Southern Union
State Community College
Faculty Handbook for
Online Education

Revised July 2021

Southern Union State Community College

Distance Education Instructor Policy and Procedures Manual

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Contents

Purpose of Distance Education

Southern Union State Community College's Distance Education program strives to serve the needs of students who work, have family responsibilities, or have other life challenges that limit their ability to attend classes on campus. The College will ensure that the distance education curriculum and instruction provided to students is of equitable quality to education and training provided through traditional classroom methods.

Accreditation Requirements

Southern Union's policies will ensure that all distance education courses comply with the definition and requirements of the principles of accreditation set by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

The College's policies will also ensure proper training and support for all engaging in distance education courses. All faculty engaged in online instruction will undergo online LMS certification by completing the Instructor Basics Course and Online Instruction Certification prior to Fall 2021. All full-time and adjunct faculty must be certified in the use of the LMS by Spring 2022. Full-time faculty must complete Quality Matters (QM) training before teaching distance education courses beginning Fall 2022, and adjunct faculty must complete QM training before Spring 2023.

Definitions of delivery methods

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) defines distance education as "a formal educational process in which the majority of the instruction (interaction between students and instructors and among students) in a course occurs when students and instructors are not in the same place. Instruction may be synchronous or asynchronous."

Southern Union State Community College uses the following definitions to refer specifically to different delivery modes of distance education courses. Throughout the handbook's remainder, the term Distance Education will encompass all modes of instruction listed below.

Hybrid/blended Course:
A hybrid course (also called a blended course) is a combination of an online and classroom-based course, with a majority of the course content being delivered electronically. Testing may be required on-campus or proctored remotely using a variety of digital means which may include a lockdown browser, use of monitoring with a webcam and microphone, and use of an online proctoring service for the final examination.

Online Course:
The entirety of the course content is delivered electronically through the college's learning management system (LMS). There are no required on-campus meetings. Tests are proctored remotely using a variety of digital means, which may include a lockdown browser, use of monitoring with a webcam and microphone, and use of an online proctoring service for the final examination.

Virtual Course:
Virtual courses are also delivered electronically through the college's learning management system. In addition, video conferencing software, such as Zoom, Canvas Conferences, or Google Meet, is used to allow students and instructors to hold class meetings virtually and in real-time (synchronously). Attendance at class meetings is not optional. Tests are proctored remotely using a variety of digital means which may include a lockdown browser, use of monitoring with a webcam and microphone, and use of an online proctoring service for the final examination.

Degrees and Certificates that are available 100% online

At Southern Union, one degree and one short certificate may be earned entirely through distance education. These are the Associate in Science Degree, a 60-64 credit hour associate degree consisting of general education core courses, and the General Education Short Certificate that requires a minimum of 28-29 credit hours of coursework. A curriculum outline for these options is available at www.suscc.edu under the Programs link or the links above.   Other degree and certificate options may be partially completed through distance education.

Enrollment Requirements

Enrollment requirements for distance education courses are the same as the requirements for traditional courses. In addition to meeting the prerequisite or corequisite requirements to enroll in the course, distance education students must also have ready access to a personal computer with reliable high-speed Internet service as well as a webcam and microphone for use during assignment completion and test proctoring.   The use of mobile devices to complete coursework is not recommended.

Additional Charges for Online Classes

The tuition rate for online classes is the same as for traditional classes however, online classes may include extra charges to be paid at the time of tuition payment. There are minimal charges included in the cost of all distance education classes to cover the cost of online live proctoring for the final examination. The amount of the charge is indicated on the course note in the dynamic class schedule. This charge will also be reflected on the student's statement/schedule at the time of registration.

Technology and Technical Skills

Learning Management System (Canvas)

The College provides a platform for distance and traditional courses through the learning management system (LMS), Canvas, an open-source software package. The Canvas LMS, along with fully developed Canvas courses and courses under construction, are stored on a fully hosted server and managed by Instructure. Instructure permanently stores course content along with student data each semester, so instructors should not remove or delete information from the LMS should there be a student complaint or appeal after course completion.

Although Canvas is the primary platform for distance education delivery at the College, some courses may additionally utilize publisher-provided course management systems such as CourseCompass, the My Lab series, and Evolve. Use of such platforms must be approved on a case-by-case basis by the Department Chair or Program Director. Support for publisher content **i**s not the responsibility of the Distance Education office or Canvas support. **Instructors who choose to use publisher content must provide students with detailed instructions in the use of the platform and with information for obtaining technical support. This information should be highly visible in the Canvas course.**

Textbooks and/or Access Codes

As with traditional classes, most online and hybrid courses require the purchase of textbooks and/or access codes to facilitate instruction. Instructors must list textbooks, access codes, software, and other requirements in the course syllabus. Students may visit the Barnes & Noble Bookstore through the "Current Students" link on the SUSCC website for textbook information and prices.

Additional Software Requirements

Students are expected to meet the requirements of the College's distance education courses. For certain courses, additional software may be required as indicated in the course syllabus. Generally, such

software requirements are limited to free "plug-ins" that can be downloaded from a safe website. Instructions for downloading any additional software will be included in the course along with appropriate links. It is the student's responsibility to download this software to his/her own home computer. Certain online courses may require the purchase of necessary software. Again, students are responsible for the acquisition of such software, which is made clear in the course syllabus. If a student cannot fulfill these requirements, then he/she should not enroll in the distance education course (or if already registered, should withdraw from it during the drop/add period).

Internet Access and Hardware/Software Requirements

Southern Union State Community College does not routinely provide Internet Service or computers for students' use. The College does maintain open computer labs with Internet access in the Learning Resource Center (LRC) on each campus. Students may use the computers in the LRC for coursework in online classes (not including proctored exams) within the LRC hours of operation. Wireless access is also available for students' use in most buildings on campus.

The College is not responsible for the loss of use of a student's personal computer through any mishap or misfortune. In such cases, students are obligated to seek alternative access to a computer with an internet connection immediately. In almost every case, students have access to a variety of on-campus computer labs in Opelika, Wadley, and Valley. In the event of an emergency situation, the college has a laptop loan program. Students may complete the Technology Request form on the SUSCC website. The request will be considered on an individual basis.

Southern Union State Community College is not able to provide hardware **support or repair** for students. Students enrolling in a distance education course are responsible for having a certain level of technical ability or having access to such when experiencing conflicts with settings on their computer. A reliable computer and Internet connection are vital to success in online courses.

Students who experience a computer emergency may request the loan of a laptop by completing the Student Technology Request form.

