

# **WALKER COLLEGE OF BUSINESS**

## **Standards for Online Courses**

**Recommended for adoption by the Online Course Task Force April 26, 2011**

**Approved by Executive Committee October 6, 2011**

The purpose of this document is to establish standards for all WCOB online courses, including those taught to main campus students and those taught to off-campus students through the Office of Extension and Distance Education. For purposes of this document, “online courses” are considered to be those in which at least 80% of the content is delivered online.

Any decision to move a course from primarily face-to-face instruction to online delivery should further the Walker College of Business mission to “offer high quality educational experiences” enabled by “our focus on instructional excellence,” while not detracting from our value of “cultivat(ing) meaningful student-faculty relationships so that each can learn, grow, and be fulfilled in their work.”

Keeping the Walker College of Business mission and values in mind, the two primary reasons for putting a course online are: 1) to improve the course’s educational effectiveness and 2) to enhance course access to provide more students with a high-quality educational experience.

### **I. Guidelines for Online Course Development**

#### **A. Process for Courses Outside the 100% Online Distance Education**

##### **BSBA**

- Typically, a faculty member petitions his/her department chair for a course to be developed for online delivery.
- The Chair, in collaboration with the Associate Dean, evaluates the appropriateness for online delivery. Courses will be considered “appropriate” if they further the WCOB mission by either (1) improving the course’s educational effectiveness, and/or (2) enhancing course access to provide more students with high-quality educational experiences.
- If approved, the faculty member develops the course in AsULearn for online delivery and submits it to the Department Chair and the Online Task Force for an evaluation of the course design.
- The Online Task Force must review and approve the course design within one semester of the offering of the course. Ideally, the approval would occur prior to delivery, but in some cases a one semester trial period may be deemed acceptable by the Chair in collaboration with the Associate Dean.
- Follow up peer reviews are to be conducted in accordance with ASU policy.

- Approval for online delivery in one semester does not guarantee approval for online delivery in subsequent semesters. Scheduling needs and delivery methods are determined by Chairs in consultation with the Associate Dean on a semester-by-semester basis.

## **B. Process for Courses to Be Delivered in the 100% Online Distance Education BSBA**

- Follow the contractual agreement with ASU. LTS certifies the course for delivery.
- Follow up peer reviews are to be conducted in accordance with ASU policy.

## **C. Course Appropriateness**

As stated above, the Department Chair, in collaboration with the Associate Dean, will evaluate the appropriateness of a course for online delivery.

The two primary reasons for putting a course online are to enhance course access and to improve the educational effectiveness. These reasons provide a way to determine which courses are the best candidates for online delivery:

1. Improve the educational effectiveness of existing programs
  - a. Course objectives require skilled use of software packages
  - b. Course ratings and feedback indicate student demand for taking a particular course online
2. Extend access to degree programs or courses
  - a. Face-to-face courses are full and classroom space is not available; use as overload to ensure students stay on track to graduate on time.
  - b. Students are off-campus for the summer but still need access to courses to ensure students stay on track to graduate on time.
  - c. Provide access to off-campus students for in-demand ASU online degree programs
  - d. Increase diversity of the student body in line with ASU goals (e.g., more international students)
  - e. Provide access to courses for degree completion for former on-campus students

## **C. Content Review**

As stated above, the Department Chair and the Online Task Force will evaluate the design of the course. Factors evaluated will include:

1. Course Design and Organization

- Instructions introduce the student to the purpose of the course and explain all of the components and requirements.
  - Prerequisite knowledge, minimum preparation, and minimum technical skills are clearly stated.
  - Etiquette expectations for online discussions, email, and other forms of communication are clearly stated.
  - The course is well organized, functional, easy to navigate, and uses a variety of media resources.
  - Clear standards are set for instructor responsiveness and availability (turn-around time for email, grade posting, etc.).
2. Instructional Design and Delivery
- The course offers multiple activities to foster interaction and communication among students and between the students and instructor.
  - Learning objectives and instructions to students on how to meet the learning objectives are clearly stated.
  - Requirements for student interaction are clearly stated.
3. Assessment and Evaluation
- The types of assessments selected measure the stated learning objectives and are consistent with course activities and resources.
  - Methods to minimize cheating are employed (proctored exams, multiple quiz versions, use of secured technology, etc.).
  - The grading policy is clearly stated.
  - Criteria for evaluation of student work and participation are clearly stated.
4. Resources and Materials
- The instructional materials have sufficient breadth, depth, and rigor for the student to learn the subject.
  - All resources and materials used in the course are appropriately cited.
5. Course Technology
- The tools and media are appropriate to deliver the content of the course.
  - Instructions on how to access resources at a distance are sufficient and easy to understand.
  - The course uses a variety of available tools and media to optimize student learning.
  - Course instructions articulate or link to a description of the technical support offered.
6. Accessibility
- The course incorporates ADA standards and reflect conformance with institutional policy regarding accessibility in online courses.
  - Course instructions articulate or link to a description of support offered to students with disabilities.

## **D. Peer Review**

As stated above, once a course has been approved to be developed for online deliver and the content has been fully developed and approved for delivery, the course will be subject to a peer review in accordance with ASU policy.

## **II. Related Matters**

### **A. Online Course Student Evaluation**

Student evaluations will be administered for online courses in accordance with current ASU guidelines. Students will anonymously evaluate online instructors using a college of business survey instrument in AsULearn. The Dean's designee will download and process evaluation information in accordance with University guidelines.

### **B. Student Authentication**

In compliance with the Higher Education Opportunity Act, ASU must “demonstrate that the student who registers in a distance or correspondence education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the credit by verifying the identity of a student who participates in class or coursework.” This verification is accomplished by requiring the ASU student 1) to use a secure login and pass code into the ASU Learning Management System, currently AsULearn, and/or (2) to sit for proctored examinations. All online courses are housed within the AsULearn system and require either the use of AsULearn for submission of graded assignments and/or the use of proctored mid-term/final exams.