

Resources



Faculty have a number of resources for distance ed at Suffolk.

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2008-2009 Distance Education Committee

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Governance Representatives:

Ammerman - Senate

Beverly Broomell • Mathematics
Stephen O'Sullivan • Philosophy

Eastern - Congress

Mike Boecherer • English
Cynthia Eaton • English

Grant - Assembly

JoAnn Gushue • Business/Info Tech
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Campus Technology Deans:
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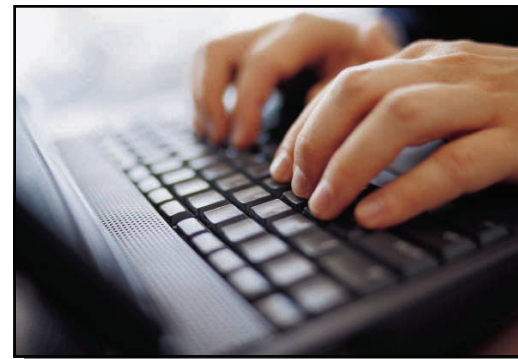
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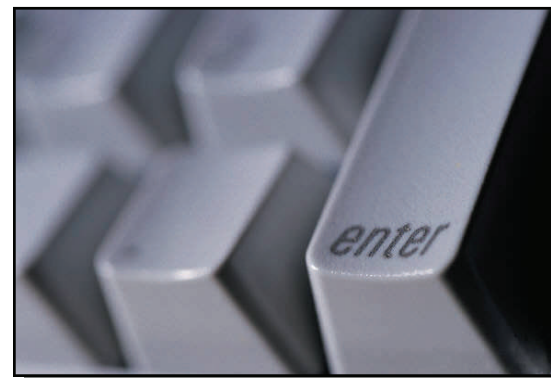


DE@SCCC

Quick Guide to Distance Education



at Suffolk County Community College



prepared for a February 6, 2009, Professional Development Series workshop
by Steven B. McIntosh (College Associate Dean of Instructional Technology)
and Cynthia Eaton (Distance Ed Committee Member and FA Officer)

DE Modalities



This document serves to introduce you to some basic policies and procedures on how to propose a distance education course at Suffolk, which can refer to any of four modalities.

- 1 **Online Courses** • Online courses, the most common of the four modalities, are fully online DE courses. They are also called asynchronous DE courses because they are not conducted in real time; that is, the faculty members and students are separated by time and distance. The course content, assignments, and all communications and interactions are conducted within Desire2Learn (D2L). Online courses are developed and taught by faculty who are accessible to their students on a weekly basis; however, neither the faculty member nor the students are required to be "present" in D2L at any specific date and time.
- 2 **Hybrid/Blended Courses** • Hybrid, or blended courses, are courses for which some portion of the coursework is completed online and some portion of the coursework is completed on campus. These are growing in popularity because our faculty enjoy working with students face-to-face as well as at a distance. Plus, meeting students in person and requiring on-campus exams give faculty a stronger sense that the students are doing their own work. For the online portions of the course, the coursework is conducted within D2L just like fully online classes. For the on-campus portions of the course, the faculty member must identify to students—in advance of registration—on which specific dates and times the students must attend the on-campus meetings. For example, in a science course, students might complete the lecture portion of the course online but meet on campus to complete the laboratory assignments.
- 3 **Distance Learning Classroom Courses** • Distance learning (DL) classroom courses are synchronous on-campus courses held in classrooms equipped for live interactive video transmissions between two or more of the SCCC campuses. In DL classroom courses, each location is staffed with an audio-visual PA for technical support at the beginning and the end of each transmission and for assistance during the transmission as well as staff assistance to distribute, collect, and fax materials at remote sites and to proctor tests/exams at the remote sites, as required by the instructor.
- 4 **Telecourses** • Telecourses are commercially prepared courses that SCCC has purchased and offers to enrolled students via video transmission. These courses require an on-campus component taught by an SCCC faculty member. Five campus meetings are required for each three credit hour telecourse; seven for a three credit hour course with a lab. As with hybrid courses, the specific dates and times of the on-campus meetings must be identified for students prior to registration.

