer workshops to facilitate pedagogical enhancements for distance education courses and programs.
    - c. Faculty in these departments utilizing complete publisher courses will request that the publisher QM-certify the course. The Office of eLearning will assist with the request.
  2. Departments, through a majority vote of the full-time faculty, may choose to develop an eLearning course-design rubric based on nationally recognized best practices. This includes best practices as stipulated by outside accrediting bodies.
    - a. The department chair will ensure that faculty new to eLearning receive instruction on using the rubric from an experienced eLearning faculty member. The department chair will decide who is experienced.
    - b. The department chair will disseminate this rubric to all eLearning faculty and coordinate training sessions.
    - c. The department should review and update the rubric when necessary, but not less than every five years.
    - d. Office of e-Learning will offer workshops to facilitate pedagogical enhancements for distance education courses and programs.
    - e. Faculty utilizing complete publisher courses will contact the publisher to request that the course be aligned with the department-approved rubric. If this is not possible, the faculty member will request that the publisher QM-certify the course. The Office of eLearning will assist with the request.
  3. Faculty in departments that choose to independently create an eLearning course design rubric may opt out and instead select the QM training and certification process for their online and hybrid course(s).
    - a. These faculty will contact the Office of eLearning for instructions.
    - b. The Office of eLearning will assist faculty who opt for the QM process with training and certification.
    - c. Office of e-Learning will offer workshops to facilitate pedagogical enhancements for distance education courses and programs.
    - d. These faculty who are utilizing complete publisher courses will request that the publisher QM-certify the course. The Office of eLearning Office will assist with the request.
- M. Training for adjunct faculty: Department chairs shall select a process for ensuring that adjunct faculty receive training and assistance in offering eLearning courses and programs.
  1. This may include Quality Matters training, a department designed best practices rubric, or department designed master courses.
  2. The Office of eLearning will assist department chairs with QM training for adjunct instructors. Department chairs with independent rubrics will facilitate training their adjuncts in the rubric application.

3. The Office of eLearning will assist department chairs, upon request, in designing master courses.
4. Office of e-Learning will offer workshops to facilitate pedagogical enhancements for online courses.
5. Department chairs with adjuncts utilizing publisher courses will request that the publisher QM-certify the courses unless the department has an independent rubric. If the publisher will not use the independent rubric, the department will request that the publisher QM-certify the course. The eLearning office will assist with this process.

N. Incentives: Appropriate financial or release time incentives may be initiated as funding becomes available. Incentives may, include stipends for rubric creation, master course creation, course reviews and certifications, and attendance at pedagogy workshops. Distance Education Stipend Policy

O. Responsibility

1. Upon administrative approval of this policy, the Vice President of Academic Affairs will transmit this policy to all academic deans with instructions for implementation.
2. Upon receipt of this policy, the academic deans will instruct department chairs to hold a vote to either adopt the QM process or to independently develop an eLearning rubric. This shall be completed within six months of the policy being signed by the President.
3. Departments choosing to independently develop an eLearning rubric will convene a committee to research eLearning best practices and to design an eLearning rubric. This process must be completed within one year after the President signs this policy. All independently developed eLearning rubrics will be submitted to the eLearning Office for reference purposes.
4. Department chairs will advise their faculty of the option to directly contact the Office of eLearning Office to select the Quality Matters training and certification process.

P. Accountability

1. The Faculty Senate Chair will confer with the Vice President of Academic Affairs no later than May 06, 2020 to request documentation showing that all departments offering eLearning programs and courses have selected to use either the Quality Matters process or the independent rubric process, and are working toward being fully in compliance with this policy.
2. The Vice President of Academic Affairs will provide this documentation within six months of the request.
3. The Faculty Senate Chair will maintain this documentation demonstrating efforts to reach compliance for strategic planning and accreditation purposes.
4. Results of distance education program and course assessments using the rubric selected by the department will be incorporated in the department's academic assessment process.
5. If a department decides that they would like to re-evaluate the rubric they are using to evaluate online and hybrid courses, they can repeat the process in Sections III.L and III.M IV.F and G. If a change is made, the department must notify the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Chair of Faculty Senate so the documentation can be updated for strategic planning and accreditation purposes.

#### **IV. AUTHORITY AND CROSS REFERENCE LINKS**

NSHE BOR Handbook, Title 4, Chapter 14, Section 13. Distance Education  
 NWCCU Distance Education Policy  
 Faculty Senate Academic Assessment Policy

## V. DISCLAIMER

The President has the discretion to suspend or rescind all or any part of this policy or related procedure(s). The President shall notify appropriate CSN personnel, including the Administrative Code Officer and Faculty Senate Chair, of the suspension or rescission.

Questions about this policy should be referred to the Office of General Counsel ([general.counsel@csn.edu](mailto:general.counsel@csn.edu), 702.651.7488) and/or the Recommending Authority.

