



# COLLEGE OF THE MAINLAND DE FACULTY HANDBOOK

December 2025

## DESCRIPTION

The DE Faculty Handbook is a living document that is updated on an as-needed basis by the Director of Educational Technology Services with input from the Distance Education Committee

## **About this Handbook**

This content is maintained by College of the Mainland's Educational Technology Services Department and the Distance Education Committee.

There may be occasions when conditions are outside the guidelines provided in this handbook. When such situations occur, the DE Executive Committee will review all available information and make a recommendation to the deans and the Vice President of Academic Affairs for final resolution.

### **I: Distance Education Mission**

To provide educational opportunities to students through an alternative delivery method, College of the Mainland faculty will provide and promote superior distance education in keeping with expectations of local industry and 4-year institutions.

### **II: General Information**

College of the Mainland Website

[www.com.edu](http://www.com.edu)

College of the Mainland Disability Services

<https://www.com.edu/counseling/disability-services>

College of the Mainland Distance Education Announcements Page

<https://apps.com.edu/blackboard/>

College of the Mainland Educational Technology Site

<http://edtech.com.edu/>

College of the Mainland Educational Technology Support Requests

<http://de-support.com.edu/>

From the COM website, you can access the Distance Education announcements page by clicking on D2L under the "Get Connected - Online Resources" section and then clicking D2L Login in the upper right-hand corner of the page.

Additionally, you can directly access the College of the Mainland D2L site at this URL:  
[www.com.edu](http://www.com.edu)

### **Contact Information:**

Educational Technology Services Offices

409-933-8445

Director of Educational Technology

409-933-8207

Learning Management System Admin

409-933-8206

Instructional Designers

409-933-8453

Media Services

409-933-8634

## **Table of Contents**

<b>Academic Standards of Online Instruction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Evaluation of Instruction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Curriculum and Instruction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Distance Education Committee</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>DE Committee membership is composed of</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Members of the DEC are expected to</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>DE Executive Committee</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Distance Education at COM</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Goals</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Distance Education Standards</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Online Attendance Best Practices</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>What to do Before, During, and After Your Online Course</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Evaluation and Professional Development</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Program Assessment</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Faculty Expectations</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Best Practices for Online Faculty</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Definitions</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Online Course Development</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Difference Between Face-to-face, Hybrid, Online, &amp; 100% Online</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>DE Faculty Mentor</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Faculty Training and Certification</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Pedagogical and Technological Proficiency</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Training Flexibility</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Course Development</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Accessibility Compliance</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>New Online Course Development Process</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Course Planning</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Content Creation</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Technology Integration</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Interaction and Engagement</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Assessment Design</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Quality Assurance</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Launch and Support</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>New Online Courses (Non-Master)</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>New Online Master Course Requirements</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Ownership/Copyright</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Online Course Review Forms/Documents</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Faculty Concerns Related to Review Results</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Training and Support</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Guidelines, Best Practices, and FAQ</b>	<b>17</b>

**Academic Standards of Online Instruction**

College of the Mainland (COM) will provide quality distance learning opportunities for students in support of the vision, mission, and values of the College.

Online instruction will meet the same standards and academic rigor as its traditional counterparts, adhere to the guidelines outlined in the Southern Association of Colleges and school's distance education policy statement and will meet the minimum requirements as published in the Distance Education Faculty Handbook.

**Evaluation of Instruction**

Online, anonymous student evaluations will be administered for each section offered to guide improvement of all distance courses. These evaluations will measure the same quality of instruction as traditional sections of a course and also include assessment of the unique methodology used in distance classes to provide feedback to the faculty member.

**Curriculum and Instruction**

Online courses will have the same credit value as the face-to-face equivalent and will include the same student learner outcomes as face-to-face courses.

The cost per credit hour will be identical to the per-credit hour cost of other courses in the College catalog. An additional distance education fee will be charged for each Internet and Hybrid enrollment. (See current catalog for fee structure.)

Department chairs and deans (and/or their designees) are required to complete training in COM's Learning Management System (LMS) in order to effectively monitor distance education courses that reside on the course management system and publisher's websites.

