STANDARDS FOR e-Learning

There are standards which characterize effective teaching and learning which are present in all course formats and delivery methods--on campus or online. In planning for and delivering e-Learning instruction, e-Learning instructors should strive to maintain the same standards of performance as in their traditional classes.

COURSES ARE STUDENT FOCUSED

e-Learning experiences will be designed and implemented with attention focused on student needs and expectations. e-Learning iterations of courses should take into consideration the asynchronous nature of online learning and use this to the benefit of their students.

COMMUNICATION IS EFFECTIVE, REGULAR, AND RELIABLE

In on campus classes, faculty interact with students at least once a week for several hours. This provides regular and effective communication between faculty and students. Due to the asynchronous nature of eLearning, faculty will need to maintain the same standard of communication using the wide variety of tools available.

FACULTY ARE KNOWLEDGEABLE AND SKILLED IN ELEARNING METHODS AND PRACTICES

All faculty keep abreast of the changes in their areas of professional expertise and pedagogy, and eLearning Faculty must develop and maintain skills that are particular to the ever-changing world of eLearning. As such, faculty are expected to utilize the opportunities provided by the college to become knowledgeable regarding e-Learning delivery of instruction and will incorporate quality techniques associated with e-Learning into their teaching.

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING IS APPROPRIATE AND EFFECTIVE

Just as in traditional classroom sections, e-Learning faculty will identify specific measurable learning objectives, communicate them to their students, carefully assess those objectives and, in response to that assessment, make appropriate changes to improve student learning.

E-Learning at MCC

E-Learning at MCC is part of the shared governance structure of the college. The Distance Learning Advisory Subcommittee (DLAS) is a faculty-majority group which provides oversight of the "e-Learning" aspects of e-Learning courses including certification and re-certification of instructors to teach e-Learning courses, approval and recommendation to CPSC of courses in e-Learning format, and formulation of e-Learning policy. Its authority is derived from its position as a subcommittee of the College Professional Studies Committee (CPSC), the main academic governing body of the College to which DLAS reports.

Each division is represented at DLAS by a faculty member elected by their colleagues. Faculty should direct questions and concerns about e-Learning policies and decisions to their representative who will bring the matter to the DLAS committee at its monthly meeting.

The e-Learning Office serves as the point-of-contact for e-Learning students' questions and concerns about e-Learning at MCC. The office also provides support for faculty in developing the technical side of their e-Learning courses, providing professional development opportunities, and publicizing e-Learning

courses. Faculty with any questions about e-Learning at Mott should contact the Manager of e-Learning for assistance.

Types of e-Learning courses
There are three distinct varieties of e-Learning courses at MCC. The key difference lies in the proportion of student time spent on-campus as opposed to online.

WWW- The course is delivered completely online--every aspect of the course (learning materials, assessments, examinations, etc., Startup materials, syllabus, etc.) must be delivered and/or conducted online. No course component (including students' submission of required work) will require the students' physical presence on campus.

WCA- The instructor-provided course material is delivered online. The course will contain student obligations which require on-campus activities (eg. exams, presentations, picking up specialized course material) which are minimal (less than the 25% threshold for a HYB course), but required. Dates and times of required student activities must be published in the syllabus at the beginning of the semester. Exams must be administered during a week-long window of time in which to take the exam in the Testing Center so that differing student off-campus schedules are accommodated.

HYB- A Hybrid course is an instructor designed blend of online and offline instructor-led and student-centered activities which fulfills course objectives by combining on-campus and e-Learning methods and techniques. A minimum of 25% (maximum of 75%) of the learning activities must take place in a face-to-face campus setting. Dates and times of on-campus activities must be published in the semester schedule and, thus, must be finalized before the schedule goes to print.

APPROPRIATE PRACTICES IMPLEMENTING THE STANDARDS FOR e-Learning FACULTY

Recommended practices to implement the Standards for e-Learning faculty are presented in a chronological format – reflecting the order in time that a faculty member needs to address them.

