Procedure 3.2523

Distance Education Procedure

Table of Contents

Introduction

This information constitutes a working document which serves as a resource for distance learning at Beaufort County Community College. It is presented as a dynamic document, which is evaluated and reviewed periodically for necessary revisions.

Because of the large geographic area served by Beaufort County Community College and the transportation barriers caused by distance and waterways, distance learning is the only practical delivery format to serve many students in our service area. Videoconferencing and asynchronous delivery are educational options that meet the needs of many working students who are unable to attend regularly scheduled courses. Therefore, it is incumbent on Beaufort County Community College to offer a comprehensive program of distance learning courses with the goal of providing certificate, diploma and degree options in targeted curricula.

Distance Learning is coordinated by the Blackboard Administrator, Network Administrator, Director of Library, and the Distance Education Quality Improvement Committee under the supervision of the VP of Academics. Support for distance learning instructors and students is provided by the Blackboard Administrator, Library staff, IT staff, and through the regular administrative chain of Lead Instructors, Deans, and VP of Academics.

Mission

Beaufort County Community College (BCCC) is a public comprehensive community college committed to providing accessible and affordable quality education, effective

teaching, relevant training, and lifelong learning opportunities for the people served by the College.

In support of this mission, BCCC is committed to provide students with a competitive distance education program that demonstrates the same rigor and quality of instruction as the traditional learning experience. BCCC strives to provide a comprehensive array of quality, affordable, and accessible courses delivered synchronously and asynchronously by qualified faculty.

Policy Statements

Authentication 4.8.1

Beaufort County Community College's (BCCC) distance learning program is provided through online instructional format and videoconferencing. The College uses North Carolina Research Education Network (NCREN) as provided by MCNC, a secure communications network, to broadcast videoconferencing courses. Online, hybrid, and web enhanced courses are delivered through the college's learning management system (LMS), Blackboard. The College requires students to log into the LMS using secure username/password credentials to verify each student's identity. Once verified, the LMS associates this identity with all online coursework completed throughout the login session. Students are only permitted to access content within courses in which they are enrolled.

The LMS communicates securely with the College's network directory to authenticate username/password credentials via the industry standard secure lightweight directory access protocol (LDAPS). The College's industry standard Microsoft Active Directory network directory is directly and securely populated with username/password information from the student information system embedded within the College's enterprise resource planning platform, Colleague.

Each student is provided a unique username/password credential to view course content, submit assignments and tests, communicate with the instructor, participate in online discussions, and complete other course requirements. This username/password credential is also used to provide access to student e-mail and other online services provided by the College. Each student receives an acceptance letter that includes their student identification number and a link to directions for logging in, as detailed in the Acceptance Letter Procedure (3.2504).

In addition to the required use of the secure login/password method, instructors of some distance learning courses also require students to take proctored tests and examinations (example). Instructors can arrange for students to take proctored examinations in the library. Students taking proctored tests are required to complete a Proctored Test Agreement form and present a photo ID for verification of identity before taking the examination. In order to ensure appropriate measures are used to verify student identity, faculty complete a Proctor Request Form. Instructors can arrange for students to take proctored examinations in the library. Students taking proctored tests are required to complete a form and present a photo ID for verification of identity before taking the examination.

If a BCCC distance learning student needs to take a proctored test at another site, testing arrangements may be made by the BCCC library staff. Distance learning students from

colleges outside of North Carolina are responsible for arranging their proctored tests. The Library Director will provide assistance if needed.

BCCC instructors and North Carolina Information Highway (NCIH) facilitators at broadcast sites verify the student identity for those who participate in the class.

BCCC does not offer correspondence courses.

Privacy 4.8.2
Beaufort County Community College (BCCC) has procedures in place to protect the privacy of all students and their education records. BCCC follows the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (PL 93-380) (FERPA) which sets forth requirements governing the protection of student privacy. All students, including distance education students are notified of their rights under FERPA through a FERPA notice emailed to students annually each fall semester and have continual access to BCCC's Student Records and Privacy Rights Policy and Procedure through the College's website.