Course Shell Availability Dates in LMS

The availability of a course in the LMS for faculty to prepare for the upcoming term is governed by the following rules:

1. Empty course shells for the next semester will be accessible to all full-time faculty members no later than the Monday following the last day to withdraw with a W for the previous semester as published in the College's academic calendar.
2. Course shells will contain the standard course template for Southern Union.
3. Master course templates for adjuncts will contain the template designed by their department and will be available at a later date after the Master Template has been placed in the shell.
4. Instructors should not copy over the template with information from a previous semester. Follow the course copy procedure established by the Distance Education Department.
5. Instructors should prepare the course for publication/instruction by 7:00 am of the first day of the term following the Canvas Course Requirements Checklist. (link)
6. Students will be added to course shells automatically upon registration but will not have access to the next term's classes until one week before the beginning of the term. At the one-week prior mark, students will see a list of future enrollments in Canvas but will not have access to classes until the instructor has published.
7. Students must have access to LMS courses by 7:00 am the first day of that term. Terms that begin at a later date such as mini-term 2 will not be available at the same time as full-term classes.

8. Courses not published by the instructor before the first day of class may be published by Distance Education staff at 7:00 a.m. on the first day of class as published in the College's academic calendar. Instructors must have the minimum requirements in the course shell by that time (See Canvas Course Requirements Checklist).
9. Student access to a Canvas course ends at midnight one (1) calendar day after final grades are due as published in the College's academic calendar.
10. If one or more students in a course received an "incomplete", the instructor must notify the Distance Education staff that the course should be reopened for a specified amount of time. The instructor should provide an exact date when the student will finish with the course, not to exceed the last date of the following semester. Note that courses that are reopened will appear on the Dashboard for all students enrolled in the course. Instructors should be sure there are no open assignments that students can complete that would affect their grade in the course.

It is required that Canvas classes be published by 7:00 am on the first day of class for the term.

Technical Support

The College is committed to providing quality and timely technical support for the technology used in any distance education class. Faculty and students may seek support for the LMS by clicking the Help button located in the blue navigation bar in any Canvas course. Faculty and students may email SUSCC support regarding email, LMS, or Banner support through support@suscc.edu.   The following are guidelines for support.

- Links that do not work or cannot be found inside Canvas.
  - For links in your course that do not work or take students to the wrong webpage, students will be directed to **contact the course instructor. Course instructors are responsible for verifying the links are operational before a course is published** by using the Link Validator button found within the Course Settings.
- Canvas login
  - If students have problems logging into Canvas, they should visit the Online Services link in the yellow bar on the SUSCC website for clear directions and guidance or email support@suscc.edu.
- Assignment submissions issues through Canvas
  - Check that the deadline had not passed when the student tried to submit. All times in Canvas are central time. There are some time zone issues with students living in Eastern time.
  - As the course instructor, check the Student View to make sure that the assignments appear as they should. (Is it published? Is the deadline correct?)
  - Refer to directions for uploading assignments.
  - Search the Canvas Guides, **chat with, or call Canvas 24/7 Support** by clicking the Help button in the blue bar inside the Canvas course.
- Publisher websites to which you have been directed within the course.
  - Instructors who use publisher-provided course management systems such as MyLabs, MindTap, Launchpad, etc., should provide clear instructions for obtaining technical support for these technologies. These instructions should be highly visible in the course and also in the course syllabus. These may include directions to contact the publisher's technical support team. Instruct students to keep you informed of the support process.
- Technical problems with the Canvas LMS.
  - After successful login to the LMS, users (students and instructors) experiencing problems

with the LMS (Canvas) have 24/7 technical support available by clicking on the **Help button** in the Navigation Bar within the LMS. The user may choose to enter a chat session with a support person or call the 800-number listed in the menu.

- o Canvas support cannot help with login information, access to links the instructor has provided, or publisher content within the course.

● Respondus Lockdown/Monitor

- o The first point of contact is the course instructor. Any time a course is copied into a new shell, instructors should click the Lockdown Browser link in the course to make sure the links are updated. **This is required each time a course is copied.** Students who cannot download the browser should email support@suscc.edu or call any campus and dial extension 5516 during normal business hours. In an emergency situation, students may take quizzes through the lockdown browser on the computers in the LRC during operating hours. Students who have computer problems may request a laptop loan from the college.

● Final exams through ProctorU

- o For computer issues while setting up their account with ProctorU, students should click on the ProctorU Chat tool at the bottom of the ProctorU site. If you have difficulty finding an answer through the Chatbot, type "transfer" in the search box to be transferred to a live person.

- o Students must make an appointment for testing. Students in online classes have paid a fee for the online test but students who wait to schedule their appointment until a period equivalent to 72 hours before the test closes will be charged an additional fee.

- o For problems that arise during the scheduled testing time, a ProctorU technician will work with the student to try to resolve any problems that arise.

- o If the student missed their test appointment, they should first contact ProctorU to find out if they have enough time to reschedule the test. If the deadline is near, the next person they should contact is the course instructor. The instructor should determine whether the student will be allowed an extension. If an extension is allowed, the instructor is responsible for reopening the text for the individual students and either setting up an individual test session with ProctorU or setting up other arrangements for the student to take the test.

Accessibility and Blackboard Ally

Southern Union is committed to providing all students with the tools to succeed. Therefore, ALL images, videos, and documents within a Canvas course should be fully accessible to those with both visible and hidden disabilities. Blackboard Ally is a product that integrates seamlessly into the Canvas learning management system and focuses on making digital course content more accessible. On the instructor side, Ally indicates whether the content that has been uploaded meets accessibility standards and offers help in making documents accessible. See Ally Help for Instructors.

Ally also indicates a score for each course that reveals how "accessible" the course is for students. This Ally score is also reflected in the College's Ally score being monitored at the state level. Instructors are required to make improvements to their Ally score by making documents accessible as they should be to help students with certain limitations. The **Ally score goal for Fall 2021 is 75%.** Your course Ally score is also indicated on your course evaluation at each review.

On the student side, Ally allows the student to download documents in alternative formats such as electronic braille, audio, pdf, HTML, and other formats. See Ally help for Students. Making these formats available will assist students who experience visual impairments.

Course Requirements

Course Syllabi

Each semester, all faculty members will complete the course syllabus template provided by the College with information about their course. The course syllabus includes information regarding the course, the instructor, and class policies; requirements of the class including how the grade is derived, class participation, course deadlines, dealing with technology problems, makeup and late work policy, grading and feedback turnaround time, and academic withdrawal; and serves as a written "contract" between the faculty member and the student. It is the reference for any grade inquiry or grade appeal.

The syllabus must be posted under the Syllabus link in the LMS no later than 7:00 am the first day of the semester. Each course syllabus should also be uploaded to the Faculty Utility database found on the College's Intranet before the end of the Drop/Add period.

Course Participation and Engagement

Electronic interaction among learners and the instructor is a viable and vital portion of distance education. **Instructors must actively initiate communication and student engagement** within the course. Methods to accomplish this may include electronic discussions (online forums and/or chat sessions), online conferences using Google Meet or Zoom, providing timely and substantive feedback on assignments, and responding to questions presented by students throughout the course.

Instructors should consider adapting techniques to improve student engagement and interaction from the following articles, From Virtual Spectator to Participant: Engaging Students in Synchronous Online Learning Activities by Meigan Robb, Ph.D., RN, and Five Ways to Make Your Online Classrooms more Interactive by Amy Peterson.

