

DISTANCE EDUCATION POLICY

Brunswick Community College (BCC or the College) recognizes distance education as a delivery system for instruction. Distance education is 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. The goal of these courses is to provide available, accessible, and affordable courses for transfer and professional technical programs for students. Each distance education course or program must be offered in a manner that is consistent with the standards established by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools – Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) as well as the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS), State, and federal requirements, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Brunswick Community College includes distance education course options for students by offering fully internet, hybrid, and blended as course delivery methods. BCC does not sequester online learning in a separate school, separate division, or apply academic policies in any manner for online students that is different from the regular “seated” student population. All of the present policies that apply to on-campus or “traditional classroom” education apply to the area of distance education. This includes admission, prerequisites, grade requirements, etc. Distance education courses must be of the same quality and rigor as those presented on campus. Distance education courses are evaluated in the same manner as seated courses in regards to learning outcome attainment and student evaluation of instruction. The records of distance learners are subject to the same level of confidentiality as all other student records. There is no additional fee charged for verification of student identity.

PROCEDURES

BCC recognizes four primary means of course delivery:

- **Traditional (TR)** – Instruction is delivered in person, in a Face-to-Face classroom setting
- **Internet (IN)** – Fully online with 100% of the instruction delivered via the internet
- **Hybrid (HY)** – Instruction is delivered in a combination of Face-to-Face and at least **51% or more** via the internet
- **Blended (BL)** – Instruction is delivered in a combination of Face-to-Face and **50% or less** via the internet

The Section codes beginning with the following numbers are used to identify the above

delivery methods utilizing distance learning:

- Internet – 8...
- Hybrid – 9...
- Blended – 4...

COURSE DEVELOPMENT, SUPPORT AND QUALITY

The Distance Learning/Instructional Technologies office is charged with providing support and training for instructional technologies to employees and students. Organizationally, this office is part of the Information Technology division of the college and is physically located within the library environment. Functions supported by this office include the Learning Management System (LMS or Moodle), student email, login/password support, wireless access, Self-Service, WebAdvisor, and other campus-based instructional technologies.

Typically courses that have not been offered via distance delivery methods in the past can be converted for hybrid or internet delivery methods. Faculty members should consult with their Dean to determine if release time or stipends are available to support the work. Faculty undertaking development of a course for online delivery must consult and work with the Director of Instructional Technologies. Faculty control the planning, content, and review of curricula in all learning formats.

Moodle is BCC's designated LMS. All online courses must be offered via Moodle. Certain course areas may utilize a 3rd party site (publisher site or content), but all 3rd party sites must be linked through a BCC Moodle course site. Under no circumstances may faculty utilize or link to a personal web site for their BCC courses or offer students direct access to purchase faculty authored learning resources. Academic supervision of faculty teaching the same course will be the same, regardless of the format in which the course is delivered. Supervisors have monitor access to the online classes taught by all instructors, full and part-time.

Appropriate library/learning resources are made easily accessible for distance education students through access links in the LMS and the College's website. Students have access to a reference for technical hints and tips and a training module for how to be a successful online learner. Student Services, Disability Services and Academic Support must be easily accessible for distance education students. Access to Student and Academic Support Services is available through links in the LMS and the College's website. Appointments and conferences with faculty and support staff can be conducted by email, phone, and video conferencing.

BCC utilizes the standards of the Quality Matters (QM) Rubric for its distance education courses and systematically trains faculty and conducts internal peer review of rebuilt online courses that have been made QM compliant. Various training opportunities are provided to faculty on a variety of topics related to quality online learning throughout the academic year. Each new faculty hire is scheduled for a one-on-one Moodle training session with the Director of Instructional Technologies.

CREDIT HOURS, INSTRUCTION AND ENGAGEMENT

Both fully online, hybrid, and blended courses must adhere to the NCCCS credit/contact

hour requirements as shown in the Combined Course Library. Faculty must provide an equivalent amount of online instruction and student work to fully represent the time required. Syllabi of distance education courses must exhibit comparable course content to the same course offered in a traditional format.

