

## Notes on NEASC Standard 5.16 as it relates to Distance Learning

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*The institution endeavors to enhance the quality of teaching and learning wherever and however courses and programs are offered. It encourages experimentation with methods to improve instruction. The effectiveness of instruction is periodically and systematically assessed using adequate and reliable procedures; the results are used to improve instruction. Faculty collectively and individually endeavor to fulfill their responsibility to improve instructional effectiveness. Adequate support is provided to accomplish this task.*

*The institution endeavors to enhance the quality of teaching and learning wherever and however courses and programs are offered.*

Faculty are provided with the following Distance Learning (DL) resources to enhance the quality of distance teaching and learning:

- CCRI's Distance Learning Policy, which are the "policies and practices for developing, planning, evaluating and implementing distance /distributed offerings with a focus on quality and connection to the mission of the institution."  
<http://www.ccri.edu/distancefaculty/Distance%20Learning%20Policy%20with%20Addendum.pdf>
- Six copies of *Teaching Online: A Practical Guide*, by Susan Ko and Steve Rossen, available to be borrowed for two-week periods.
- All DL faculty are enrolled in the Blackboard Distance Pedagogy Forum, which includes distance pedagogy resources.
- All DL faculty receive several messages throughout the semester from the Distance Education Faculty Coordinator to keep courses on track and in compliance with the Distance Learning Policy, and to share distance pedagogy resources and training opportunities.
- Faculty are provided with Distance Learning training at regular intervals (e.g. Faculty Technology Day in August and Professional Development Day in March).

Students are provided with the following DL resources to enhance the quality of learning:

- The Distance Learning for Students website, which includes resources describing Distance Learning at CCRI, a list of current and past course offerings, technology and student readiness checklists, and other orientation materials and links to resources.  
<http://www.ccri.edu/distance/index.html>

*It encourages experimentation with methods to improve instruction.*

Faculty are offered training from Information Technology in technological tools suitable for distance learning (e.g. Blackboard, content sharing, and assessment tools) several times a year. They are also

encouraged to make individual appointments with the Center for Instructional Technology. The Distance Education Faculty Coordinator encourages faculty to attend presentations on best practices in distance course design and to read academic papers on DL topics.

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From Distance Learning Policy:

"Contractually, department chairs are responsible for monitoring the quality of any course regardless of delivery method. Online, anonymous post-course student evaluations **will** be administered to guide improvement of all distance courses."

The Distance Learning course evaluation form is available to all DL faculty in the DL Pedagogy course with instructions for administering the evaluation. The DL faculty are reminded each semester by the Distance Education Faculty Coordinator to administer the DL evaluation.

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The Distance Learning Advisory Committee regularly reviews Distance Learning Policy and creates resources for DL faculty with the goal of improving instructional effectiveness. Examples of these resources include DL syllabus template, DL course management checklist, and templates for communication with students.

Individual faculty have access to the Center for Instructional Technology, two faculty mentors, and the Distance Education Faculty Coordinator. They are encouraged to take advantage of these resources for technical and pedagogical support.