Students' Rights and Responsibilities

General Information

Every student enrolled in a distance education course at Southern Union State Community College is expected to abide by the same guidelines that apply to traditional, face-to-face instructional methods. All policies that appear in the Southern Union State Community College Student Handbook and Catalog apply to distance education. See Appendix A, Students' Rights and Responsibilities.

Access to Campus Facilities and Services

Students who are enrolled in distance education courses are entitled to use all on-campus facilities, such as libraries, bookstores, and computer labs with a valid student ID. In addition, links on the College's

website provide access to, or information on all student resources and services, including the Student Handbook and Catalog, registration, library/research assistance, advising, financial aid, tutoring, and more.

Student Profiles

Student profiles are a useful tool for promoting peer interaction in online courses. Students should be encouraged to develop their personal student profiles within certain limitations. Specifically, students are prohibited from posting profane, defamatory, or salacious comments. Student photos must be "yearbook" style photos of the students themselves (not group photos). In other words, student photos should be headshots with plain backgrounds and contain no images of alcohol, tobacco, drugs, profanity, racial slurs, offensive slogans, or clothing that is excessively revealing. Online instructors are responsible for monitoring the profiles of students in their online classes and for ensuring that prohibited postings are removed as soon as possible.

Sharing of Student Information

Southern Union State Community College will under no circumstances share student account information with parties other than the student. Student data is stored in a secured off-site server protected by SSL encryption. Password information is not available to SUSCC employees and must be maintained by the students themselves. Sharing of account information is strictly prohibited.

Online Communication and Security

Electronic Security

Contact through electronic media (Canvas and SUSCC student email) is the foundation of distance education. Just as in traditional methods of communication, electronic messages may be intercepted or received by individuals other than the intended recipient. Southern Union State Community College works under the protection of secure passwords and firewalls. Therefore it is vital that responses to student emails and messages be conducted only through Canvas Inbox or SUSCC email. **It is extremely important that login information remains secure to maintain privacy of student information.**

Procedure For Protecting The Privacy Of Students Enrolled In Distance Education Courses

FERPA: Southern Union State Community College protects the privacy of all students, including those enrolled in distance education courses/programs, through strict adherence to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). The official FERPA statement is available for students and public view through the *Student Handbook and Catalog*.

Secure Login and Password: Faculty members and students are issued unique identification numbers, email addresses, and passwords generated by Banner, the college's information management system. Upon enrollment in any course in the Banner system, a corresponding user account is created in Canvas. To access the Canvas account, the user selects the college's Canvas account link or the Canvas mobile applications, enters his/her unique college email address and eight-digit birthday. This combination of unique email and password identifies faculty members and students to the system upon each visit.

Through the Student Handbook and Catalog, the Distance Education portion of the college website, the Student Handbook for Online Learning, and the Faculty Handbook for Online Education, all parties are informed of their responsibility for the security of their account passwords and they must not share them with anyone. Student and faculty information by default is protected and separated from other users within the Canvas learning/teaching environment and from outside intruders. To keep user information secure and confidential, users are advised to change the default password for additional security measures. Sharing passwords will put your account at risk of others entering your course and disrupting learning activities and accessing confidential information.

Additional Security of Online Coursework: Faculty members teaching online classes promote the security of students' personal data and course grades by utilizing a learning management system grade book that prohibits students from accessing other students' grades. Many security features, such as those listed below, are provided within the LMS. Instructors are encouraged to utilize as many of these as necessary to ensure the safety, security, and integrity of student coursework:

- Question groups used to randomize the selection of quiz questions for each student.
- Instructor-provided passwords for quizzes, tests, and other graded assignments.
- Time limits for quiz/test attempts.
- Automatic shuffling of questions and shuffling of multiple-choice responses between student quiz/test attempts.
- Browser security settings (lockdown browser) prohibiting access to other online sites and/or prohibiting printing during quizzes and tests.
- Limiting student access to quiz/test grades or to review of graded quizzes/tests until all submissions have been graded.
- Requirements for specific IP addresses or monitoring and comparing of IP addresses between student attempts of quizzes/tests.
- Quiz/test item presentation options (one question per page, no returning to previous questions, etc.).
- Limiting the number of attempts per quiz/test.
- Time delays between subsequent attempts of quizzes or tests that allow multiple attempts.
- Monitoring of student activity logs which record dates, times, and duration of access to graded assignments

Student Email

Upon admission to the institution, each student is provided with a student Google email account, the official communication method between the student, instructor, and the College. Students are assigned a secure password to access the account. They can access their Gmail account through a link found on the College website. Students are responsible for frequently monitoring their SUSCC student email account for communication. **For security reasons, it is not recommended that College faculty and staff communicate with students through personal email accounts.**

Online Communication/Responding to Student Posted Messages

To promote student success in an online/hybrid course, instructors are expected to communicate with their students in a professional and timely manner. The following stipulations apply.

- All faculty members will post hours of availability to students in their Canvas course.

- ○ **Full-time instructors** will post office/contact hours in their semester schedule. See *Virtual Office Hours Policy* for posting virtual office hours for online overload courses.
    - ○ **Adjunct instructors** will post virtual office hours on the front page of their Canvas course. The number of posted hours should **not be less than one hour per week for each course credit hour. Hours of availability are times when you will respond to student questions with a quick turnaround much like traditional instructors who are available during class meeting times.**
- When the college is open, instructors should respond to student communication received outside of posted contact hours as soon as possible, no later than 24 hours after the receipt of the communication.
- **Instructors must be available to answer student questions within a reasonable time prior to any activity deadline. For example, it would not be reasonable to have an assignment deadline on a Sunday night if the instructor doesn't intend to answer questions on Sunday.**
- Faculty who will be unavailable for an extended period of time must send an email or post a notice within their course to alert students to the possible delay in responding.
- In addition to providing timely responses, faculty members must ensure that their communication with students is professional, clear, courteous, respectful, and meets the student's needs for academic assistance.
- Use Canvas features (inbox, announcements, discussions, etc.) when communicating with students so a record of all communication is maintained automatically. Doing this will protect the instructor in case of student issues.

Canvas Inbox

Within the LMS, Canvas Inbox allows for communication between students and instructors regarding the course content. Students and instructors have the ability to set up their profile to send all Inbox messages to an email address or phone number as a backup so you do not have to log in to Canvas to check messages.

It is strongly recommended that all communications about the course be conducted through Canvas Inbox for a variety of reasons such as the following:

1. All course communications are available in one place allowing you to better communicate with your students.
2. This will prevent confusion when you can't remember an answer you previously gave to the student.
3. When an instructor becomes ill or hospitalized, it may be necessary for someone to take over teaching the course temporarily. Access to communications will help the temporary instructor know if a student has been given makeup opportunities, etc.
4. Communication in the LMS assists the Department Chair or Dean in making decisions regarding an appeal from a student.
5. Regardless of whether the email has been forwarded from Canvas to the school email address, instructors are responsible for checking the Canvas Inbox regularly to make sure no messages were missed.