Faculty and staff attend mandatory FERPA Training each year provided by the Vice President of Student Services. Faculty and staff also agree to a statement regarding the confidentiality of student records each time they access the College's student information system, Colleague, which is the College's electronic means of accessing student records.

Student Charges 4.8.3
The college does not charge additional fees for verification of student identity per policy of the BCCC Board of Trustees. Students in online courses are charged the same tuition and fees as students in seated courses.

Enrollment
The College uses standardized reporting for monitoring headcount enrollment each semester. Aggregate student headcount is calculated based on all students enrolled during a given term regardless of the mode of instruction the students received.

Curriculum and Instruction
Overview
Distance learning at BCCC includes video conferencing and web-based courses (online, hybrid, and web-enhanced) for both curriculum and continuing education programs. The admissions requirements, placement scores, methods of evaluations, and other conditions of eligibility are consistent with the state requirements for curriculum courses. These courses are delivered via appropriate technology to maximize accessibility. Descriptions of distance learning methods at BCCC include:

Online Courses. College credit or continuing education course where 100% of the instruction is delivered through the Internet.

Hybrid College. credit or continuing education course where the primary delivery is on-line with a requirement that students also meet in traditional face-to-face sessions as determined appropriate by the college.

Web-enhanced. College credit or continuing education course where the primary delivery is via traditional face-to-face method with a requirement that students have Internet access as a supplemental part of the course.

Video-Conferencing. (North Carolina Information Highway) College credit or continuing education course where 100% of the instruction is delivered by two or more way video).

Course Development and Review
BCCC online course and program development is a collaborative effort between faculty and lead instructors with input from the division dean and advisory committees. Online course offerings are determined by the adaptability of the coursework to an online environment and student need. Faculty developing courses for online delivery adhere to copyright and ADA regulations as well as the College's intellectual property guidelines.

Beginning Fall 2018, the College will implement new course review process guidelines. The purpose of the course review process is to ensure quality instruction and student learning. Faculty will assume primary responsibility for and exercise oversight of the course review process. The *Blackboard Exemplary Course Rubric* will be used in all reviews to promote systematic course development and design and to provide documentation to use for course improvement and teaching effectiveness.

BCCC will use a continuous improvement model as the basis for online course review that includes the following:

BCCC Course Prep Checklist
Faculty will complete the BCCC Course Prep Checklist each semester, prior to first day of class, to ensure accuracy of course menu and syllabus, ease of navigation, and logical progression of content for each upcoming Blackboard course. Instructors will sign the checklist as acknowledgment of course review and submit to their Lead or Dean. Leads or Deans will forward these to the Blackboard Administrator to use for professional development planning.

Option A: BCCC Formal Course Review
The BCCC Course Review Team (CRT) will consist of faculty who have completed the Blackboard Exemplary Course Program. Each semester, the CRT will review a representative sample of online courses using the Blackboard Exemplary Course Rubric (ECR). The CRT will provide instructors detailed feedback on their course, including best practices and areas for improvement. It will be the expectation that instructors will make necessary improvements, if needed, to move toward exemplary course standards. Prior to the formal review, instructors will complete the following:

- **Self-Review**
  Self-review is the starting point for any course review process. The purpose is to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the course using the criteria in the *Exemplary Course Program Rubric*. Instructors will provide a number score for each standard to the Peer Reviewer.
- **Peer-Review**
  After completing the Self-Review, instructors will submit their course for Peer-Review. The peer will evaluate the course based on the criteria in the ECR and provide

feedback and recommendations. The Peer Reviewer will provide a number score for each standard to the CRT.

