



## **Report of the Joint Administrative/Faculty Task Force on Distance Learning Policies and Standards**

**June 15, 2021**

### **I. Introduction: The Task Force's Composition and Charge**

#### **A. Need:**

- Current Distance Policies are out of date because of the substantial changes to Distance course delivery resulting from the response to the Covid crisis.
- The College's Strategic Plan Goal 2B, Strategy 2, Part B, 2<sup>nd</sup> Bullet point calls for the creation of "a joint administrative/faculty task force/governance committee to promote core standards."

#### **B. Charge:** Update the College's Distance Learning Policies to reflect:

- Changes since they were last issued including, but not limited to, changes made in response to the Covid crisis such as adoption of novel modalities and widespread ad-hoc use of Blended format;
- Policies the Task Force recommends and Faculty Governance and the Administration adopt that address indicators whose enhancement is identified in the College's "Online Institutional Readiness Implementation Plan" (pp. 52-3 and appended below) with the creation of such a Task Force. (The full [Online Institutional Readiness Implementation Plan](#) can be found at the Policies and Procedures tab in the Faculty Portal.)

#### **C. Membership:** Co-Chairs (Director of Distance Learning, Governance Designee), Chairs of APPC, CAP, and TLRC or their designees, to the extent not already represented 3 SAS, 1 SOE, 1 SOB, 1 SPS, Dean of SAS, Manager of Instructional Design, Registrar or designee, Student Academic Support Services Representative, Academic Affairs Representative.

#### **D. Timeline: Recommendations to Senate: April 9, 2021.** Note that this deadline was extended to June 15, 2021 on the recommendation of the Task Force

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by the Provost and Faculty Senate Executive Committee.

### **II. Revisions to Distance Learning Policy Document**

See the attached document, “SUNY Old Westbury Distance Learning Policies Effective Spring, 2022, June 2, 2021” (Appendix A)

### **III. Recommendations on Indices in the Online Institutional Readiness Implementation Plan**

#### **A. Introduction**

This section considers and makes recommendations on the 15 Indices in the Online Institutional Readiness Plan that the Task Force was charged with addressing. In addition, 10 other Indices that the Task Force thought relevant are also included.

The discussions of the Indices include a number of acronyms, which are defined immediately below. After that, the Indices are presented in numerical order, based on the numbering system in the Implementation Plan. This includes the major section identifier and the specific index number separated by a period (i.e., 1.1; 2.4, 4.11, etc.). The section headings are indicated before the first index within it discussed here. Note that each index header includes its current ranking on the 0 (lowest) -3 (highest) rating system used in the Implementation Plan.

Finally, fortuitously, the first three indexes are all from Section I, Institutional Support and all involve the same, most significant recommendation by the Task Force, so they are not only given first, but also are presented as a separate unit, linked by their common recommendation which forms the basis for many of the recommendations that follow.

#### **Acronyms**

CETL: Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning

DL: Distance Learning

ID: Instructional Design

EIT: Electronic & Information Technology [Accessibility Standards]

ITGAC: Information Technology Governance and Advisory Committee

ODL: Office of Distance Learning

OIE: Office of Institutional Effectiveness

OSCQR: Online SUNY Course Quality Review [Rubric]

## **B. Establishment of a standing Joint Administrative/Faculty Distance Learning Governance Committee**

Per the three indices in Part 1 of the College's Online Readiness Plan concerning Institutional Support which the Joint Administrative/Faculty Distance Learning Policy Task Force was charged to consider (immediately below), it recommends that a standing Joint Administrative/Faculty Distance Learning Governance Committee be established. The reasons for this and the proposed membership and structure are elaborated below.

### **1. Institutional Support**

#### **1.1. The institution has a governance structure to enable clear, effective, and comprehensive decision making related to online education. (Self-rating: 1.3 (of 3))**

Considerations: The College has long had a Director of Distance Learning, who acts as an executive overseeing training efforts and otherwise administering College-wide activities related to Distance Learning, but the College lacks a corresponding legislative body charged with considering and recommending to the appropriate administrative and faculty governance bodies policies specific to Distance courses and programs. Both the College's Online Institutional Readiness Implementation Plan and the College's 2018-23 Strategic Plan call for the creation of such a body.

Recommendation: Establish a formal governance structure (i.e., "*Joint Administrative/Faculty Distance Learning Governance Committee*") to take over when the Task Force's work is done.

1) Membership: Co-Chairs (Director of Distance Learning, Governance Designee), Chairs of APPC, CAP, and TLRC or their designees, to the extent not already represented 3 SAS, 1 SOE, 1 SOB, 1 SPS, Dean of SAS, Manager of Instructional Design, Registrar and Assistant Registrar, Student Academic Support Services Representative, Academic Affairs Representative.