*Each faculty member must maintain a record of all electronic communication that occurs within an online course for the duration of one semester following the end of the course. Such records may include either electronic or hard copies of student emails, instructor emails, online chat session logs, discussion forum postings, posted course announcements, and virtual classroom sessions.

Feedback on Grades

Students have a right to be informed about their academic progress in a timely manner. The instructor's policy and timeline for providing feedback will be included in the course syllabus. Feedback and grades on assignments, assessments and evaluations should be returned to students promptly. This is especially important when feedback is needed for the students to study for future work. Sufficient time for questions and answers should be allowed between feedback and major assessments, evaluations, and/or examinations. All grades should be set up accurately and entered in the LMS regularly so the student and their advisors are aware of the student's progress.

Attendance and Withdrawals

Attendance in Online Classes

According to the College attendance policy (see the current Student Handbook & Catalog), students must demonstrate a minimum level of participation to receive college credit for a course.

Weekly participation is expected in all online courses. Activities and assignments required for students to demonstrate active weekly participation are determined by the online course instructor and are listed in the course syllabus. They may include discussion forums, chat sessions, group projects, quizzes, homework, tutorials, or any other activity that requires student engagement in the learning process.

Attendance Verification

At the beginning of each semester, instructors are required to complete an Attendance Verification for students enrolled in courses. In a distance education context, documenting that a student has logged into an online class is **not sufficien**t, by itself, to demonstrate academic attendance by the student. A school must demonstrate that a student **participated in class or was otherwise engaged in an academically related activity**, such as by contributing to an online discussion or completing an assignment before the attendance reporting deadline.

Examples of acceptable evidence of academic at an academically-related activity in a distance education program include:

- student submission of an academic assignment,
- student submission of an exam,
- documented student participation in an interactive tutorial or computer-assisted instruction,
- a posting by the student in a discussion forum showing the student's participation in an online discussion about academic matters

Students who are reported for non-attendance in their class(es) will be withdrawn by the Admissions Office. This may affect the full-time status and financial aid awards for the student. The student may ask the instructor for readmission to the course before the deadline date assigned in the email from the Registrar. It is the decision of the instructor whether the student will be allowed to be reinstated in the course. If the instructor determines a student could be successful in the course if readmitted, the instructor must complete the form for readmission distributed by the Registrar through email. This form will be located in the Canvas Faculty Information Center.

Administrative Withdrawal

Course syllabi should clearly state whether or not the instructor will utilize Administrative Withdrawals (based on Southern Union's Administrative Withdrawal and departmental policy.) For official records

(including financial aid), the last date of attendance for a student administratively withdrawn from an online class will be the last day the student demonstrated active **participation** in the course and not the last day the student logged into the course.

If a student officially withdraws or is withdrawn prior to Southern Union's published withdrawal date (refer to the current semester calendar), he/she will receive a grade of "W." Students who do not withdraw before the published deadline to withdraw may consider applying for Catastrophic Withdrawal should an unforeseen circumstance arise. The student may contact the Assistant to the Dean for the appropriate forms. Students must provide documentation to support the need for catastrophic withdrawal. A committee will determine based on documentation whether the situation warrants a catastrophic withdrawal.

Authentication and Verification of Student Identity

The Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) regarding student authentication was signed into law on 14 August, 2008. It requires "an institution that offers distance education or correspondence education to have processes to establish that the student who registers is the same student who participates in and completes the work and receives the academic credit." SACSCOC's policy states, "An institution that offers distance or correspondence education (a) ensures 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. (b) has a written procedure for protecting the privacy of students enrolled in distance and correspondence education courses or programs. (c) ensures that students are notified in writing at the time of registration or enrollment of any projected additional student charges associated with verification of student identity." The College adheres to these identity guidelines by assigning each student a unique identification number and password for access to the LMS and the use of Live-proctored examinations that require the student undergo an identification process. The students are charged a fee for live-proctoring and are informed of this fee on the class note that accompanies the class listing at the time of registration.

Proctored Assessments

Online classes **are required** to have at least one live-proctored assessment to verify the identity of the student participating in the course. Southern Union has determined this must be the **final exam.** At the time of registration for online, virtual and select hybrid courses, students are charged a fee that covers the cost of proctoring the final exam with a selected live-proctoring service which is currently ProctorU. Students are informed in the note with each class on the schedule that they are required to have a computer with a webcam and microphone for testing and that they will be charged the proctoring fee. If your class note indicates that the student was charged a testing fee, you must use ProctorU for the final exam as the students have paid for this service. Instructors may choose to use other conferencing tools such as Zoom, GoogleMeet, or Canvas Conferences to proctor students during **unit or midterm exams**. Refer your students to the student's ProctorU Resource page for details.

The College also provides Respondus Lockdown Browser with or without Monitor for remote proctoring of any exams except the final. Students must download the Respondus Lockdown Browser from the specific link provided for SUSCC, as each school has a unique link. If you require the Lockdown Browser for a quiz or exam, there must be a link in your Canvas course for the students to download the software. It will need to be installed one time on the computer the student will use for testing. Instructors may also require the use of Respondus Monitor in addition to the Lockdown Browser. Monitor is not an additional download. You will need to adjust your Lockdown Browser settings in your course to turn on or off the Monitor feature. (If you require Monitor, you must indicate on your syllabus that the student is required to have a webcam and microphone installed on their computer so they will

have time to prepare.) Once the browser is installed, the student will open the browser from the shortcut, log in to Canvas, and take the quiz. PLEASE, add a fake test into your Canvas course so that students can practice first to make sure they know how to use the browser (and Monitor) before a graded test.

Additional Notes:
- To test on an iPad, iPads must be enabled for the Lockdown Browser separately in Canvas, by the instructor. This option can be found in the Lockdown Browser settings.
- Chromebooks **are not fully supported by the Lockdown Browser at this time. Students may download the Respondus Lockdown Browser and use a Beta version as long as the instructor enables that for each test.** *Beta is in the testing phase and there may still be issues with it.
- Students who have problems downloading the Lockdown Browser software may email support@suscc.edu.
- Students having computer difficulties in general may need to request a laptop loan from the college by completing the Student Technology Request form.
- In an emergency situation, you can refer the student to their nearest SUSCC campus library to take the test on the LRC computers during normal business hours.

Student Complaints

Grievance and Appeal
Southern Union State Community College recognizes that in order to efficiently and effectively fulfill its mission, its students must feel confident that any valid complaint made concerning the College will be promptly addressed by the appropriate authorities. Therefore, the Grievance and Appeal Procedure outlined in the Student Handbook and Catalog will also apply to students taking distance education courses.