I. PREPARATION FOR e-LEARNING
A. Training and Certification of e-Learning Faculty

The Faculty CBA provides authority to DLAS to develop a process of certification (Article XIX.D.2), to confirm that e-Learning faculty members are aware of and complying with the Standards and Practices guidelines.

Required Initial Training - New e-Learning faculty training requires:
● Successful completion of an e-Learning approved Online Teaching Certification course, such as that offered by ETOM.
● Successful completion of an e-Learning approved Instructional Design Software training course, such as WIDS.
● Confirmation of certification may require providing documentation of training and completion of DLAS forms.

FACULTY MUST HAVE COMPLETED REQUIRED E-LEARNING CERTIFICATION TRAINING <u>BEFORE</u> SUBMITTING AN E-LEARNING COURSE FOR APPROVAL.

e-Learning Re-certification
- DLAS conducts an annual review of Faculty Certification to teach e-Learning courses.
- DLAS reviews e-Learning faculty individually every two years.
- Every two years e-Learning faculty must participate in a minimum of six hours of approved professional development relating to e-Learning, which may include workshops and training sessions planned by the DLAS or Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) as well as demonstrated compliance with the eLearning Standard and Practices.
- Required professional development must be completed prior to the re-certification deadline established by the manager of eLearning.
- Faculty who fail to complete re-certification requirements by the deadline may reapply for certification during the next scheduled re-certification review. At that time faculty must show completion of the required professional development. Faculty should contact the Manager of e-Learning for the next re-certification deadline.
- Annually, DLAS forwards a list of faculty who fail to complete re-certification to Division Deans for their consideration when scheduling classes.

The following are samples of re-certification professional development activities that have been approved by DLAS reviewers:
- Attended Peer to Peer Workshops for eLearning instructors
- Attended ETOM Fall Conference geared toward eLearning
- Attended ETOM Summer Retreat geared toward eLearning
- Attended ITC Conference geared toward eLearning instruction
- Attended Teaching with Technology mini-conference in CTL
- Attended discipline-specific conference sessions focused on online education
- Attended CTL Webinars geared toward eLearning instruction such as:
  - Seven Ways to Facilitate Online Discussions
  - Online Learning through Instructional Design
  - Three secrets to diverse and inclusive online learning
  - Designing Online Learning for Intrinsic Motivation
  - Rubrics – Take Quality of your Online Course to the Next Level
  - Effective Writing Assessment in Online Classroom
  - Practical Strategies to Improve Student retention in Online Courses
  - Online Group Work: making it meaningful and manageable
  - Managing Instructor Presence in the Online Classroom
  - Five Ways to Improve Interaction in your Online Courses
  - The Flipped Approach to Online Teaching and Learning
  - Transforming Students into Online Learners
  - Creating Exemplary Online Courses
  - Practical Strategies to Improve Student Retention in Online Courses
  - Top Ten Faculty Challenges for Teaching Online
  - Synchronous Online Learning: Increasing Online Student Success with Direct Faculty Engagement in Live Sessions
  - Forum Quality or Quantity: What is Driving Student Engagement Online?
  - Motivation, Online Learning Obstacles, and Student Retention: A Segment Level Approach
  - Teaching Teamwork Online: Practical Applications for Virtual Reality
  - How Using Lecture Capture Affects Performance of Online and Face-to Face Students in Current and Subsequent Courses
  - Cheating 101: Strategies to create a safe and fair online learning environment

- o Designed online developmental mathematics for Student Success
- o Created Prime Instructional Principles for Fully online developmental Math
- o Participated in University of Michigan Flint – Intensive Course Development for online Instruction
- o Participated in Great Online Teachers Seminar
- o Participated in Faculty Learning Community (Quad-Pod) on Security in Online Course
- o Participated in Teaching Science Online Group

The following are examples of recertification professional development activities that were rejected by DLAS reviewers:

- No documentation or response provided at all
- Cover of a conference program or professional newsletter
- Attending a disciplined-specific conference with no clear focus on online education
- Learning to use Google Sheets
- Attending a session focused on Using Humor in the classroom
- Developing general pedagogical content using technology
- Attending a sales pitch for a new technology product
- Attending a Basic Blackboard Session
- Certification material submitted without an application form for recertification

B. Procedure for developing new e-Learning Courses

IMPORTANT REMINDER: FACULTY MUST HAVE COMPLETED REQUIRED E-LEARNING CERTIFICATION TRAINING <u>BEFORE </u>SUBMITTING AN E-LEARNING COURSE FOR APPROVAL. COURSES BEING BROUGHT TO DLAS FOR APPROVAL IN AN E-LEARNING FORMAT (WWW, WCA, HYB) MUST ALREADY HAVE BEEN <u>APPROVED AS A COLLEGE COURSE </u>BY CPSC PRIOR TO PRESENTATION AT DLAS.

Interest - Interest in creating an e-Learning version of a course may come from several directions. If the Manager of e-Learning sees a need for an e-Learning course, the Manager will work with the division Dean to survey faculty interest. If a faculty member is interested in developing or teaching an e-Learning course, they should discuss that interest with the Manager of e-Learning and the Dean of the faculty member's division. The faculty member will obtain a copy of Standards and Practices for e-Learning faculty, read it, and confirm his or her understanding of the requirements of e-Learning instruction as well as the required training to teach e-Learning courses at MCC.

Development - Faculty developing a new e-Learning course or desiring to teach an existing one must be qualified to teach that course according to divisional requirements. If it does not already exist, faculty must develop a syllabus and the required summary of course outcomes and objectives document (i.e. WIDS). Faculty must adhere to the "Syllabus Standards for e-Learning Courses" section of the e-Learning Standards and Practices when preparing their course for approval. Courses being adapted to the e-Learning mode of instruction must utilize the same course outlines, criteria and standards as approved by CPSC.

The faculty member will then complete the standard DLAS form to propose a new e-Learning course and obtain the required approvals from their division dean. These forms and the required course outcomes and objectives documents must be forwarded to the Manager of e-Learning at least one week prior to the DLAS meeting at which the faculty wishes to propose their course. DLAS expects faculty to be present to discuss their course or, if necessary, to send a representative who is able to discuss the course and answer the committee's questions.

Upon approval, the e-Learning office will communicate with the faculty member regarding any required forms per CBA, Article XIX.

C. Procedure for Approval to teach existing e-Learning Courses
- A faculty member wishing to teach an existing e-Learning course for the first time must contact the Manager of e-Learning to confirm that a summary of course outcomes and objectives (ie. MCD) exists for the course. The approved course objectives and CPSC approved course outcomes and standards must be the basis for any e-Learning version of the course, regardless of instructor. If the summary of course outcomes and objectives does not exist, the faculty member must complete the procedures outline in section B above for new e-Learning course development.
- The Faculty member must develop their syllabus for the course and the required DLAS forms must be forwarded to the Manager of e-Learning at least one week prior to the DLAS meeting at which the faculty wishes to be approved to teach the existing course. DLAS expects faculty to be present to discuss their course or, if necessary, to send a representative who is able to discuss the course and answer the committee's questions. Faculty must adhere to the "Syllabus Standards for e-Learning Courses" section of the e-Learning Standards and Practices when preparing their course for approval.
- All certified faculty wishing to teach an e-Learning course for the first time must bring a syllabus for that course to DLAS for approval.

D. Assignment of Faculty to E-Learning Courses
Faculty are to be assigned to e-Learning sections in time for the instructor's name to be added in the Class Schedule Booklet. Failure to accept e-Learning assignments when offered may result in the course being assigned to another qualified faculty member, in accordance with Article XIX of the Faculty CBA.

