UCBA ACADEMIC POLICY FOR DISTANCE-DELIVERED PROGRAMS AND DISTANCE-DELIVERED/HYBRID COURSES

This policy is designed to ensure the academic integrity of distance-delivered programs and distance-delivered (DL)/hybrid courses offered to students at UCBA. To ensure a lively academic community, it is recommended that full time faculty members teach at least 50% of their teaching assignments in a face-to-face format each semester, unless they are assigned to a fully online program.

Definitions:

Web-Enhanced Courses: Web-enhanced courses are those in which less than 25% of the instruction and interaction occurs via electronic communication or equivalent mechanism, with the faculty and students physically separated from each other. These courses do not need to be submitted to the Curriculum Committee for approval or as informational reports.

Hybrid Courses: Hybrid courses are those in which 25% but less than 75% of the instruction and interaction occurs via electronic communication or equivalent mechanism, with the faculty and students physically separated from each other.

Distance-delivered (DL) courses: Distance-delivered courses are those in which 75% or more of the instruction and interaction occurs via electronic communication or equivalent mechanics, with the faculty and students physically separated from each other.

Distance-delivered programs: Programs in which students may take 50% or more of the total courses required in the distance delivery format.

Quality Matters: Quality Matters (QM) is a nationally recognized, faculty-centered, peer review process designed to certify the quality of online courses and online components. This is the standard chosen by the University of Cincinnati.

QM Applying the Quality Matters Rubric Workshop: Applying the Quality Matters Rubric Workshop (APPQMR) is a one day workshop to learn how to use the QM rubric to review the course design to help the course meet the Quality Matters standards. This face-to-face workshop is included as part of the UCBA Distance Learning Design Seminar.

QM Peer Reviewer Training: The QM Peer Reviewer Training (currently a two-week online course) is designed to prepare experienced online faculty to become Quality Matters Certified Peer Reviewers. The QM Peer Reviewer Training includes a review of Quality Matters, practice critiquing and writing helpful recommendations, and a practice review in which the participants are asked to review specific standards in an online course using a simulated online rubric tool. The pre-requisite for this training is the QM Applying the Quality Matters Rubric workshop.

UCBA Distance Learning Design Seminar: An eight-week online seminar offered by the UCBA Learning & Teaching Center. Faculty members who enroll in the seminar shall be endorsed by the unit head based upon department objectives and needs.
Ownership of Course Materials: Individual faculty who design courses shall retain ownership of the materials. These materials are the equivalent of a face-to-face course syllabus and teaching plan. The faculty member can share the materials if desired.

UCBA Peer Review of Course Design: An in-house review of a distance-delivered/hybrid course conducted by a UCBA faculty member who has either completed the UCBA Distance Learning Design Seminar or the QM Peer Reviewer Training and has taught at least one hybrid/online course. The purpose of this peer review is to provide feedback for the improvement of the design of the course to ensure that the course meets the minimum QM standards.

UCBA Peer Reviewer Pool: A list of all college faculty qualified to conduct a UCBA Peer Review of Course Design.

UCBA Peer Review of Teaching Effectiveness: Peer evaluation of teaching effectiveness for an instructor teaching a DL/hybrid course is performed by visiting the course online.

A. Role of Curriculum Committee in DL offerings at UCBA

- The Curriculum Committee shall approve new distance-delivered programs as any other new program.
- The Curriculum Committee shall receive informational reports concerning new distance-delivered sections of existing courses prior to scheduling.
- The Curriculum Committee shall receive informational reports concerning new hybrid sections of courses previously approved as face-to-face courses.
- When new courses are brought to the Curriculum Committee for approval, the proposal must include the delivery methods.
- Developmental courses shall not be offered in either the distance-delivered or hybrid format.
- When choosing a DL delivery mode, research recommends the hybrid model as the preferred format for 1000 level courses.
- To the extent possible, hybrid courses should be offered at 33%, 50% or 66% face to face for scheduling purposes.
- Should a department wish to begin offering DL/Hybrid courses, the following steps must be taken:
  - A course(s) must be approved with the DL designation by the department, Curriculum Committee and UCBA College Faculty.
  - The faculty intended to teach a DL/Hybrid course(s) must be recommended to undergo training as listed below (Training).
- Should a department wish to begin offering a DL program, the following steps must be taken:
  - A program must be approved for distance learning by the department, Curriculum Committee, UCBA College Faculty, Academic Committee (AC) and the OBR.
  - Proposed DL programs must include the following:
    - A rationale and evidence of need, including the target student population
    - Evidence of departmental resources to support the program
    - College services needed to support this DL program
    - Current HLC evaluation items