Students who are enrolled in distance education courses offered by the College are afforded the same rights as those who attend traditional college courses. Students have specific rights, such as the right to adequate contact with their assigned instructor, the right to comparable instruction, resources, and materials, and the right to question the policies and procedures of their respective instructor.

Students are always encouraged to contact their instructor first with concerns. In some cases the department chair or program director, or ultimately the Instructional Dean may need to get involved with complex or extreme cases.

Out of State Students
Southern Union has joined the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA). The State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement is an agreement among member states, districts and territories that establishes comparable national standards for interstate offering of postsecondary distance education courses and programs. It is intended to make it easier for students to take online courses offered by postsecondary institutions based in another state. SARA is overseen by a National Council and administered by four regional education compacts. Provisions of NC-SARA include those for consumer protection and the resolution of complaints that apply to interstate distance education offered by participating institutions in other SARA states. Only those complaints resulting from distance education courses offered by participating institutions to students in other SARA states come under the terms of the agreement. Complaints about a SARA institution's in-state operations are to be

resolved under the state's provisions, not those of SARA.

Faculty Rights and Responsibilities

General Information

Distance Education faculty members of Southern Union State Community College will be held to the same requirements as are faculty members who instruct traditional on-campus courses. They are required to keep accurate records of students' grades and attendance, provide students with contact information (office phone number and e-mail minimum), and inform their department chair or program director concerning any absences.

Faculty teaching distance education courses receive the same credit toward their teaching load as do faculty who teach traditional courses. Full-time faculty may teach one to two online or virtual classes each semester. The exact number of course courses a faculty member may teach is left to the discretion of the department chair or program director.

Office Hours

All Distance Education instructors must post **availability** hours on all syllabi and the Office Hours button of the course in the LMS. Specific contact method(s), email address, and office phone numbers (if applicable) must be provided for the students.

Online Faculty Profiles

Instructor Profiles

In effective online courses, students build interpersonal connections with their instructors as well as fellow students. To facilitate this process, each online instructor will complete his/her own profile for the course, which may include the following items:

- Digital photo* of the instructor
- Friendly welcome to the student
- Short biography or other relevant information about the instructor

Photos are recommended as long as they conform to the College's standards for public viewing, which prohibit the depiction of alcohol, tobacco, drugs, profanity, racial slurs, offensive slogans, and clothing that is excessively revealing.

Academic Freedom [ACCS 719.01]

Southern Union State Community College allows faculty and students the freedom to cultivate a spirit of inquiry and scholarly criticism when discussing discipline-related subjects. However, the principle of academic freedom shall not prevent the College from taking the initiative to assure the best possible instruction in accordance with the mission and goals of the College. Any faculty member who believes that his or her academic freedom has been violated has the right to file a grievance following the College's Grievance Policy. The College's Grievance Policy can be found in the Employee Handbook.

Professional Quality

Faculty members are required to maintain and conduct their distance education courses with the same

professional quality as they maintain and conduct their traditional courses. Faculty will receive the full support of Southern Union State Community College in the successful execution of maintaining and accelerating the quality and viability of distance education courses. The College will make every effort to maintain and continually upgrade the equipment, support, and materials necessary to conduct distance education courses. Professional development opportunities will regularly be made available and equipment/software upgraded to assist instructors in ensuring that online courses at Southern Union State Community College are of the highest academic quality. Online instructors should make expense and leave requests related to distance education in advance of the fiscal year so that budgets and schedules can be adjusted accordingly.

Intellectual Property Rights and Copyright Policies

Introduction and Definitions

Southern Union State Community College recognizes and values creativity and innovation as part of the teaching and learning process. Similarly, the College recognizes the importance of and wishes to encourage the transfer of new knowledge, generated in the College to the private sector for the public good. At the same time, as a publicly funded institution, the College must be a good steward of the public resources provided to it, and must safeguard against the use of public funds for private gain. This policy addresses the rights to, interest in, and protection and transfer of Intellectual Property created by the College's faculty, staff and students.

For purposes of this policy: "Intellectual Property" means inventions, discoveries, innovations and copyrightable works.

"Invention" means a tangible or intangible discovery, whether or not reduced to practice, and tangible research products, whether or not patentable or copyrightable. Such research products include, but are not limited to, computer programs, integrated circuit designs, industrial designs, databases, technical drawings, equipment, biological materials, and other technical creations.

"Copyrightable Works" mean original works of authorship fixed in tangible media of expression.

Ownership

Ownership of any Intellectual Property created by a faculty or staff member employed by the College or by a student enrolled at the College such as written compositions, musical scores, scriptures, sculptures, paintings, photographs, films, videotapes, and computer software, shall be vested in the faculty, staff or student unless the faculty, staff or student has been employed by the College to create the Intellectual Property. Any works created by faculty or staff members or students using College resources, including time at work, belong to the College.

Use of Intellectual Property: Submitted Work as Part of Course Requirements

1. When a student submits work as a course requirement, the student retains ownership of the work, but ownership of the physical or electronic document shall be vested in the College. The College is granted a perpetual, royalty-free license by the submitting student to make copies of the work for administrative and educational purposes.

2. The College and its faculty, staff and students recognize that some Intellectual Property may arise or be developed by students from interaction with the instructor and other students. Under those circumstances, the Intellectual Property may not be the exclusive property of the student.

3. When work prepared/done by a student, faculty or staff has been accepted for publication by a journal or a publisher, absent an agreement to the contrary, the work becomes the property of the publisher.

Use of Intellectual Property: Computer Programs

1. Computer programs that are written within the scope of faculty members' and staff members' employment duties with the College become the property of the College.

2. When a program is developed for a course project or assignment by a student, faculty member, or staff member, ownership is retained by the student, faculty, or staff member with the College having a perpetual and royalty-free license to make and distribute copies to faculty, staff and students for administrative and educational purposes.

Compensation for Creation of Intellectual Property

The College does not compensate employees or students for the intellectual property of any kind developed as part of the creator's normal employment duties or course assignments. The only compensation provided by the College for intellectual property, other than that allowed for online course development, will be for fulfillment of a preauthorized, legally binding contract issued by the College to the creator for the sole purpose of the development of the Intellectual Property. Such a contract will necessarily constitute work performed in excess of the employee's normal duties and beyond his/her scheduled work hours.

Copyright Issues

Intellectual Property rights for Copyrightable Works are earned through ownership, which is established according to the rules set forth earlier in this policy. College employees and students alike must comply with all federal copyright laws in the creation and use of intellectual property, whether such property is created for compensation, created or used as part of a course requirement, or created or used as part of normal employment duties. In particular, the College complies with Public Law 110-315 (the Higher Education Opportunity Act), which requires the institution to take measures to combat unauthorized distribution of copyrighted materials through illegal downloading or peer-to-peer (P2P) file-sharing of music, photographs, videos or other digitally stored information. The U.S. Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) criminalizes such unlawful distribution, even when such distribution is unintentional.