II. FACULTY RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Syllabus Standards for e-Learning Courses
Faculty must create a course syllabus that clearly explains the requirements and accurately describes the features of the course.

The syllabus for an e-Learning section of a course must include the following elements:
- Course Title
- Course Prefix and Number
- Semester and Year of offering
- Credits/Contact Hours
- Course Pre-Requisites
- Instructor Contact Information
    - Instructor Name
    - Email Address
    - Office Location
    - Office Phone Number
    - Office Hours
        - Any variation to established office hours should be communicated to students and division well in advance.
    - Communication Policy: What is the instructor's preferred method of contact (email, phone, Skype, etc.)? What are the best times to contact the instructor? How quickly

should a student expect a response? How will communicate information to your class? How often do you expect your students to check their email (do you require them to use MCC's email system?) or BlackBoard for information?

- Faculty are expected to maintain regular contact with students via e-Mail, telephone, online announcements, etc. Every effort should be made to respond to student communications within 72 hours.
  - ○ Other recommended contacts include:
    - Division Office phone number
    - E-Learning Office phone number
    - 2-HELP technical support information
    - Testing Center
- CPSC Approved Course Description and Objectives
- Text information (including ISBN) and other required materials for the course
- Attendance Policy (including Title IV funding information, see below)
  - ○ **For HYB courses, explain attendance policies for both your on-campus and online course components.**
  - ○ Define "attendance" for your online course. Does it mean just logging in once per week, or do students need to complete specific assignments?
  - ○ Title IV Funding eligibility: Guidelines require the college to keep attendance record in order for students to maintain their Title IV fund eligibility. Excessive absences may affect that eligibility.
- Grading Policy
  - ○ Explain your grading scale
  - ○ Explain how the students' work will be graded and what weight/percentage/points that assessment carries with regard to the final grade.
    - Describe assignments, including what students are required to do and where to find detailed assignment guidelines, instructions, rubrics, due dates, required methods of submission, etc. in your online course. Note: Students cannot be required to submit materials via mail.
    - **For WCA & HYB, specify which activities are online and which require on-campus attendance.**
    - Examination policies
      - How long are examinations available for students' to complete?
      - Where are exams taken?
      - What materials must they provide?
      - What materials are students allowed to use on exams?
      - If review sessions/materials are offered for the students, provide details.
  - ○ Explain your makeup/late policies with regard to specific assessment activities.
  - ○ Extra Credit policy
- Academic Integrity Policy
  - ○ Carefully and specifically define what actions violate the Academic Integrity policy for your course.
  - ○ Explain penalties for violations.
- Other Policies
  - ○ Explain your policy on the NS grade (How you define "nonsufficient contact"?)
  - ○ Explain your Incomplete policy (see the MCC Registrar's policy on incompletes for guidance).

- Provide withdrawal deadlines and direct student to Registrar's office for information on college withdrawal policies and procedures.
- Title IX
- Class Schedule which provides
  - Topics to be covered and when
  - Due Dates for assessments and exams
  - **For WCA & HYB, the syllabus must include dates, times, and locations of required on-campus attendance. Meeting dates and times must be submitted to the Dean for approval for publication in the course schedule.**

- Faculty must update syllabus and class schedule every semester as needed and maintain the syllabus and class schedule online for the duration of the course. These items should be easily accessible to students.

B. Learning Materials
- Preview and, if necessary update, online course materials including audio/videos, links to external websites, text, study guides and any other material posted for students in advance of using them and as needed.
- Faculty must secure permission to use copyrighted materials from the owners as required by copyright laws and by Mott Community College policies.