Distance education instructors must support continued communication with and amongst students. Faculty members are required to meet minimum standards for course management in Moodle, Aviso and WebAttendance. Those are:

Moodle - Minimum Process Requirements

At beginning of course (prior to course start date):

- Syllabus posted with correct dates/grade calculations
- Welcome/Getting Started message posted in course
- Grade book set up to match grade calculations in syllabus
- Ensure the Enrollment Assignment Quiz restriction is on all weeks/modules (except syllabus and enrollment assignment topics)
- For first-time at BCC instructors, meet with Instructional Technologies/Distance Learning, Registrar, and Disability Resources (*earlier if possible*)
- Ensure all materials meet ADA accessibility standards and your course includes DOE required regular and substantive instructor/student interaction
- Post a reminder for students of important calendar dates (withdrawal, registration, graduation deadlines)
- If using any required online or on-campus synchronous meetings, these must be announced to students at the beginning of the course
- If used, complete third-party information included in topic for week 1 (*after enrollment assignment*) including, but limited to:
 - how to enroll/register
 - how to obtain help
 - all codes necessary (instructor, course, textbook, etc.)
 - any other information necessary to successfully access the information (*Remember, do not place 3rd party information before the enrollment assignment*)

Weekly:

- Post at least one announcement each week for fully online courses and as needed for all other courses
- Post at least one graded assignment (non- automated) each week in fully online courses (graded discussion board post, assignment, test or quiz) to serve for attendance verification and instructor interaction
- Ensure that the week's topic *and* each item within the week are not hidden
- Ensure that each week's summary and course objective prompts are completed
- Ensure the Gradebook is kept up to date (including transfer of grades from third-party sites)
- Attendance posted in Self Service
- Log into each course site at least 3 times per week for online courses and weekly for all other courses to check for questions/messages, post weekly (and additional as necessary) announcements, reply to discussion boards, ensure assignments, lecture materials and resources, quizzes, videos, etc. are available

At least 2 days prior to each Grade Alert date:

- Confirm all grades have been posted/transferred in the gradebook and the grade showing is calculating correctly (Contact Instructional Technologies/Distance Learning if there are issues)

As necessary:

- Post an addendum to the syllabus if any changes are made that deviate from the original syllabus
- Communicate with supervisor about any absences or questions
- Contact Instructional Technologies/Distance Learning with any questions about Moodle, access (usernames/passwords), or instructional design questions

- Enter Excessive Absentee alerts in Aviso
- Once attendance exceeds the 20% mark, engage the process for an Administrative Withdrawal for students with excessive absences, document outreach efforts in Aviso and complete withdraw forms (now found in Etrieve)
- Submit Academic Alerts and referrals to The Learning Center (TLC) in Aviso as early as possible

INTEGRITY, AUTHENTICATION AND PROCTORING

Distance Education faculty members must deliver accurate and current information. Faculty shall not include in the content or delivery of a course any information which he or she knows to constitute libel, invasion of privacy, infringement of copyright or other literary rights, or otherwise violate the legal rights of others. (See the BCC Copyright Policy and TEACH Act Information).

Each student is required to use a unique user name and password to access the LMS and other online instructional interfaces. (See the BCC Security of Networks and Acceptable Use of Computers Policy). Faculty are encouraged to use the Respondus Monitor and Lockdown Browser for at least one of their major examinations or assignments. Live proctoring is also available upon request.

Out of State students enrolling in distance education courses are subject to State Authorization permissions. BCC is approved to participate in the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) and adheres to the quality requirements of NC-SARA as well as requirements for enrollment, complaint processes, and licensure information notification.

Approved by the Brunswick Community College Board of Trustees

October 15, 2020

Procedures updated by President's Cabinet

August 23, 2021