Use of Revenue from Intellectual Property

All revenue derived from the sale or use of Intellectual Property created in association with Southern Union State Community College belongs to the established owner(s). Since ownership is dependent upon whether College resources are used in the production of Intellectual Property, instructors are prohibited from profiting from the sale of materials created while using College resources to develop online courses.

Resolution of Disputes

All complaints regarding the ownership of Intellectual Property, its use, compensation for its development, and/ or use of revenue derived from its sale shall be addressed through the College's standard Grievance and Appeal procedures as established in the Employee Handbook.

Decision Making Authority

The Distance Education Department, with the approval of the Instructional Dean(s), Academic Support Committee, Executive Committee, and President shall make decisions concerning the execution of distance education at Southern Union State Community College. All policy reviews, adoptions, and changes will be processed through these channels before implementation.

Procedures/Policies for Course Development and Online Teaching

General Guidelines

All distance education courses for Southern Union State Community College will be developed, evaluated, and taught under the guidelines approved by the Distance Education Department. Faculty of Southern Union State Community College must follow all procedures and adhere to all policies for course development, evaluation, and online teaching as established by the Distance Education Department, Instructional Deans, and the College and published in this manual. Noncompliance with any of these policies or procedures may result in the loss of the privilege of online instruction.

Access to Training and Professional Development

A representative from the Distance Education office will hold regular training sessions at various times and locations for faculty. Topics covered may include Canvas, Ally, TidyUp, SoftChalk, Zoom, Respondus, Respondus Monitor, hardware usage, troubleshooting, Quality Matters (QM), online course planning, and course management. Introduction and advanced sessions are held to ensure that all faculty have access to relevant information. Faculty are made aware of training session scheduling through campus email and Canvas announcement postings. Further, distance education staff are available during regular working hours through office visits/phone/email for faculty technical support. Southern Union additionally provides 24/7 Canvas support for faculty that is available by chat or phone by clicking the Help button within Canvas.

Certification Process for Online Teaching

In effective online classes, teachers provide instruction in ways that actively engage all students in memorable learning experiences. Effective online classes stimulate communication among class members and elicit thought-provoking dialogue between the teacher and the student. In such a class, students are challenged to think logically and creatively, and master course content to the same degree of proficiency as students in the same traditional course. It takes a special skill set and a particular passion for online teaching to develop and deliver a course that meets these standards. Therefore, Southern Union State Community College requires training and certification for all instructors who desire to teach an online or hybrid class. The Distance Education Committee is the College's agent for developing and managing the certification process.

Due to recent development surrounding the pandemic, Southern Union must be prepared to go 100% online at a moment's notice. Therefore, all instructors must be Canvas certified by completing the Instructor Basics course which includes the technical training required for basic Canvas course setup. This course is required of ALL new instructors. Upon completion of the Instructor Basics course, the instructor will be enrolled in the Online Instruction Certification (OIC). This second training will prepare the instructor in methods to prepare an online course complete with activities. The OIC additionally challenges the instructor to consider other elements of instructional design in their course. Topics in this certification include accessibility, student engagement, available college resources, pedagogy and assessment.

When an instructor completes all of the stages of Canvas training and obtains certifying signatures on the areas of the skills check-off sheet that pertain to online instructors, he/she is certified to teach online

at Southern Union. Notice of completion will be sent to the Department Chair/Program Director and to the Human Resources Office for inclusion in the employee file.

Special Certification Cases

Instructors who already have LMS training and experience teaching online using Canvas at another institution may earn Canvas certification in an accelerated process. Each such instructor should first provide **documentation** of his/her online training to the chair of the Distance Education Committee for consideration of an expedited training process.

Course Master Shell Development

SUSCC reserves all rights to online courses created by College employees who use any Institutional resources (i.e. financial compensation, work time, College-owned facilities, equipment, or software) in the development of an online course. Course "shells" used in online courses are the property of Southern Union State Community College.

All online courses developed using the Southern Union State Community College distance education platform or any medium, media, or symbol (icon, logo, letterhead, etc.) used to represent the College shall be the property of the College and must be approved prior to publication. The process of approval will include 1st, the Department Chair, 2nd, the Distance Education Department, 3rd, the respective Dean, and 4th, the President. Violation of this policy will be considered a misrepresentation of the College, a violation of copyright, and subject to all due penalties and procedures.

Furthermore, the Student Handbook and Catalog provide the College's Internet Acceptable Use Policy. This policy details the appropriate use of the Colleges' resources to access and use materials of various types in the academic pursuit of a college degree or in college-wide instructional and employee practices.

Additions to the College Curriculum

For any new course not currently in the College curriculum, instructors must follow standard course adoption procedures before making a request to develop the course. Courses not currently in the ACCS Course Directory must be submitted by the Department Chair to the appropriate Instructional Dean. The Instructional Dean will submit the proposal to the Academic Support Committee, Executive Committee, and President for approval prior to submission to the Alabama Community College System (ACCS). Once a course has been approved by ACCS, the College's Distance Education Committee will consider the course for development as an online course according to the criteria prescribed on the Proposal for Development of an Online Course application. .

Staffing

Master Course Templates are developed by a designated "lead" instructor for each online course. Each course shell serves as the master for all **adjunct** instructors teaching that course online. Online courses must be staffed by qualified personnel who have completed the Online Instruction Certification (or equivalent) and approved to teach by the appropriate department chair.

Quality Matters

Southern Union is requiring Quality Matters standards in all online/hybrid courses in an effort to improve course quality. All distance education instructors will be required to complete QM training and online and hybrid courses will be required to gain QM certification in the future. The process of certification through QM requires that all courses be measured against standards in the QM rubric and that course must meet the standards at a level of 85% or higher. This review process is completed by a team of QM

peer reviewers made up of faculty members around the country who have been trained in the QM review process.

Why use a certification process like Quality Matters? The course review process results in better course design, which makes navigation easier for students, reduces barriers to student achievement, and results in better outcomes. But, the impact of using Quality Matters goes far beyond the course or courses being certified. Using the QM Quality Assurance System even in one area, or one course begins to instill a "culture of quality" throughout the organization.

What is Quality Matters? Quality Matters is a nonprofit organization comprised of dedicated staff who work together virtually—from cities all over the United States—to support everyone's quality assurance goals.

Course Review and Certification Process. After submitting a course for an Official Course Review, the peer course Review Team will review the course using the QM Rubric and provide feedback on how to improve the quality of the course. Through collaboration with reviewers, instructors, and course developers, QM members can work together to improve the course to meet QM Standards at the 85% quality level or better. Members can also take advantage of professional development options that assist them in using QM Standards to improve courses. While there are many ways to meet QM Standards, a course can only achieve QM Certification once it meets quality expectations.

Course Design and Content

Every online/hybrid course offered by SUSCC should be designed to maximize student learning and minimize confusion. To ensure consistent quality in online/hybrid courses, the principles of course design utilized by Quality Matters will be required for each course. These principles can be found in the [2018 QM Rubric 6th Edition for Online & Blended Courses](#). The annotation for each standard gives more specific descriptions and examples. Contact the Distance Education office for details about where you can find the annotated version of the rubric.