Important DEC Policies



In the past, the college's Distance Education Committee (DEC) had developed a number of policies designed to help ensure high academic quality in DE courses at a time when distance education was still relatively new. Due to the maturation of our DE program and our increasing number of veteran DE faculty, DEC has revised several of these policies in the best interests of the college, faculty, and students.

- 1 **Timeline for Course Preparation** • In the past, all DE faculty were required to have their courses prepared three weeks before the start of the semester: new DE faculty had to have 100% of their course ready, and veteran DE faculty had to have 50% of their course ready. The new policy, however, states that while new DE faculty should still have 100% of their course ready three weeks in advance—so that OIT can review the course to check for broken links, etc.—veteran DE faculty are to have their course outline, basic course information, and weekly schedule of assignments prepared at least one week in advance of the semester in which it is to be offered.
- 2 **No Summer Assignment for New DE Faculty** • This policy has been revised to allow faculty to teach hybrid courses for the first time during the summer. Faculty who wish to teach an online course, however, are not allowed to teach for the first time during the summer because they have greater access to college resources during the spring and fall terms.
- 3 **Must Teach On Campus Before Online** • This policy required that faculty must have taught a course at least once in a traditional on-campus setting before they could offer it in a DE modality to better ensure faculty preparedness for and success in delivering that DE course. However, this policy was deemed by DEC to be no longer necessary or appropriate due to the maturation of our DE Program and has therefore been eliminated.
- 4 **Special Topics DE Courses** • In the past, all courses were required to be proposed a full year in advance of when they were to be offered. However, in recognition of the fact that Special Topics courses typically follow a "fast track" approval process to ensure that innovative courses are available to students in a timely fashion, proposals for Special Topics courses by veteran DE faculty (faculty who have taught in the modality at least once before) are exempt from this policy. New DE faculty have to adhere to the one-year timeline for their DE courses.
- 5 **Use of Other CMSs** • The FA contract allows for faculty to use other CMSs "for the purposes of pedagogical innovation." However, the college is only required to provide support for D2L and the faculty member choosing to use a different CMS is fully responsible for ensuring compliance with ADA regulations and with FERPA (e.g., password protecting the website) as well as to address student equipment and modality needs.

Course Assignment



To request assignment to a DE course that has already been taught in a specific DE modality, follow instructions on the Course Assignment Form. Here's an overview of the steps.

1. On the Course Assignment Form, faculty members should complete page 1 with their faculty info and the proposed course info. On page 3, in the Faculty Development section, if this is their first time developing a DE course, faculty should check off whether they prefer release time or compensation.
2. Faculty should attach a copy of their course outline course to the proposal.
3. Faculty should make a copy of pages 1 and 2 for their records, then send a copy of page 1 to OIT so they can keep track of all requests in the event paperwork is lost.
4. Next, faculty should submit their proposals to their department/area DE committee or—in the absence of a committee—to their chair or area supervisor for approval. If the committee or chair does not approve the assignment, they must provide a written rationale.
5. If the chair/committee does approve the assignment, the chair should forward the complete proposal to the campus technology administrator for a signature, who will then forward it to the campus dean.

Once the campus dean signs, he or she will forward the completed Course Assignment Form to the college Distance Education Committee (DEC), via OIT, for review.

6. DEC will take a formal vote on the Course Assignment proposal and make a record of the number of votes for, against, and abstaining.
7. If approved by DEC, faculty will be contacted by OIT for training, certification, and a assignment to a peer DE mentor (OIT will complete page 3 of the form).

Common Questions



If you are interested in teaching a DE course at Suffolk, you should become familiar with some of the basics outlined below.

Q What's the difference between the Course Proposal Form and Course Assignment Form?

A If you want to teach a course that has never been offered before in your chosen DE modality, use the Course Proposal Form (because you're the first to propose it for that specific modality). For example, if you wish to teach ESC102 as a hybrid, which has not yet been done at Suffolk, complete the Course Proposal Form.

If you want to teach a course that has been offered in your chosen DE modality, use the Course Assignment Form (because you're requesting to be assigned to a section of an existing course in that DE modality). For example, if you wish to teach ENG101 online, which has been done many times at Suffolk, complete the Course Assignment Form.

Q How do I get trained in Desire2Learn?