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2) Charge: To consider and enact policies relating to Distance Learning activities at the College, including, but not limited to:

- a) Reviewing and recommending action to appropriate governance and administrative bodies related to the Task Force's Recommendations on the balance of the Indices it has considered, and which are discussed in part III B, below.
- b) Reviewing and recommending action on other Indices in the Implementation plan it may find appropriate.
- c) Initiate or entertain consideration of other proposed policy changes to address issues related to Distance Learning at the College that may arise in the future.
- d) Submit an annual report by June 15 to Academic Affairs and Faculty Governance on its activities during the year.

### **1.5. The organizational structure of the online program supports the institution's mission, values, and strategic plan. (2)**

Considerations: The structure and requirements of our online offerings, which are housed in departments (while coordinated by the Director of Distance Learning), support our mission and values. This structure partially supports the Strategic Plan, but as indicated above which calls for the creation of a Joint Administrative/Governance body to review and set policies specific to Distance Learning.

Recommendation: Same as 1.1.

### **1.9. The institution has a governance structure to enable systematic and continuous improvement related to the administration of online education. (2)**

Consideration: To “close the loop” when assessments indicate that new policies are needed, a body empowered to review and recommend additions or changes to College Distance Policies is needed.

Recommendation: Same as 1.1

## **C. Recommendations on Other Indices in the Online Institutional Readiness Plan**

The following discussion is predicated on the assumption that the recommendation above to create a standing Joint Administrative/Faculty Distance Learning Governance Committee will be implemented, and so the Task Force's considerations and recommendations will be inherited by that body as the basis for its first deliberations and actions.

### **3. Course Development and Instructional Design**

#### **3.1. Guidelines regarding minimum requirements for course development, design, and delivery of online instruction (such as course syllabus elements, course materials, assessment strategies, faculty feedback) are followed. (2)**

Considerations: In recognition of college faculty's individual and collective autonomy in course design and delivery, an indirect approach to accomplish the purpose of this index is proposed.

Recommendations:

- 1) Issues of "development, design, and delivery" of online instruction should generally be considered "best practices," not "requirements."
- 2) We should continue our existing policy of requiring training in best practices for instructors seeking to teach in new distance modalities, including the 1-month observation.
- 3) The proposed Joint Administrative/Faculty Distance Learning Governance Committee should revisit this issue and consider how such review can be conducted beyond the 1-month observation period.
- 4) Departmental process needs to be identified for determining any additional "minimum requirements" such as additional special training before teaching in a modality.

**3.3. Instructional materials and course syllabi are reviewed periodically to ensure they meet online course and program learning outcomes. (1)**

Considerations: This item seems to be somewhat misworded. Inputs to courses are not understood to meet learning outcomes. Instead, student outputs are assessed to measure their attainment of learning outcomes. Instructional materials and course syllabi may, however, be reviewed to determine if they align with course and program learning outcomes, so that is what is recommended here, with due consideration given to the faculty's autonomy in course design and delivery.

Recommendations:

1) We should continue our existing policy of requiring training in best practices for instructors seeking to teach in new distance modalities, including the 1-month observation.

2) Revisit the question of whether CAP, in consultation with ODL, should consider incorporating a review of these aspects of Distance Learning into the five-year review requirements.

**3.5. A process is followed that ensures that permissions (Creative Commons, Copyright, Fair Use, Public Domain, etc.) are in place for appropriate use of online course materials. (2)**

Considerations: The DL policies and initial training include the requirements for permissions. The Online Institutional Readiness Implementation Plan calls for the Joint Administrative/Faculty Distance Learning Governance Committee to insure that these are up to date.

Recommendations: The Joint Administrative/Faculty Distance Learning Governance Committee should periodically review our policies and practices and update them as needed.

**3.6. Course assignments and activities are reviewed periodically to ensure they meet online course and program learning outcomes. (1)**

Considerations: Same as 3.1 and 3.3 above.

Recommendations: Same as 3.1 and 3.3 above.

**3.7. Student-centered instruction is considered during the course-development process. (2)**

Consideration: This is a Best Practice that faculty should be encouraged to employ as appropriate.

Recommendation: The current DL training does encourage it, but CETL and TLRC should be encouraged to run workshops that address this.

**3.8. There is consistency in course development for student retention and quality. (1.3)**

Considerations: Faculty autonomy in course design and delivery need to be balanced against the difficulties students face when they take multiple Distance courses with idiosyncratic course structures, navigational paths, and interface processes. The latter are not just a matter of convenience, but impact the College's ability to retain and graduate students.

Recommendations:

- 1) Continue existing policy of requiring training in best practices for instructors seeking to teach in new distance modalities, including the 1-month observation.
- 2) Make sure departments understand the unique requirements of online courses.
- 3) ODL should review and/or update the new dashboard for the OSCQR rubric <https://oscqr.suny.edu/>.