For ease of student use and to maintain a sense of consistency among online courses, the instructor of each course will ensure that these items are included in the introductory section of the online course website:
- Home or Front Page. This page is the landing page (first page students should see) and should include Instructor name and contact information..
- Home Page must include directions to the students regarding the next step(s) to begin their course work.
- Link to the course syllabus must be active and the current syllabus located under this link. The syllabus may be copied and pasted on the page or included as a **clearly** labeled link to the uploaded file. You may link the syllabus in multiple places but for consistent navigation, the syllabus must be located under this link in every course.
- ALL Grade columns should be available and grades recorded in a timely manner in the same time-frame as face-to-face classes. A student and their advisor cannot know how they are progressing in the class without grades. If all grade columns are not published, the grade will not be correctly displayed.

Professional Development Requirements

Distance education instructors will be required to periodically update skills and training to maintain their level of expertise. Each online instructor will be required to attend a professional development workshop or participate in a webinar or training related to online education. These sessions may be online,

face-to-face, or a combination. The D.E. Department will inform instructors of opportunities as they become available.

Applying to Develop an Online or Hybrid Course

Instructors who desire to develop an online or hybrid course for SUSCC must follow the guidelines for Canvas instructor check-offs. A detailed outline of the course content and online learning resources must accompany the application to develop an online course. **No new online or hybrid course will be listed in the official College semester course schedule until the course has been fully developed, evaluated by the Distance Education Committee, and approved for enrollment.** To allow for schedule planning, courses must be fully developed, evaluated, and approved by the end of spring semester for listing in the fall semester course schedule. A similar timetable will apply to courses listed in the spring and summer course schedules.

Evaluations

All online and hybrid courses are subject to periodic evaluation by the Distance Education Department at the direction of the Instructional Dean. If a course does not meet minimal quality standards, the course instructor and/or developer or Department Chair will be notified. The course developer and/or instructor may request another evaluation after he/she has made the required improvements.

If either course quality or online teaching quality is found to be unsatisfactory based on the results of evaluations, the course may be removed at the direction of the Instructional Dean from the College's online or hybrid course offerings until its quality has reached an approved level.

Policies to Promote Best Practices in Online Teaching

Online Course Syllabus

While the syllabus for online and hybrid courses should be the same as that same course taught in the classroom in regards to student learning outcomes, prerequisites and general departmental policies, the syllabus for an online or hybrid course should be customized to reflect the online nature of the class. In addition to those items already included in the College's syllabus template, each online syllabus must include the following:

1. **Availability hours**: Each online instructor must post weekly times they are available for immediate contact with students. For adjunct instructors, this may be synchronous or asynchronous communication. Full-time instructors must reflect this time on their semester schedule as on-campus office hours. The amount of time the instructor is available should be equal to the contact hours for the course(s). For example, an instructor teaching a 3 credit hour course which is all theory (3 contact hours) should post availability times totaling 3 hours per week. This availability time is in addition to time required for normal response to emails and messages from students.

2. **Instructor** contact information, office hours, and a plan establishing acceptable response time **parameters for the instructor to respond to student e-mails and phone calls. Response times for emails and messages should occur within 24 hours but must not exceed 48 hours during days the college is open.**

3. **Hardware and software requirements**, including instructions for downloading any necessary "plug-ins" required for student participation in the course.

4. **Attendance and participation policies** for the online class and department.

5. **Make-up policy for missed work.**

6. **Instructions for obtaining technical support and academic support.**

7. **Third-party sites:** Courses that are supplemented by publisher online materials must include clear directions for students to access the material, working links to the material and directions for obtaining support from the publisher for technical problems. Technical support for publisher content is not supplied by SUSCC.

8. **Rules** for acceptable online communication (netiquette) from and between students and instructor.

Student Identity Confirmation Procedures

SUSCC is committed to maintaining the academic integrity of all courses, including online and hybrid courses. The College has established the following policies to ensure that the student who registers for a distance education course is the same student who participates in and completes the course:

1. Students enrolled in a **hybrid** course must present a valid photo ID (e.g. driver's license, College-issued student ID, military ID) to confirm their identity at each on-campus session. Students who cannot produce such identification will not be allowed to participate in the activity. Instructors will carefully compare the photo on the ID to the student presenting the identification and verify that the name on the ID matches the student name on the official course roll. Specific courses may require additional on-campus activities within the limitations prescribed by the definition of "hybrid course".

2. Students enrolled in an **online** course will be required to present a valid photo ID (e.g. driver's license, U.S. Passport, College-issued student ID, military ID) at the time of online testing.

3. Final examinations for **online** courses will be proctored by an online proctoring service. Before beginning the final examination, students will be required to present a valid photo ID as well as pass a security screening.

4. Additionally, to discourage cheating in an online course, instructors will employ a grading system in which the on-campus exams/evaluations constitute a significant portion of the student's final course grade.

Security and Integrity of Online Coursework

Faculty members teaching online courses are responsible for creating and maintaining an online teaching and learning environment that provides for the security of personal data and student coursework and fosters academic integrity in the course.

Faculty members teaching online classes will promote the security of students' personal data and course grades by (1) utilizing the LMS' secure grade center for posting grades, (2) refrain from sharing instructor login information with students which may give unauthorized access to students' information.

Faculty members teaching online classes will promote academic integrity and security of student work within their courses by implementing appropriate security measures for online testing and assignment submission. Many security features, such as those listed below, are provided within the course management system. Instructors are encouraged to utilize as many of these as necessary to ensure the safety, security and integrity of student coursework:

1. Instructor-provided passwords for quizzes, tests, and other graded assignments

2. Time limits for quiz/test attempts

3. Automatic shuffling of questions and shuffling of multiple-choice responses between student

quiz/test attempts

4. Using the Lockdown Browser to prohibit access to other online sites and/or prohibiting printing during quizzes and tests

5. Utilizing the monitoring system with the Lockdown Browser to record student's activities during tests and quizzes

6. Limiting student access to quiz/test grades or review of graded quizzes/tests until all submissions have been made

7. Quiz/test item presentation options (one question per page, no returning to previous questions, etc.)

8. Limiting number of attempts per quiz/test

Time delays between subsequent attempts of quizzes or tests that allow multiple attempts

Appendix of Forms

Student's Rights and Responsibilities in Distance Education

1. Every student enrolled in a distance education course at Southern Union State Community College will be required to follow the same guidelines and policies that apply to traditional, face-to-face instructional courses.

2. Email or social media messages intercepted or received by individuals other than the intended recipient are not the responsibility of Southern Union State Community College. Students should not share personal information through digital communication.

3. Students must log in to the LMS within the first week of the beginning course date and complete the assignment designated to verify attendance. If a student fails to do so, the instructor must report the student as a "no show" on the Attendance Verification report. Students who do not have a "Last date attended" reported **will be** withdrawn due to failure to attend.