A Training is connected to a specific Course Proposal or Course Assignment Form because the first time faculty members teach a DE course (except telecourses), they receive compensation or release time. Once the course is approved by DEC, faculty are trained.

Q What are the deadlines for proposing a DE course?

A All Course Proposal Forms must be submitted to DEC one year in advance of the semester in which you hope to teach the course. The deadlines are on page 1 of the form. This is to ensure that you have sufficient time to be trained in your chosen DE modality and to develop a DE course that is of high academic quality. You should be working with your assigned DE peer mentor throughout the process.

For Course Assignment Forms, the deadlines depend on whether or not you've taught a DE course before. New DE faculty must follow the same deadlines as for the Course Proposal Forms. Veteran DE faculty (faculty who have taught a DE course at least once before) do not have to adhere to this one-year timeline; veteran DE faculty should submit their Course Assignment Forms early in the semester prior to the course offering.

Q I've heard DE courses are a lot of work. What are the class sizes for DE courses?

A Online courses are capped at 2/3 of the corresponding traditional on-campus sections, and hybrid courses are capped at 3/4.

Common Questions



Q How are DE courses assigned within a department or area if more than one person wants to teach the same course?

A DE courses are treated the same as special topics courses. This means that if more than one faculty member in a discipline requests to teach a course in a specific DE modality, the most senior faculty member making the request will be assigned the course for a period not to exceed two semesters. At the end of these two semesters, the next most senior faculty member making the request will be given the assignment. When all faculty members in a discipline have been given the opportunity to use a DE format, the future assignments for DE formats are based on seniority.

This assignment process applies the same to both full-time and adjunct faculty. The college makes no distinction between full-time and adjunct with respect to DE courses.

Q How many online classes can I teach in a semester?

A Faculty can teach up to 40% of their normal load—2 sections or no more than 8 credits—as online or hybrid (this does not apply to the other two modalities). There are no restrictions on overload or adjunct load other than the contractual maximum of eight contact hours.

Q What can be expected of observations/evaluations of online classes?

A Online observations and evaluations have been structured such that they follow—to the extent possible—the same policies and procedures used in traditional on-campus classroom observations and evaluations. Due to the difference in modalities, however, observations in online classes must be modified as appropriate.

This means that online observations are to be done with the full knowledge of the faculty member being observed and must be performed by a DE trained administrator with appropriate knowledge of the subject area and with the faculty member present.

Upon request, the administrator and peer observer will be provided with a 24-hour password for access to the course. The students in the online course being observed will be notified of both observers' email addresses with the option to share their experiences with the observers, and any information shared with the administrative observer must be shared with the peer observer, and vice versa.

Course Development



To propose a course that has never been offered before in a specific DE modality, complete the Course Development Form. Here's an overview of the steps:

1. On the Course Development Form, faculty members complete page 1 with their faculty info and the proposed course info. On page 2, they should write their rationale for offering this specific course in their chosen DE modality. On page 4, if this is their first time developing a DE course, faculty should check off whether they prefer release time or compensation.
2. Faculty should attach their course outline to the proposal, then make a copy of pages 1 and 2 for their records, and send a copy of page 1 to the Office of Instructional Technology (OIT) so they can keep track of all requests in the event paperwork is lost.
3. Faculty should notify their academic chair/area supervisor of their proposal. If their department or area has a DE committee, the proposal should go to this committee in keeping with the committee's timelines. The committee will vote on the proposal and record the results on page 3.

If their department or area does not have a DE committee, faculty should ask that their proposals are placed on a department meeting agenda and are distributed to all department members. At the meeting, the faculty member should be allowed to present their proposal, then the chair must ask for and record the results on page 3.

4. Once the course is approved by the entire department or by the department/area DE committee, the academic chair or area supervisor must sign the form, then notify the appropriate chairs/supervisors on other campuses. The chair must attach a copy of this notification to the proposal.
5. The chair should next submit the complete proposal to the campus technology administrator. After signing, the tech administrator should forward it to the campus dean who, after signing, will then forward the proposal to the college Distance Education Committee (DEC), via OIT, for review.
6. If approved by DEC, faculty will be contacted by OIT for training, certification, and assignment to a peer DE mentor (OIT will complete page 4 of the form).