**3.9. Course design promotes both faculty and student engagement. (2)**

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Consideration: This is a Best Practice that faculty should be encouraged to employ as appropriate.

Recommendation: The current DL training does encourage it, but CETL and TLRC should be encouraged to jointly run workshops that address this.

### **3.10. A process is followed for evaluating the effectiveness of current and emerging technologies to support the achievement of learning outcomes and delivery of course content.**

Considerations: There are two issues raised by this item. One relates to technologies that are institutionally adopted and supported by the College. The other relates to technologies that are adopted and used by faculty members individually.

1) The ID staff, as a unit within the College's ITS department, evaluates emerging technologies that will potentially be institutionally supported. The ITGAC (and the separate proposed faculty IT standing committee) are being put into place to work with ITS to facilitate the alignment of its recommendations and purchases of educational technology with faculty interests and needs, and to review purchasing and track the use of technology once acquired.

2) The College recognizes the value of faculty initiative in exploring and adopting emerging technologies for use in Distance instruction, but has limited resources and therefore ability to support such adoptions. Nevertheless, numerous technologies are currently used by faculty on an individual and seemingly ad-hoc basis even though they are not "officially" endorsed by the campus. They have not been catalogued in a campus-wide resource document, so, while faculty have expressed an interest in understanding emerging technologies, currently their main resource is word of mouth.

Recommendations:

1) The ID staff should continue to explore and evaluate emerging technologies with the potential to become institutionally adopted and



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supported. The proposed ITGAC (and proposed faculty IT standing committee) will work with ITS to facilitate the alignment of ITS's recommendations and purchases of educational technology with faculty interests and needs, and will review purchasing and track the use of technology once acquired.

2) For other technologies not provided by the campus, TLRC should be encouraged to conduct less formal explorations of emerging technologies; survey faculty about their use of extra-institutional technologies in order to create a list of technologies, departments who use them, and relevant opinions; and, perhaps with CETL, conduct workshops both surveying these technologies and their potential and discussing ways that individual items have been and can be employed by faculty.

### **4. Course Structure**

#### **4.1. The online course includes a syllabus outlining course objectives, learning outcomes, evaluation methods, books and supplies, technical and proctoring requirements, and other related course information, making course requirements transparent. (2)**

Consideration: This is an issue for courses offered in all modalities.

Recommendation: The Joint Administrative/Faculty Distance Learning Governance Committee should encourage and contribute, with the ODL, to the creation of a Faculty Handbook that incorporates FRRC guidelines for syllabus development and that is relevant to courses in all modalities. This effort should be also coordinated with UUP and any existing departmental handbooks.

#### **4.3. Expectations for student assignment completion, grade policy, and faculty response are clearly provided in the course syllabus. (2)**

Consideration: Same as 4.1 above.

Recommendation: Same as 4.1 above.

**4.7. Opportunities/tools are provided to encourage student-student collaboration (i.e. web conferencing, instant messaging, etc.) if appropriate.**

Consideration: This is a Best Practice that faculty should be encouraged to employ as appropriate.

Recommendations:

- 1) CETL and TLRC should be encouraged to run workshops that address this.
- 2) The ITGAC and/or any future IT faculty committee should be encouraged to work with faculty to investigate and test into new tools.

**4.8. Rules and standards for appropriate online student behavior are provided within the course.**

Consideration: The Online Readiness Implementation Plan's suggests include making a "Netiquette" policy.

Recommendation: The Joint Administrative/Faculty Distance Learning Governance Committee should work with the ODL to create a "Netiquette" policy for the College.

**5. Teaching and Learning**

**5.1. Student-to-student interaction and faculty-to-student interaction are essential characteristics and are facilitated through a variety of ways. (1.3)**

Consideration: This is a Best Practice that faculty should be encouraged to employ as appropriate.

Recommendations:

- 1) DL initial training should continue to include strategies to promote these interactions, and use the 1-month observation to confirm.

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2) Subsequent workshops on best practices in student engagement can be offered by CETL and the TLRC. ODL should encourage distance faculty to attend these.

### **5.2. Feedback on student assignments and questions is constructive and provided in a timely manner. (2)**

Consideration: This is a Best Practice that faculty should be encouraged to employ.

Recommendations:

1) DL initial training will include strategies to promote timely and helpful feedback practices, and use the 1-month observation to confirm.

2) Subsequent workshops on best practices in student engagement can be offered by CETL and the TLRC. ODL should encourage distance faculty to attend these.

### **5.4. Students are provided access to library professionals and resources to help locate, analyze, evaluate, synthesize, and ethically use a variety of information resources.**

Consideration: The Online Readiness Implementation Plan suggests that we “Develop information literacy module to be included in all online courses during the first week of the semester.”

Recommendation: Modules for students before they start an online program are being developed by Instructional Design staff. Once available the ODL should devise ways to make students and instructors are aware of them.