## IV. SIGNATURES

Recommended By:

/s/ Maria Schellhase  
Faculty Senate Chair

4/8/21  
Date

Recommended By:

/s/ James R. McCoy  
Interim Vice President,  
Academic Affairs

4/12/21  
Date

Reviewed for Legal Sufficiency:

/s/ James Martines  
General Counsel

4.13.21  
Date

Approved By:

/s/ Federico Zaragoza  
CSN President

04/13/2021  
Date

## V. ATTACHMENTS

1. HISTORY
2. GLOSSARY
3. APPENDIX A: Sample notes for course section description notes.

## HISTORY

- 10/31/2005 Submitted to Faculty Senate for Review.
- 10/31/2005 Forwarded by the Senate Chair to the Senate Ad Hoc Committee on Online Resources for initial review.
- 12/21/2005 Returned to Faculty Senate Chair with proposed revisions from the Senate Ad Hoc Committee on Online Resources.
- 03/10/2006 Returned to committee for minor update.
- 04/05/2006 Returned to Faculty Senate Chair with proposed revisions from the Senate Ad Hoc Committee on Online Resources.
- 10/12/2018 Submitted to Faculty Senate for Review.
- 11/09/2018 Approved by Faculty Senate.
- 04/26/2019 Reviewed by General Counsel.
- 05/07/2019 Approved by CSN President.
- 05/08/2020 Resubmitted to Faculty Senate as information item. Wait for face-to-face meeting.
- 09/04/2020 Presented to Faculty Senate as information item.
- 10/02/2020 Resubmitted with proposed changes to Faculty Senate
- 12/11/2020 Resubmitted with proposed changes to Faculty Senate
- 02/04/2021 Approved by Faculty Senate (revision submitted by L. Brown, Chair ITC)
- 02/05/2021 Recommended by Faculty Senate Chair (M. Schellhase)
- 04/13/2021 Reviewed by General Counsel
- 04/13/2021 Approved by CSN President Federico Zaragoza

## GLOSSARY

**Contact Hours:** The amount of instructional time per credit hour. For example, in a 3 credit, 16-week course there would be 3 contact hours per week except when a holiday recognized by CSN falls on the scheduled day of instruction.

**Class notes:** The class notes mentioned in the policy refer to the class notes section of CSN's online enrollment system and are visible to student prior to enrolling in a class.

**eLearning:** Any instructional activity conducted in an online medium.

**In-Person:** All classes meet on campus at a regular scheduled time as noted in the class schedule.

Note: In-person classes may require students to use the web-based learning management system for instructional activities or materials. Online work requirements will be noted in the class schedule in the "class notes" section, the class syllabus, and during the first in person meeting with the class.

**Distance Education:** Distance education—classes deliver coursework via the web-based learning management system. There are no regular in-person class meetings.

Note: In addition to online classwork, the instructor may require in person meetings for distance education courses including, but not limited to, orientation meetings, proctored exams, attending plays in a theater class, service-learning activities, or going to a city council meeting in a political science class. Any in-person meetings are clearly noted (place and times) in the class schedule in the "class notes" section and in the online syllabus.

**Hybrid:** These courses meet on campus but have a reduced meeting schedule compared to traditional in-person courses because some regularly scheduled in-person class time (in-person contact hours) is replaced by distance education instruction. In-person meetings are clearly noted (place and times) in the syllabus and class schedule.

**Clinical/Practicum/Independent:** A regular work schedule in a field placement, scheduled on campus class meetings and/or independent work with scheduled meeting with the course instructor are required. Students enrolled in independent classes are responsible for working with their instructor and/or placement site to set their schedule.

**Web Remote:** All classes meet through web-conferencing software at a regular scheduled time as noted in the class schedule. Student contact hours are equal to the number of credit hours for the course. Students need to log into Canvas on the first day of classes to find out how they meet online.

## APPENDIX A

Sample notes for “class notes” section for MyCSN

- Sample note for a hybrid course with regular meeting time:
  - *This course has a reduced meeting schedule because some parts of the class are taught online.*
- Sample note for a hybrid course with an irregular meeting time:
  - *This course will meet in person for 4 weeks Mondays and Wednesdays from 10:00 – 11:15, then all coursework we be completed online.*
- Sample notes for an in-person course with online requirements:
  - *Tests and quizzes for this course will be completed in Canvas.*
  - *Documents for this course will only be available through Canvas.*
- Sample notes for an online course with an in-person requirement:
  - *This class requires you to attend a Las Vegas City Council meeting. Instructor will provide available times and the location in the syllabus. If you are not local, you can coordinate with your instructor for a substitute location.*
  - *This class requires that you take the ServSafe Proctored National Exam at the North Las Vegas Campus on a specific day, at a specific time, as designated by the instructor of the class. The exam will occur within the eight weeks scheduled for the course.*