Online and Hybrid courses

REPORT FOR THE UNIVERSITY SENATE

University Senate Committee: Academic Policies

Brief History of Issue - why the issue is being considered:

With more online and hybrid courses being proposed by faculty, there is a need for uniformity in the definitions of these courses. First, students need clear information regarding the type of course they are registering for. Second, the type of course also has implications for classroom usage. Online courses occur entirely online, with no classroom assigned to them. Hybrid courses, on the other hand, require a classroom for part of the course. In web-enhanced courses all instruction occurs in a face-to-face environment.

The proposed policy also specifies that the same attendance policy and procedures that apply to on-campus courses also apply to online and hybrid courses.

Points Discussed by Committee:

The need for the definitions.
The reason for the “more than 25%” of the course being delivered online. This is included to permit for efficient usage of classroom space.

Pros of Recommendation:

Please see above.

Cons of Recommendation:

None

Technology/Human Resource Impact:

Addition of the policy and best practices/recommendations to FASH and the Provost’s web page.

Committee Recommendation:

That the proposed policy regarding online, hybrid, and Web-enhanced courses be approved.
Online and Hybrid courses

MOTION FOR THE UNIVERSITY SENATE

The University Senate Committee: Academic Policies Committee

by a vote of __9__ for to __0__ against on _April 12, 2011_ (Date)

Recommends that

The University Senate approve the policy regarding online, hybrid, and web-enhanced courses shown below:

{to be placed in the Faculty and Academic Staff Rules and Procedures; PART III: Bylaws of the University Faculty and the University Academic Staff; ARTICLE FIVE: Academic Polices}

Section D – Online and Hybrid Teaching and Learning

1. Definitions of an online, hybrid, and web enhanced course

   General
   Expectations for technology use should be clearly articulated in the course syllabus.

   Online Course
   Online courses are courses in which 100% of the instruction occurs in an online environment. Online assignments and activities occur synchronously, asynchronously, or both. No face-to-face meetings are required for the course. Instructor provides all materials, course activities, assignments, and discussions in an online environment. If a student orientation is needed for training with technology, this must occur in an online environment. Course materials should include links to training resources provided by the university or other sources.

   Hybrid Course
   Hybrid courses are courses in which more than 25% of the course is delivered online in lieu of on-campus meetings. Most materials, course activities, assignments, and discussions should be available in an online environment.

   Web-enhanced Courses
   Web-enhanced courses are courses in which all instruction occurs in a face-to-face environment. Technology is used to enhance the instruction rather than to reduce face-to-face meetings. Face-to-face classes meet as scheduled.

2. Attendance policies for online or blended courses

   Online course attendance policy:
   Students enrolled in online courses are subject to the same attendance policy and procedures as on-campus students. The specific course attendance policy must be posted in the online course.

   Hybrid course attendance policy:
   Students enrolled in hybrid courses are subject to the same attendance policy and procedures as on-campus students. Students are expected to attend class meetings as scheduled.
BEST PRACTICES/RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR ONLINE AND HYBRID TEACHING AND LEARNING

1. Appropriate enrollment for online or hybrid courses

**Recommendation:**
Optimal class size is a function of various factors including course design and desired outcomes. The authority to determine online course enrollment minima/maxima resides with the Dean of each college. The most important factors in setting enrollment ranges are:

1. Existing enrollment ranges for a single-section size of the same course when offered on campus.
2. Any special needs and requirements of the course delivered in an online format.
3. The recommendations from the professor teaching the course.
4. Whether or not the course is taught in a compressed schedule (e.g., summer sessions).

Courses requiring more student/instructor interaction and student-centered activities should be a candidate for a lower enrollment maximum. Ideally, all online courses will incorporate student-centered learning pedagogy.

2. Use of campus standards for the design and layout of online or hybrid courses

**Recommendation:**
To assist students in their learning, online/hybrid courses need a standard design and layout. Online and hybrid courses should be developed with input from appropriate campus units. The campus units will provide professional development resources for faculty and staff interested in developing online/hybrid instruction.

3. Maintaining the integrity of online or blended testing and other embedded assessments

**Recommendation:**
Both technology- and nontechology-based strategies should be employed to maintain academic integrity in an online/hybrid environment. Faculty should work with appropriate campus units to develop a long-term technology strategy for establishing a secure testing environment. Any recommended technology would need to be deployed and supported by Learning & Technology Services (LTS). Faculty are encouraged to provide within the course materials a link to the University of Wisconsin—Eau Claire.
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(UWEC) academic misconduct policy, well-defined standards for ethical integrity, and a strong sense of accountability and properly focused “community” attitudes. Faculty are encouraged to maintain currency in testing integrity by utilizing the educational guidelines and tip sheets for educators as developed by online program development partners such as Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL), the Educational Technology Office (ETO), or LTS.

4. Using emerging technologies in online or hybrid courses
Recommendation:
Online/hybrid educators should consult with appropriate campus units when exploring the use and support of sustainable, emerging technologies and the cost-benefit analysis related to their use.

Implementation Date: Upon approval

Signed: ___Barbara Lozar_______________
Chair of the Committee

Send to: University Senate Office