### **5.5. Instructors use specific strategies to create a presence in the course.**

Consideration: The Online Institutional Readiness Implementation Plan suggests that we “Create a list of ideas that instructors can use for online presence in the classroom.”

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Recommendation: CETL and TLRC should be encouraged to run workshops that address this.

### **7. Faculty Support**

#### **7.3. Faculty receive training and materials related to Fair Use, plagiarism, and other relevant legal and ethical concepts.**

Consideration: The DL policies and initial training include the requirements for permissions. Plagiarism is addressed by the College's plagiarism policy.

Recommendation: CETL and TLRC should be encouraged to run workshops that supplement the existing processes and materials.

#### **7.5. Clear standards are established for faculty engagement and expectations around online teaching (e.g., response time, contact information, etc.) (1)**

Considerations: Same as 3.9, 4.1, 4.3, 5.1, 5.2, and 5.5 above.

Recommendations: Same as 3.9, 4.1, 4.3, 5.1, 5.2, and 5.5 above.

#### **7.6. Faculty are informed about emerging tech. and the selection and use of new tools.**

Recommendation: CETL and TLRC should be encouraged to run workshops that address this.

### **8. Student Support**

#### **8.1. Before starting an online program, students are advised about the program to determine if they possess self-motivation and commitment to learn online.**

Recommendation: Modules for students before they start an online program are being developed by Instructional Design staff. Once available the ODL should devise ways to make students are aware of them.

### **9. Evaluation and Assessment**

**9.2. A variety of data (academic and administrative information) are used to regularly and frequently evaluate program effectiveness and to guide changes toward continual improvement. (1.3)**

Recommendation: OIE and Co-Directors of Academic Assessment will collect academic and non-academic assessment reports, which will include distance courses. The DL office will conduct its own periodic institutional assessment.

**9.7. Program demonstrates compliance and review of accessibility standards.**

Recommendation: DL, OSSD and EIT accessibility committee will review and ensure compliance.

**D. Additional Recommendation on Office Hours**

Considerations: In the course of discussions concerning Faculty Engagement and Support of Students, the issue of Office Hours was raised. The policy requiring faculty to schedule class meetings on at least two different days during the week ensures that they will be available to meet with students in person even if teaching Distance classes, but it fails to take into account the necessity for Distance faculty to support students remotely. All faculty engage with students via email these days, but Distance faculty have a particular responsibility to respond in a predictable and timely manner with Distance students, and now, with online conferencing software widely used, to be available for synchronous interactions with remote students as well.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the possibility be revisited of establishing a trade-off between required office hour time for fixed email/electronic response times for faculty teaching Distance courses.

**Submitted by**

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**Effective Spring, 2022  
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Old Westbury encourages all instructors to explore the distance courses training modules available through the campus LMS. These modules are based on various appropriate aspects of the OSQCR rubric (Appendix B).

**I. Rationale**

The goal of SUNY Old Westbury's Distance Learning Program is to promote the seamless integration of online modes of content delivery and instructional interaction into the academic offerings of the College. Formats for such integration include fully online classes in which instructional activity is conducted asynchronously, with no scheduled class time; remote classes in which all instructional activity is conducted synchronously during scheduled class times via an online conferencing platform; hybrid and blended classes in which some but not all synchronous class time is offset by asynchronous online instructional activities, and flex classes in which students can choose to either attend class meetings on campus or via an online conferencing platform.

**II. Definitions, Tagging & Room Scheduling**

**A. Distance Course:** Any course in which class time is either conducted remotely online via conferencing software or is offset all or in part by asynchronous online instruction.

1) For 4 credit courses, the combination of synchronous and asynchronous instructional activities should, per the Middle States Commission on Higher Education's Credit Hour Policy, "reasonably approximate" 180 minutes of "classroom or direct faculty instruction" per week plus an additional 420 minutes on out of class work per week during the 15

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week semester, for a total of 600 minutes, the same as traditional-format (two 90 minute meeting per week) classes.<sup>1</sup>

2) Time commitments in Summer and Winter sessions will be adjusted to achieve the same totals accordingly, as will time commitments for courses worth other than 4 credits. See section “Policy on Credit Hours and Course Expectations” in the College Catalog.

3) A total of 10 Course modalities are utilized at Old Westbury, 9 of which are considered Distance modalities.

**B. Campus / Synchronous.** Campus Synchronous is the one Course modality that is *not* a Distance modality. A Campus Synchronous course has all instruction in the classroom during scheduled class meeting times, supplemented by out-of-class work. These are conventionally referred to as “traditional” or “classroom” classes.

**C. Online / Asynchronous.** An Online Asynchronous course is a distance course with exclusively online asynchronous instruction, where students access content, complete assignments, and meet deadlines with no scheduled meeting times. These are conventionally referred to as “NET” classes.