Option B: Blackboard Exemplary Course Program

Each semester faculty will have the option to work in conjunction with Blackboard, Inc. and BCCC support staff to *complete the Blackboard Exemplary Course Program (ECP).* This program consists of five free webinars conducted by Blackboard, Inc. Webinars are provided once per week as follows:

Week 1: Course Design

Week 2: Interaction and Collaboration

Week 3: Assessment

Week 4: Learner Support

Week 5: Course Reviewer Training

Instructors choosing this option will attend each webinar, participate in virtual and/or campus-based support sessions facilitated by the Blackboard Administrator, and submit at least one course for review by the Blackboard ECP staff. If exemplary or accomplished status is not achieved, it will be the expectation that instructors will make necessary improvements and resubmit to the Blackboard ECP for review.

Technology

BCCC Distance Learning encourages the use of technology to deliver our course offerings. Technology refers to, but is not limited to, hardware devices, software titles, software, subscriptions to Web based delivery methods, and network connectivity requirements.

- The BCCC Learning Management System must be able to offer the delivery method chosen by the instructor.
- Syllabi on the LMS should inform the student of what technologies will be used in the course and how the student will use them.
- Instructors should be encouraged to utilize technology that is affordable and easily obtained by the students.
- Instructors should not use a technology that does not inherently apply to the nature or objectives of the program or courses that are being delivered.
- Instructors will inform students if training on a particular technology will be part of the course offering or is expected to be accomplished by the student prior to or during the course delivery.
- Instructors will inform the students how results using the technology are to be submitted.
- Instructors will inform students if they will or will not accept submitted results that are not created by nor transmitted by the technology.
- Students will be advised of the technical resources required for a particular course or program prior to enrolling in that course or program.

Intellectual Property

Intellectual property may be defined as any intellectual or creative works that can be copyrighted or patented. The college supports the development, production, and dissemination of intellectual property to enhance the teaching/learning environment. The College will develop and maintain procedures to define the rights and responsibilities of the College, all employees, and all students in regard to intellectual property (Policy 6.12)

The ownership of intellectual property will be determined according to the following conditions.

- The employee retains ownership if the following criteria are met:
- The work was created independently and as a result of the individual's own initiative, not requested by the college.
- The work is not a product of a specific contract or assignment made as a result of employment of the college.
- The work is not prepared within the scope of the employee's job duties.
- The work involves insignificant use of college facilities, time, and/or other resources.

The college retains ownership if the above criteria are not met and/or if the following criteria apply:

- The work is prepared within the scope of the employee's job duties.
- The work is prepared within the scope of class assignments.
- The work is the product of a specific contract or assignment made in the course of the employee's employment with the college.

The development of the work involved significant facilities, time, and/or other resources of the college including, but not limited to, released time, grant funds, college personnel, salary supplement, leave with pay, equipment, or other materials or financial assistance.

When it can be foreseen that commercially valuable property will be created, the college and the employee/student should negotiate an agreement for ownership and the sharing of benefits prior to the creation of the property. The College may grant an employee use of the intellectual work at another educational institution.

An ad hoc Intellectual Property Committee, appointed by the President and comprised of equal numbers of faculty and staff, will make recommendations to the President when exceptions and related issues arise (Procedure 6.1201).

All employees must abide by the College Copyright Policy (6.05).

Faculty
Online Faculty Qualification Requirements (Full-Time)
In order to preserve the existing standards of educational excellence guiding the pedagogical process at BCCC, curriculum faculty desiring to teach online should meet all qualifications set forth by the North Carolina Community College System and SACSCOC and complete the **BCCC Certified Online Instructor Program** within an established time-frame set forth by the College. Beginning Fall 2018, certification can be earned by completing one of the following options:

Option A – Blackboard Exemplary Course Program
Faculty choosing Option A will work in conjunction with Blackboard, Inc. and BCCC support staff to fulfill the following criteria:

- Complete the *Blackboard Exemplary Course Program.*
- Attend on-campus and/or virtual Peer Review sessions provided by the BCCC Blackboard Administrator.
- Submit at least one course for review by Blackboard ECP staff.
- **Provide documentation from Blackboard, Inc. of achieving at least "Accomplished" level.** ***(Exemplary, Accomplished, Promising, Incomplete, Not Evident)**

If required level is not achieved, participants will receive detailed feedback on their course, including best practices and areas for improvement, and can resubmit.