C. Class Orientation Sessions.
- Faculty must develop an orientation to their course that is available to students on the first scheduled day of class. The format and timing of the class orientation must be shared with the e-Learning Office staff prior to the deadline set by the Manager of e-Learning.
  - For WWW courses, this class orientation **must** include an audio-visual presentation and be posted online.
  - For WCA courses, this class orientation **may** be posted online as an audio-visual presentation **or** presented on campus during two separate orientation sessions. On-campus class orientation session dates must be listed in the College's schedule of courses.
  - For HYB courses, this class orientation **must** be the first on campus class meeting and take place during the first week of class.
- The orientation session is your students' introduction. As such, it should provide a basic overview of your syllabus, contact information, and any other information which will lead to success in your course. Such information could include:
  - Effective study techniques for your class
  - How to navigate your online course environment
  - Locations of assessments, syllabus, other key information
  - How students can check their grades
  - How to send email through Blackboard
  - Textbook information, such as useful pedagogical tools or features
  - Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

D. Using the Testing Center
- When using the Testing Center, tests must be submitted electronically. Information which must be provided to the Testing Center includes:
  - testing dates

- ○ materials students are allowed to use during the exam (books, notes, study guides, calculators, etc.)
- ○ whether students may write on the exam or not
- ○ time limit (if any)
- ○ procedures regarding homework
- ○ disposition of tests remaining in the Testing Center once any testing period is over
- ○ late or make up test policy

III. Best Practices

Online education presents unique challenges and opportunities for faculty and students. As such, faculty need to consider the impact the asynchronous environment has on student preparation, student learning, and student success. To assist faculty in the development of best practices for E-learning, the following recommendations are made for consideration as you develop/teach your course.

A. Clarity of Course Requirements.

Unlike a traditional classroom where students can ask a question as soon as they think of it (and get an immediate response), in an online atmosphere, student questions arise as they are working through the learning materials, reading the syllabus, or at other times. Be preemptive in your materials. Consider what questions students might have and address those issues up front. The more time you spend in making instructions and requirements clear, the less time you will spend answering student questions about what you meant. Be specific and explicit in conveying your expectations of students. For example:

1. How and where should they submit assignments? On Blackboard? Through email?
2. What file formats are acceptable?
3. How are assignments graded? Are there rubrics for students to consult? How will students receive feedback on graded assignments?
4. How much time does a student have to take a test/quiz/complete an assignment once it is open (when does it close)? What is the time window for completion of the item once the student has begun work on it?
5. Are deadlines flexible or not?
6. How do you define "midnight"?
7. What is the student to be responsible for on their own initiative?
8. Is there a specific order in which students should approach the learning materials? If so, what is it?
9. How are discussion boards, blogs, wikis, or other collaborative assignments graded? What is the instructor's role (if any) in participation?
10. How should students deal with problems they have in accessing course content? Should they email you? Call you? Both?
11. What technological requirements exist for your course? Are there specific browser requirements? Plugins? Programs? Access codes for publishers' online materials? Can a student be successful using only a mobile device (smartphone, tablet) or must they use a traditional computer?
12. What level of formality do you require in discussion boards and class-related communications?
13. What reading and writing level recommendations does the course carry? If students who have been recommended for developmental courses would struggle to succeed in your class, make that clear to them.

14. What avenues for assistance do you expect them to utilize? The Writing Center? The Math Empowerment Center? The Learning Center? The Library? Computer help desk?
15. How often should a student need to log in to the class? Are there multiple due dates during a week?

Consider adding a "Frequently Asked Questions" list to your online learning environment.

B. The Online Learning Environment: Organization and User Experience
1. Organize for clarity and simplicity. For example, divide your course materials up into categories that are intuitive to the student (eg. "Weekly Lessons", "Tests", "Assignments", "Class Information", etc.). Consider using folders to organize items and course links to minimize the amount of clicking back and forth between folders and categories.
2. Do your links go where they are supposed to? Websites, online videos, and other resources routinely vanish or change URLs. Check and (if necessary) update links at least every semester. If a student tells you about a nonworking link, fix it as soon as possible.
3. Consider posting a weekly announcement (or sending a class-wide email) updating students on course issues, upcoming deadlines, or changes in office hours, or highlighting your expectations for them during that week. Doing so can remind students that there is someone at the other end of the course who is engaged and there to assist them in their learning.
4. Are items you intend to be visible, actually visible? It is very easy to forget to open a folder or make a test available. Consider using tools that allow you to set the date and time of availability. To see what your students see, turn off the "edit mode". Regardless of how your class is set up, it is your responsibility to ensure things work, are visible, and that the online learning environment facilitates rather than hinders learning.