**D. Campus / Hybrid.** A distance course that meets regularly for half the time of a “traditional” course in an assigned classroom as scheduled, offset by asynchronous online or independent work, and supplemented by out-of-class work. These are conventionally referred to as “hybrid” classes.

**E. Campus / Blended.** A distance course that meets in an assigned classroom for some class meetings during the scheduled times as indicated in the syllabus, offset by meetings via an online conferencing platform during the scheduled times, or asynchronous online or independent work, and supplemented by out-of-class work. These are conventionally referred to as “blended” classes.

**F. Remote / Synchronous.** A distance course with all instruction conducted during scheduled class meeting times via an online conferencing platform, supplemented by out-of-class work. These are conventionally referred to as “remote” classes.

**G. Remote / Hybrid.** A distance course that meets regularly for half the time of a traditional course via an online conferencing platform, offset by asynchronous online or

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<sup>1</sup> Middle State Commission on Higher Education, “Credit Hour Policy: Effective August 23, 2012, Rev. October 30, 2012”, downloaded from [www.msche.org/documents/CreditHourPolicyRev112012.pdf](http://www.msche.org/documents/CreditHourPolicyRev112012.pdf), April 8, 2016.



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independent work, and supplemented by out-of-class work. These are conventionally referred to as “remote hybrid” classes.

**H. Remote / Blended.** A distance course that meets via an online conferencing platform for some class meetings during the time scheduled as indicated in the syllabus, offset by asynchronous online or independent work, and supplemented by out-of-class work. These are conventionally referred to as “remote blended” classes.

**I. Flex / Synchronous.** A distance course in which instruction is conducted in an assigned classroom during scheduled meeting times, but with live streaming audio and video that enables students to participate in these classes either by attending in person or via an online conferencing platform, and supplemented by out-of-class work. These are conventionally referred to as “flex” classes.

**J. Flex / Hybrid.** A distance course in which instruction is conducted in an assigned classroom for half the time of a traditional course, with live streaming audio and video that enables students to participate in these classes either by attending in person or via an online conferencing platform, offset by asynchronous online or independent work, and supplemented by out-of-class work. These are conventionally referred to as “hybrid flex” classes.

**K. Flex / Blended.** A distance course in which instruction is conducted in an assigned classroom for some class meetings during the time scheduled as indicated in the syllabus, with live streaming audio and video that enables students to participate in these classes either by attending in person or via an online conferencing platform, offset by asynchronous online or independent work, and supplemented by out-of-class work. These are conventionally referred to as “blended flex” classes.

**L. Online Program:** per New York State Education Department regulations, a course of study leading to a Degree or Certificate in which a student can earn 50% or more of the credits necessary through Online / Asynchronous or any Remote Courses.

### **III. Policies**

#### **A. Procedures Outline for Faculty Training and Qualifications**

**1) Distance Skill Sets:** *The 9 Distance modalities involve different combinations of 5 different Distance Skill Sets:*

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- a) Asynchronous technology: Knowing how to create and manage course elements in an LMS with which instruction is conducted asynchronously.
- b) Asynchronous online pedagogy: Knowing how to conduct a class through entirely asynchronous online instructional activities.
- c) Hybrid/Blended pedagogy: Knowing how to coordinate asynchronous, ~~and~~ synchronous online, and synchronous classroom instructional activities.
- d) Remote instruction: Knowing how to utilize online conferencing software to conduct synchronous instructional activities.
- e) Flex instruction: Knowing how to utilize flex classroom equipment to conduct synchronous instructional activities in the classroom with both classroom and online students simultaneously.

### **2) Proposals**

Faculty members must submit a proposal to the Director of Distance Learning by the time that their program submits its schedule for the term in which they desire to teach their first Distance class involving a new Distance Skill Set at Old Westbury.

*Note that this means a Faculty member must submit separate proposals for each of the following: their first Asynchronous Online course, their first course involving Hybrid/Blended instruction, their first course involving Remote instruction, and their first course involving Flex instruction.*

### **2) Training for Distance Courses**

- a) Before teaching their first course with a new Distance Skill Set faculty must complete the appropriate training offered by the Distance Learning Program.
- b) The training will include instruction in appropriate aspects of the modified Design and Accessibility OSCQR quality rubrics employed at SUNY Old Westbury (attached below).

### **3) Preparation for Initial Offerings**

- a) Before conducting their first Distance course involving each new Distance Skill Set, a Faculty member must work with an Instructional Designer or Mentor to develop the course.

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b) This development process will begin during the semester prior to the one in which the course will be offered, and will conclude during the January intersession (for Spring offerings) or the Summer (for Fall offerings). Training for initial Distance courses that will be offered in the Summer or Winter terms will be concluded before the beginning of those terms.