B. Training

- Faculty teaching DL/hybrid courses are expected to complete the UCBA Distance Learning Design Seminar or have equivalent training and/or experience.
- There are four components in the UCBA DLD Seminar:
  1) the production of an online course following best practices,
  2) completion of the APPQMR,
  3) undergoing a course design review,
  4) conducting a course design review.
• Faculty teaching DL/hybrid courses must complete all components successfully.
• Full time faculty and adjunct faculty are eligible to complete the UCBA Distance Learning Design Seminar (with the accompanying face-to-face QM one-day workshop, APPQMR) free of charge. If faculty cannot attend a face-to-face APPQMR workshop offered through UC or UCBA, or the Ohio QM Consortium, they must pay for the online version of the workshop offered through Quality Matters.

• Training Categories

1) All faculty new to DL and hybrid course teaching shall complete the Distance Learning Design Seminar offered by the UCBA Learning and Teaching Center before they begin teaching a DL/hybrid course.
2) Faculty who have previously taught online and have experience and/or formal training equivalent to the UCBA DLD Seminar shall have their evidence evaluated by the Director of Distance Learning against the 4 components of the Distance Learning Design Seminar listed in Section B above.

Examples of formal training include the University of Cincinnati CET&L Year-Long Online Course Redesign Seminar, graduate level coursework in instructional design, or a professional certificate in instructional design that has resulted in the production of material that has been taught online. Based on the evaluation, faculty may be required to:
• Enroll in the portion of the DLD Seminar to learn how to conduct a UCBA peer review, and then conduct a review under the supervision of the DLD Seminar instructors.
• Work with the Director of Distance Learning to devise a plan to learn how to conduct a UCBA Peer Review, and then conduct a review under the supervision of the Director of Distance Learning or a designee.
• Complete the QM APPQMR.
• Complete the QM Peer Review Course.
• Undergo a UCBA Peer Review of Course Design during their first semester teaching a DL/hybrid course.

• Each department offering DL/hybrid courses will have at least one faculty member qualified to conduct a UCBA Peer Review of Course Design.

C. Evaluation Procedures

• Distribution of the summary from the “Student Perceptions of Teaching and Learning” will follow the departmental and college procedures used for all courses.
• Evaluation of teaching effectiveness and course content rests within the department and discipline and results in written formative feedback.
• The Director of Distance Learning shall maintain and distribute annually the UCBA Peer Reviewer Pool. Departments select reviewers from this list.
• Review of course design can be conducted by any faculty member who has completed the UCBA Distance Learning Design Seminar or the QM Peer Reviewer Training. This review is based on the QM Rubric and is intended to improve the course design. Successful review requires a score of at least 85% on the rubric items and meeting all essential standards. If a course does not achieve the minimum QM standards, then the faculty member and the reviewer work together so that the course does meet the standards. The appropriate changes must be made before the faculty member can teach the course again.
D. Continuous Improvement

- Faculty who have completed the UCBA Distance Learning Design Seminar may undergo a UCBA Peer Review of Course Design when the course is first offered, but may delay that until the second offering. Failure to undergo a UCBA Peer Review of Course Design during the second time the course is taught results in the faculty member being ineligible to teach online until the review is scheduled and completed.
- After the initial review, DL/hybrid courses shall have at least one UCBA Peer Review of Course Design every three years using UCBA Peer Review.
- The results of a UCBA Peer Review of Course Design are reported to the faculty member and the academic unit head.
- The Associate Dean of Academic Affairs will compile student course completion data for online courses on an annual basis.

E. Reporting

- The Director of Distance Learning will report annually to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs on faculty who have completed the UCBA DL Design Seminar, and the faculty who have completed the QM Peer Review of Training.
- Departments will report the following to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs annually (October 1):

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<tr>
<th>Faculty Name</th>
<th>Course Name and Number</th>
<th>Date of Review</th>
<th>UCBA Peer Review of Course Design Conducted by (name)</th>
<th>Does the course meet the standards? Yes/No</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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- The report will go to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs for inclusion in the HLC electronic data file.

Developed by the Curriculum & Academic Affairs Committee.
Approved by the UCBA Faculty May 31, 2012.
Amended August 28, 2014, February 26, 2015, March 26, 2015 and September 24, 2015