Option B – Blackboard Online Course
Faculty choosing Option B will work independently to complete the following criteria:

- Complete two Blackboard Online Training Courses within an established time-frame set forth by the College. Courses are free and available to all current faculty through Blackboard access.
- Choose from a variety of courses, based on experience level and needs. The Blackboard Administrator will assist with this process.
- Provide documentation of successful completion of course.

Online Faculty Qualification Requirements (New/Adjunct)
It will be the expectation that all online faculty complete the BCCC Certified Online Instructor Program within an established timeframe, regardless of employment status. Until certification is obtained, non-certified faculty will operate under the supervision of a BCCC Certified Online Instructor.

Online Faculty Evaluation
Curriculum instructor evaluations are conducted each Fall and Spring semester using technology managed and distributed by the Office of Research and Institutional Effectiveness (ORIE). Curriculum instructor evaluations are conducted during Summer semester on request from the division dean and/or vice president of academics.

The Personnel Evaluation Systems Committee is responsible for development, review, and update of the evaluation instrument used for curriculum instructor evaluations. ORIE reserves the right to create, edit and/or customize the evaluation instrument consistent with best practices and/or the needs of program areas.

The data collected during curriculum instructor evaluations will be prepared as individual reports for each instructor; results for all courses taught by the instructor will be aggregated together into one report.

Online Faculty Training
To ensure that online instruction remains relevant and substantive, high quality training for instructors is essential. The Blackboard Administrator and other support staff provide

ongoing support and training through a variety of delivery methods (virtual, on-site, small-group, one-on-one, etc.) to meet the varying needs of faculty.

The *Blackboard Faculty Support & Training* course is available to all faculty and provides a concise source for distance learning information. It covers a wide range of topics and serves as a quick reference for a myriad of questions.

The *Blackboard Training Course* is an online, self-paced course designed to be an interactive orientation to Blackboard. It helps instructors stay up-to-date with the latest functionalities of Blackboard in order to navigate courses and use its most current tools efficiently. All instructors have free access to this through the *Blackboard Faculty Support & Training Course*.

Institutional Effectiveness
Comparability
The College compares educational effectiveness of distance education programs to campus-based programs through a variety of means. Student satisfaction with educational programs are collected through course-instructor evaluations conducted each fall and spring semester and through graduating student surveys conducted during spring semester.

Student learning, retention and course completion rates are disaggregated by mode of instruction to ensure student achievement is comparable across traditional, hybrid, and distance education programs as documented on the College student achievement page.

Student learning outcomes are compared across traditional, hybrid, and distance education instructional methods in assessment reports that faculty complete each semester and document on the College content management system.

To adequately assess and make improvements to the Distance Education program, The Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness will routinely provide the Blackboard Administrator and Distance Education Quality Improvement Committee with pertinent reports. Reports will include data related to the following:

1. Student Learning Outcomes
2. Student Retention Rates
3. Student Satisfaction (including evaluation of instructor and course)

Resources and Services
The College regularly evaluates the effectiveness of its library/learning resources and student support services through an Evaluation of College Services survey conducted each spring semester for students and faculty. All students, to include distance education students, are included in the survey.

Library and Learning Resources
Beaufort County Community College Library has several research options available to distance learning students. In addition to traditional library services, several research and informational resources are available online. The following services are available to support distance learning at BCCC:

The Community College Libraries in North Carolina (CCLINC) is a consortium of community college libraries in North Carolina that has a shared catalog with more than a million learning resources, making this library cooperative third in size among the libraries of publicly funded institutions of higher education in North Carolina.