*Note that Faculty members must work with an Instructional Designer or Mentor before each of the following: their first Asynchronous Online course, their first course involving Hybrid/ Blended instruction, their first course involving Remote instruction, and their first course involving Flex instruction.*

### **4) Exemption from Training**

Faculty members who demonstrate prior training or experience equivalent to items 2 and 3 above in their proposal can be exempted by the Director of Distance Learning from the requirements, or their training and supervision can be reduced.

### **5) Approval**

a) At least one week prior to the beginning of the semester in which a faculty member's first Distance course involving a Distance Skill Set will be taught, the Instructional Designer or Mentor with whom he or she worked must certify to the Director of Distance Learning that the course has been designed satisfactorily in terms of online structures and interaction (not content).

*Note that each of a Faculty member's following courses must be certified as satisfactory by the Instructional Designer or Mentor: their first Asynchronous Online course, their first course involving Hybrid/ Blended instruction, their first course involving Remote instruction, and their first course involving Flex instruction.*

b) This certification will be based on appropriate aspects of the rubrics used in the training mentioned in III. A. 2. b. above.

i) All items in the Accessibility Rubric must be included satisfactorily.

c) In cases of disagreement, the Director of Distance Learning will examine the course and discuss it with both the instructor and the ID/mentor and decide if it is satisfactory. If the course design is deemed unsatisfactory, the faculty member must correct it before the beginning of the semester.

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d) If a Faculty member is exempted from items 2 or 3 above, the Director of Distance Learning or an Instructional Designer serving as his or her designee must certify that the course has been designed satisfactorily as per item 5. In the event of a disagreement, the Instructional Designer or Director of Distance Learning, whichever did not do the initial review, will examine the course and discuss it with both the instructor and the initial reviewer. If the second reviewer also deems the course design unsatisfactory, the faculty member must correct it before the beginning of the semester.

### **6) *Initial Observation***

a) Approximately one month after the beginning of the semester in which an instructor offers their first course in a new modality (or its equivalent in Summer and Winter terms), the Instructional Designer or Mentor with whom they worked will conduct an observation by accessing the course shell.

b) The instructor will be given at least 3 days notice before the course shell is accessed.

c) The Instructional Designer or Mentor will provide the instructor written feedback based on the observation and appropriate aspects of the rubric used in the training mentioned in III.A.2.B. above.

d) If in the Instructional Designer's judgment the observation reveals severe problems requiring immediate and substantial remediation, the Instructional Designer will inform the Director of Distance Learning, who will then conduct an observation and, if he or she concurs with the Instructional Designer, will then inform the appropriate Chair or Dean.

e) If the instructor has been granted an exemption per item 4 above, the observation will be conducted as per item 5) d) above.

### **7) *Other Restrictions on Initial Offerings***

a) Faculty can only teach one Distance course involving a new Skill Set in a semester.

b) If a Faculty member fails to follow the policies above in this section III. A., the scheduled course may be reassigned or canceled.

### **9) *Subsequent Offerings***

Once a Faculty member has completed training for and taught their first Distance course involving a Distance Skill Set, they may offer it courses involving that Skill Set in future semesters, and may develop and offer additional courses involving that Skill Set, without submitting a proposal or undergoing further training, in accordance with the

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policies and practices of their Department or School, subject to the College policies set forth below in this document, sections B through G.

### **B. Distance Course Load and Enrollment Limits**

#### ***1) Faculty Course Loads***

In order to help sustain the vibrancy of campus life, full-time faculty should be scheduled with at least one class meeting on campus on at least two different days during the week. In practice, this generally means that a full-time faculty member may offer at most one Online or Remote and two Campus Hybrid/Blended courses *or* Two Online or Remote and one Traditional course per semester. Note that in the case of Campus Blended classes, synchronous meetings must be scheduled on-campus to meet this requirement.

#### ***2) Enrollment Limits***

- a) The default enrollment cap in Online classes is 25 students.
- b) The default enrollment cap in Hybrid/Blended and Flex classes is 35 students.
- c) The default enrollment cap in Online, Hybrid/Blended, and Flex classes is 5 less than in a) and b) above in the Winter and Summer three week mini-sessions.
- d) The default enrollment cap in Remote classes is the same as in Traditional classes.
- e) Lower or higher enrollment limits can be set by Departments or Schools based on program or course-specific considerations.

### **C. Scheduling Restrictions and Guidelines**

- 1) If a full-time instructor offers two Campus Hybrid courses during a term, they must be offered on different days, and if possible scheduled into the same room and time period on “alternate” days (for example, if one is on Monday 9:40 –11:10, the other will be on Wednesday 9:40 –11:10 in the same room).
- 2) If a full-time instructor offers both a Hybrid and a Blended course, the majority of the Blended’s class sessions must be scheduled on a day other than the day the Hybrid meets, and must involve an on-campus session.