4. Any student who does not interact with his/her enrolled distance education course for a period of three weeks (consecutive or not) in the spring or fall semester may be likewise withdrawn from the said course.   For summer and mini terms, this period is 2 weeks.

5. All drop/add dates are applicable to all Southern Union State Community College courses. Therefore, all refund and payment deadlines are applicable to distance education courses and traditional courses alike.

6. Courses that do not receive minimum enrollment numbers, based on current administrative guidelines, will be removed (canceled) from the listing of active course offerings. Students will be notified by phone and/or email. Students have a limited time at the beginning of the semester to add a new course to replace the one that was canceled.

7. Students are held to the requirements posted in the instructor's syllabus.

8. All complaints should first be discussed with the instructor. If the issue is not resolved at that level, the student should request a conference with the department/division chairperson. As a last resort, the student may file a formal academic appeal by completing the appropriate form. Academic Appeal forms may be requested from any Instructional Dean's assistant.

9. Southern Union State Community College does not provide personal Internet access or computer use to distance education students. The College does maintain computer labs with set hours of operation if the student does not possess a computer with Internet access. However, the College does not hold any responsibility for the loss of use of a student's personal computer through any mishaps or misfortune.

10. Students who are enrolled in distance education courses offered by Southern Union State Community College are afforded the same rights as those enrolled in traditional, on-campus courses.

11. For certain courses, additional software may be required to interact with the course. These additional requirements will be posted in the syllabus. Acquisition of such software is the student's responsibility.

12. Each student is responsible for maintaining up-to-date, effective virus protection software on his/her own computer. Although the College takes reasonable precautions to prevent the transmission of harmful files, no computer network is impenetrable. Therefore, the College assumes no responsibility for loss of data or other damage resulting from the transmission of computer viruses that may occur during online course interactions.

Proposal for Development of an Online Course

Part I: General Information

This application package is to be used by an instructor who desires to develop an online, virtual, or hybrid course to be taught at Southern Union State Community College. This proposal must be approved before the design process begins. You, the applicant, are responsible for completing the application package, securing the necessary approvals and signatures, and submitting the application package to the chair of the Distance Learning Committee. Please allow one month for processing, approval, and return of the package.

Part II: Policies and Procedures

1. No release time, monetary compensation, or reduced workloads are granted for developing an online or hybrid course.
2. Course developers must be certified in Online Instruction.
3. **Course developers must have successfully completed the Quality Matters Applying the QM Rubric (APPQMR).**
4. **Courses must be designed incorporating all elements of the Quality Matters Rubric.**
5. No course is to be opened for student enrollment or listed in the semester schedule as an online or hybrid course until it has been fully developed, evaluated, and approved for inclusion in the class schedule by the Distance Learning Committee and Instructional Dean.
6. The instructor of the online/hybrid course should be the course developer, except in the case of a full-time instructor developing a course shell for an adjunct instructor to use.
7. The course developer is responsible for notifying the chair of the Distance Education Committee when the developer believes his/her course is ready to be evaluated.
8. Both new and existing online courses will be regularly evaluated to ensure that students who are enrolled in online courses receive instruction comparable to that of the course offered by traditional means. The same applies to hybrid courses.
9. After the course has been taught two semesters, the course will be submitted for Quality Matters certification.
10. By completing, signing, and submitting this application package, the applicant indicates that he/she is thoroughly familiar with the Distance Education Policy Manual, in particular the sections that apply to developing and teaching an online course and the evaluation of online courses.

Part III: Instructor's Application to Develop an ☐Online or ☐ Hybrid Course

Course Prefix and Number:		Course Name:	
Instructor Name:		Department Chair or Program Director Name:	
Has Instructor completed training for teaching online and the APPQMR?	☐**Yes** – Continue completing this form and attach a copy of the training certificate	☐**No** – Stop! Do not submit this form until you have completed training.	
Is this course new to the College curriculum?	☐**Yes** – Stop! Do not submit this form. Consult with the Department Chair or Director. New courses must be approved by the Academic Support Committee and Instructional Dean.	☐**No** – Continue completing this form and attach a copy of the current course syllabus	
The rationale for Offering Course Online:			
Does this course have a lab component?	☐ **No** ☐ **Yes** – Then explain below how laboratory experiences will be handled.		
Special Hardware/ Software Needs:			
When do you anticipate the course being included in the class schedule? ☐ Fall ☐ Spring ☐Summer Year: _____			
Program Coordinator/Department Chair Approval What percent of the degree/certificate program's total credit hours will be available online with the addition of this course? _____ (If more than 50%, STOP! A Substantive Change report may be required before you proceed. Please discuss with the appropriate Dean of Instruction.) Program Coordinator Name (Printed): Program Coordinator Signature: _____ _____			
Division Chair Name:	(Print Name)	Division Chair Signature:	
Instructor Signature:		Submission Date:	

NOTE: A detailed outline of the proposed online course structure (organized either by topic or week), <u>must</u> accompany this application. See the sample provided after this application.

Checklist for Online/Hybrid Course Developers

√	Step	Task
	1.	Read the Distance Education Policy Manual. *Please note that all new courses must be designed to meet Quality Matters standards. (If you are unfamiliar with the Quality Matters standards, you must participate in a QM workshop. Contact the Distance Education Director at nbramlett@suscc.edu.)
	2.	Complete both Canvas training courses for instructors (see certification process described in the Distance Education Policy Manual). To enroll in the course, talk with your Department Chair.
	3.	Prepare a list of course outcomes and unit outcomes. These should be measurable according to Bloom's Revised Taxonomy.
	4.	Decide on your course design. When thinking about your course design, use backward design (consider what outcomes are desired for the course and then design learning activities and assessments that will measure whether the student has met the outcome.)
	5.	Prepare an outline for your online/hybrid course following either a topical or weekly format. This outline will detail and organize the learning resources, assignments, and assessments to be included in your online course.
	6.	Complete the "Proposal to Develop an Online/Hybrid Course" form. Attach a copy of your certificate from training as well as the course outcomes, unit objectives and a course outline prepared in steps 3, 4 and 5.
	7.	Submit your application package to the Director of Distance Education. Allow two weeks for obtaining necessary signatures and processing. You will be notified of the College's decision by email. If your application is approved, continue to the next step.
	8.	Request a blank Canvas course and begin developing your course. Refer to the Quality Matters Rubric, Distance Education Course Evaluation Form and Course Check-Off Requirements document to be sure your course meets all requirements. Seek assistance when needed and feedback periodically from the Distance Education Department.
	9.	When your course is fully developed, notify the Director of Distance Education that you are ready to have the course evaluated.
	10.	Upon receiving a satisfactory evaluation, your department chair should be sure the appropriate semester schedule reflects the following for your course: ● lists your course as an online, virtual, or hybrid course ● lists information on special software requirements ● lists prerequisites for your course

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