North Carolina Libraries in Virtual Education (NCLIVE) offers access to a diverse collection of electronic resources. NCLIVE is available free of charge to students and faculty. BCCC students have remote access to NCLIVE with a password.

Hoopla provides student access to online streaming resources including movies, audiobooks, podcasts, eBooks, and music.

The Learning Enhancement Center (LEC) offers live, online tutoring to students enrolled in any of BCCC's distance education course.

Additional information, resources, and tutorials are available to distance education students through the BCCC Library Webpage and are embedded in all BCCC Blackboard courses.

Student Services
Distance education students have the opportunity to partake of any and all student services that are available on campus, including regularly scheduled Blackboard Support Sessions. In addition, the following services are available online:

Student Blackboard Support Course
The *Student Blackboard Support Course* is an interactive, hands-on orientation to Blackboard designed to help students navigate courses and use available tools efficiently. All students have free access to this course through Blackboard.

New Student Online Orientation
Various campus-based orientation sessions are offered to all new students. For students who are unable to attend, an online version is available via the BCCC Website.

Library Services
The library provides a variety of services for students. Library staff ensure that students who are unable to come to campus have access to adequate learning resources and reasonable library services through the website and libguides, which consolidates resources, access, and instruction in one location. Student evaluations of the Library services indicated that 100% of students agree the library has "adequate technology to meet your information needs." In addition, a student evaluation of college services survey conducted in 2016 shows that students generally agree that "The library provides adequate services to distance education students."

The Access for Distance Learners page focuses on needs of any library user requiring remote access outside of the library's usual hours of operation. For both in-library and distance users, the BCCC Single Search page provides a succinct guide to searching the library's SIRSI Enterprise Discovery Service (Search the Catalog). The NC LIVE logo link incorporates all of the searchable NC LIVE aggregate resource databases with the substantial number of additional journal, e-book, and video streaming databases subscribed to by the Beaufort County Community College Library. Many other online

tutorials in PDF or video format created by library staff are provided on the Research, Databases/Resources and Subject/Course Guides page. Most research guides, such as the ones for nursing are created with Faculty request, consultation and evaluation.

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LEC Services

The LEC offers a weekly schedule of Professional, Faculty, and Peer Tutoring in a number of core disciplines: writing, mathematics, natural and social sciences, humanities, technology, and more. For those students who need to develop skills in any of these areas, the LEC provides, on a drop-in basis, a supportive atmosphere for one-on-one and group tutoring, building an ever-evolving community of learners and facilitators. Online Tutoring is also available, by appointment, for students enrolled in distance education courses.

BCCC Website

Distance education students have full access to a wide-range of services and information through the college website. Contact information for support personnel is available as well as video tutorials.

Facilities and Finances

Academics, with input from Information Technology, will decide which distance learning technologies are appropriate for achieving distance learning student goals and meeting instructional requirements.

Distance learning technologies should not present a barrier to enrollment to the distant learning student.

To the extent possible, distance learning students should utilize the same infrastructure technologies as campus seated students. Correspondence through email and participation in the Learning Management System should not differ between the campus seated student and the distance learning student.

The College will create employment positions, fund employment positions, and vet employees who are designated as administrators of the distance learning teaching technologies.

The College will vet any third party provider of distance learning teaching platforms by College employees who have expertise in the methods and technologies being used or developed for distance learning.

The College will commit to providing ongoing training for instructors, administrators and Information Technology resources who use and maintain the distance learning technologies.

References

Legal References: *Enter legal references here*

SACSCOC References: 2.10, 3.2.14, *4.8.1, 4.8.2, 4.8.3*

Cross References: **Academic Support Services Policy**

History

Senior Staff Review/Approval Dates: *8/10/15, 2/23/18*

Board of Trustees Review/Approval Dates: *Enter date(s) here*

Implementation Dates: *Enter date(s) here*