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- 3) The same principle applies in the case of two Blended courses: they must be scheduled so that the faculty member is on-campus at least two times a week (taking into consideration the faculty's third course as appropriate).
- 4) Adjunct faculty teaching two Campus Hybrid classes may schedule both to meet on the same day, and may schedule the majority of classes in Campus Blended course to meet on the same day as a Campus Hybrid or the majority of classes in another Campus Blended course, and Blended sessions can be scheduled to be held remotely without regard to the effect on the number of days per week the adjunct will be on campus.
- 5) Whenever possible, Campus Hybrid courses offered by Faculty teaching just one such course will be "paired" for scheduling purposes with a Hybrid course offered by another Faculty member to optimize classroom usage (for example, if one Faculty member is scheduled to use a room on Mondays at 11:20; another will be scheduled to use the room at the same time on Wednesdays if possible).
- 6) In cases in which a Campus Blended course will involve only a few weeks in which there will be two classroom meetings, a classroom may be scheduled only once a week, and alternative arrangements for the "extra" sessions will be made (for example, scheduling them to be held in a computer lab).
- 7) In cases in which a Blended course will only meet on campus a few times in the semester, no classroom should be scheduled, and arrangements for one-off room usage should be made.
- 8) If courses are scheduled in violation of the policies set up in this document, they may be changed or canceled by the Provost.

### **D. Quality Assurance**

#### ***1) Faculty***

Faculty should include features outlined in the campus version of the OSCQR rubric employed in the training and instructional design or mentorship support outlined in section III.A, above, as appropriate for their specific course. This includes faculty exempted from training at Old Westbury due to prior training or experience per item III.A.4.

#### ***2) Departments and Schools***

## **SUNY Old Westbury - Distance Learning Policies**

- a) Departments and/or Schools are responsible for monitoring the quality of their Distance courses, just as they are for their Traditional course offerings. The quality of a course is understood to include appropriate amounts of work for the credits awarded as well as the effectiveness of the pedagogy and accuracy and appropriateness of the content.
- b) The Director of Distance Learning will work with Chairs and/or Deans of Departments and Schools with Distance courses to ensure that they and their faculty are prepared to monitor the quality of their Distance courses.
- c) Department Chairs will have the right to access Distance course shells, just as they have the right to observe Traditional classroom activity.
- i) Observation of a faculty member's first course in a modality should be done once the Instructional Designer has conducted the Initial Observation, per III. A. 6. above, and the faculty member has had reasonable time to make adjustments in response to that.
- ii) Chairs can gain access to the Distance courses in the campus LMS of full-time faculty by contacting the Director of Distance Learning.
- iii) Faculty using other online instructional spaces (like Pearson My-Labs) must be prepared to provide Chairs access to these as well.
- iv) The terms of this access will be based on the policies that govern their supervision of traditional classes.
- v) Chairs will be automatically enrolled in the Learning Management System course shells of Online courses taught by adjuncts. Their use of this access should be based on the policies that govern their supervision of traditional classes.

### **3) *Student Evaluations***

The College student evaluation process will be used for Distance as well as Traditional courses so far as practical.

### **4) *Assessment***

- a) Distance courses taught in a modality should be included in periodic assessments of Majors and General Education domains that include courses taught that modality.

## **SUNY Old Westbury - Distance Learning Policies**

b) Distance courses as a category will be assessed once every five years.

### **E. Copyrights and Ownership**

1) Faculty are responsible to secure permission for any copyrighted material incorporated into their course.

2) Faculty who develop a Distance course maintain ownership of their intellectual property incorporated into the course.

### **F. Accessibility**

1) Faculty are responsible for implementing standard accessibility features as outlined in the Open SUNY OSCQR Accessibility rubric in all courses, existing classes as they are used as well as newly developed ones.

2) The College is responsible to disseminate the OSCQR rubric to faculty and incorporate it into training of faculty preparing to offer their first course in a new Distance modality. It will also offer workshops on accessibility to faculty, including training in implementing the OSCQR rubric, and reasonable one-on-one support with making courses accessible.

3) When items 1 and 2 here do not meet the specific needs of a student with disabilities, the College will be responsible for acting in a timely manner to make instructional materials and/or other resources used in a Distance course available to the student.

a) An exception to this is when doing so would significantly alter the nature of the instructional activity.

### **G. Student Preparation**

1) The College will provide students with orientation materials for the instructional activities offered by its standard Learning Management System.

2) Faculty will be responsible to provide sufficient training in any other online instructional resources they employ.