C. Supplemental Learning Materials and Opportunities
Unlike a traditional classroom, where students have immediate access to instructors and classmates for self-assessment and improvement of knowledge and skills, an online learning environment places a much greater burden on the student to self-assess and learn on their own. Online faculty should consider providing additional learning and self-assessment tools for students to use in a risk-free, non-graded manner. Such materials may include:
1. Review sheets for aid in studying for exams
2. Open question discussion boards for student to post questions on course material
3. Additional resources from publishers (crossword puzzle generators, online flash cards, Pronunciation guides, ungraded chapter quizzes, lists of terms, glossaries, etc.
4. Review materials you build yourself which allow students to assess course specific to your course and information you provided which may not have been in their textbook such as review worksheets or a checklist of learning objectives for each week, chapter, or topic. There is no limit to the types of items you can create and no one knows the material you're teaching better than you.

D. Effective Communication
You're standing in a classroom. A student asks a question. You answer it. Time between question and answer? However long it takes for you to think of something to say. In the online world, the time between question and answer is often far longer. Students--often acclimated to the instant response world of real-time communications--may expect faculty to be tethered to their email at all times. To prevent misunderstandings, it is crucial that faculty members be clear on:
1. How students should communicate with them for quickest response.

2. Students may contact you on weekends or in the evenings. Take this into consideration when providing a guideline for your students. In general, a 72-hour response time is appropriate. If circumstances will prevent a normal response time (illness, conference travel or other professional obligations, etc.) convey the adjusted response time to your students.
3. Communication and engagement goes both ways. Providing information about the class, updates, or any other necessary information shows students that you are engaged in the teaching and learning process as much as they are.

IV. Feedback and Evaluation
DLAS is committed to ensuring effectiveness in MCC's online education offerings. As such, there are a number of avenues through which faculty may receive feedback on their eLearning courses.

A. eLearning Office
As the conduit connecting eLearning faculty and students, the eLearning office has the obligation to convey to faculty issues of compliance with the eLearning Standards and Practices. Often the eLearning office is an online student's main point of contact when questions or concerns about an eLearning course arise. These concerns could range from inability to access a class to an out of date syllabus to a student's inability to establish contact with an instructor. The eLearning office will attempt to remedy these concerns by contacting the instructor. In addition to acting as a conduit for faculty and students, the eLearning office may, if requested, provide information about eLearning courses to division deans.

B. Student Instructor Evaluation Form (SIEF)
SIEFs are administered electronically in e-Learning courses. The e-Learning office will contact e-Learning faculty with a link to the electronic SIEF. Faculty members will make this link available to students at a time of their choosing in accordance with the Faculty CBA (Article X.R).

C. Student Issues with eLearning Courses
If a student contacts the eLearning office with feedback on an online course or instructor, the Manager of e-Learning will forward that communication to the appropriate division dean, who will follow the procedures outlined in the Faculty CBA (Articles V.E and XVI or other relevant parts of the agreement)

D. Faculty Evaluation
The Faculty CBA (Articles X.R, X.S, and X.T) deals with faculty evaluation by their division dean. As part of the evaluation procedures outlined, a faculty member's eLearning courses may be evaluated by their division dean along-side their traditional courses. Division deans with questions or concerns regarding delivery methods, modes, or usability issues should contact DLAS, as Subcommittees of DLAS can offer feedback on these issues. DLAS will not evaluate course content, discipline specific information, style or currency of learning materials or assessments. DLAS subcommittee purview shall be limited to the technical usability aspects of an eLearning course and compliance with these Standards and Practices.