# Appendix A

## Distance Course Development Proposal General Template

### I. Type of Course:

☐ Asynchronous Online   ☐ Remote   ☐ Flex

☐ Hybrid/Blended (may be checked alone or in conjunction with Remote or Flex)

### II. Academic Year Course to be First Offered: AY 202 – 202

☐ Fall   ☐ Winter   ☐ Spring   ☐ Summer

### III. Instructor Information

Name and Rank:

Teaching Experience Overall and at Old Westbury:

Experience with online, remote, hybrid/blended, and/or flex courses:

Experience with online supplements in classroom courses:

Other relevant information (inc. if you're a department Chair or adjunct):

### IV. Class information

Department:

Course ID:

Course Name:

Approved by Department/School? (yes, no, or in process):

Special constituencies (ie, First Year linked, Honors, etc.):

**V. Class Schedule** (Hybrid or Blended only; Hybrid = 1 day/week; if Blended, describe planned meeting pattern):

**VI. Equivalence** (How do you envision distance elements will be used to deliver an educational experience equivalent to or better than traditional classroom format?)

# Appendix B

## OSCQR Rubric

Details about and an interactive version of the SUNY Online OSCQR (Open SUNY Course Quality Review) Rubric used in training and as a guide to best practices at Old Westbury can be accessed at the [SUNY Online OSCQR website](#).

# Appendix C

## Modality Definitions and Banner Codes

| WHEN                                                                   | WHERE                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                        | Campus                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Remote                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Flex                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Online                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Fully Synchronous (as scheduled)                                       | <b>Campus / Traditional</b><br>Section: 001<br>Instructional Method: "Traditional"<br>Time: "Days Times"<br>Location: "Face-to-Face"<br>Comment: "A course with all instruction in the classroom during scheduled class meeting times, supplemented by traditional homework."                                                                                                                                                                                      | <b>Remote / Traditional</b><br>Section: 002<br>Instructional Method: "Traditional"<br>Time: "Days Times"<br>Location: "Remote"<br>Comment: "A distance course with all instruction contact during scheduled class meeting times via an online conferencing platform, supplemented by traditional homework."                                                                                | <b>Campus and/or Remote / Traditional</b><br>Section: 003<br>Instructional Method: "Flex"<br>Time: "Days Times"<br>Location: "Remote & C/F Face-to-Face"<br>Comment: "A course that allows students to attend class meetings either on-campus or via an online conferencing platform at the time scheduled, and supplemented by traditional homework."                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Half Synchronous (as scheduled)                                        | <b>Campus / Hybrid</b><br>Section: 004<br>Instructional Method: "Hybrid/Blended"<br>Time: "Days Times"<br>Location: "Face-to-Face"<br>Comment: "A distance course that meets regularly for half the time of a traditional course in the assigned classroom as scheduled, offset by asynchronous online or independent work, and supplemented by traditional homework."                                                                                             | <b>Remote / Hybrid</b><br>Section: 005<br>Instructional Method: "Hybrid/Blended"<br>Time: "Days Times"<br>Location: "Remote"<br>Comment: "A distance course that meets regularly for half the time of a traditional course via an online conferencing platform, offset by asynchronous online or independent work, and supplemented by traditional homework."                              | <b>Campus and/or Remote / Hybrid</b><br>Section: 006<br>Instructional Method: "Flex"<br>Time: "Days Times"<br>Location: "Remote & C/F Face-to-Face"<br>Comment: "A course that meets regularly for half the time of a traditional course that students can attend either on-campus or via an online conferencing platform at the time scheduled, offset by asynchronous online or independent work, and supplemented by traditional homework." |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Some Synchronous (as scheduled, with further instructions in syllabus) | <b>Campus / Blended</b><br>Section: 007<br>Instructional Method: "Hybrid/Blended"<br>Time: "Days Times"<br>Location: "Face-to-Face"<br>Comment: "A distance course that meets in the assigned classroom for some class meetings during the scheduled times, as indicated in the syllabus, offset by meeting via an online conferencing platform during the scheduled times, or asynchronous online or independent work, and supplemented by traditional homework." | <b>Remote / Blended</b><br>Section: 008<br>Instructional Method: "Hybrid/Blended"<br>Time: "Days Times"<br>Location: "Remote"<br>Comment: "A distance course that meets via an online conferencing platform for some class meetings during the time scheduled, as indicated in the syllabus, offset by asynchronous online or independent work, and supplemented by traditional homework." | <b>Campus and/or Remote / Blended</b><br>Section: 009<br>Instructional Method: "Flex"<br>Time: "Days Times"<br>Location: "Remote & C/F Face-to-Face"<br>Comment: "A course that allows students to attend some class meetings either on-campus or via an online conferencing platform at the time scheduled, as indicated in the syllabus, offset by asynchronous online or independent work, and supplemented by traditional homework."       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Asynchronous (not scheduled)                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <b>Online / Asynchronous</b><br>Section: 010<br>Instructional Method: "Online"<br>Time: TBA<br>Location: Online<br>Comment: "A distance course with online asynchronous instruction, where students access content, complete assignments, and meet deadlines with no scheduled meeting times." |

**Preferred Banner Code**

**Accepted for OSCQR Online**

**Online**

rev 01/23/21