All published class schedules must indicate which course sections will be delivered online, but these courses will not be distinguished on transcripts from sections of these courses delivered in more traditional ways. This designation will be reflected in the section numbers; IN indicates Internet, HY indicates hybrid and CL indicates traditional classroom instruction. Most distance education courses will be offered on the College's current Course Management System to maximize consistency.

Decisions to offer courses or programs through distance education should reflect student need or the necessity for the College to compete with other institutions of higher education. If a degree program/certificate is designed to be offered entirely online, the enrolled student must be able to satisfy all requirements of the degree program/certificate online.

The Vice President for Instruction (VPI), (or his/her designee), the appropriate academic dean (or his/her designee) and the relevant department chair (or his/her designee) shall have instructor access to distance education courses and its materials. The Educational Technology Services (EdTech) director (or his/her designee) shall have the same access to distance education courses as the designer/instructor of record.

### **Distance Education Committee**

The Distance Education Committee (DE Committee) is a sub-committee of the Faculty Senate. The role of the DE Committee is to allow faculty to “assume primary responsibility for and exercise oversight of distance and correspondence education, ensuring both the rigor of programs and the quality of instruction.”

The DE Committee co-chairs will be elected from and by the membership of the DE Committee and will serve for a term of two years which alternate each academic year. The DE Committee co-chairs are not term limited and may be re-elected to multiple consecutive terms.

Only faculty members shall be permitted to vote, and a majority of voting members will constitute a quorum.

### **DE Committee membership is composed of**

- Two committee co-chairs that may also represent an instructional unit
- Faculty representative from each instructional unit
- One current faculty senator who may also represent an instructional unit
- Representative from Information Technology
- Representative from the Library
- Representative from the Tutoring Center
- Educational Technology Services director

### **Members of the DEC are expected to:**

- Attend monthly DE Committee meetings during the fall and spring semesters. Disseminate information to their respective instructional units and ask for feedback when appropriate.
- Review and recommend learning standards for online and hybrid courses
- Review and evaluate technology needs of faculty and the IT Department
- Review and recommend policies to improve student success
- Provide pedagogical and technical training for faculty and staff
- Provide tools for division chairs to evaluate OL faculty and OL courses
- Assess and evaluate the quality of the distance learning program
- Serve on ad hoc committees to support:
  - Faculty Handbook distance education content updates
  - Student Handbook online learner content updates
  - Online course review processes and procedures
- Evaluate course management systems and other software used to support online learning

Committee actions, such as policy recommendations and procedures, will go through the following process:

Distance Education Committee

Instructional Council, chaired by Vice President of Instruction  
President's Cabinet

### **DE Executive Committee**

The role of the Distance Education Executive Committee (DEEC) is to coordinate distance education initiatives at the College. The DEEC is composed of the co-chairs of the Distance Education Committee and the EdTech Director. This committee will meet on a regular basis during long semesters to discuss:

- Distance education issues that impact student success
- Coordination of distance education initiatives at the College
- Formulate recommendations and interact with administration on behalf of the Distance Education Committee
- Develop the agenda for all Distance Education Committee meetings

### **Distance Education at COM**

#### **Goals:**

The goal of Distance Education is to provide students with the opportunity to earn college credit through alternative, technology-based methods of instruction and learning. As an instructor in online courses, your role is to provide these students with the same high- quality instruction they would receive in the physical classroom.

Although the role of distance education faculty is often perceived as passive because students do not directly interact with the instructor in a face-to-face environment, it is the proactive, energetic, engaging, and empathetic instructor who often makes or breaks the course for the student. The most important qualification an instructor brings to an online course is the knowledge of the course content and the ability to communicate this knowledge to the students in an interactive and engaging manner. However, a distance education instructor should also have the following personal characteristics in order to enhance the teaching role:

- A positive attitude towards online courses
- An understanding of the special needs of adult learners
- A good working knowledge of the learning management system
- Excellent interpersonal skills
- Excellent writing skills
- Good telephone communication
- Working knowledge of email
- Adaptability and versatility
- Excellent organizational skills
- An ability to use interactive technologies
- A commitment to timeliness in responding to students
- An interest in trying new forms of communication with students
- An understanding of accessibility requirements

- Organizational skills allowing for easy course navigation

Although the instructor's specific duties in teaching online and hybrid courses will be somewhat different from those in the classroom, the ultimate goal is to provide quality education to our students. Just as our students must have the self-discipline for home study, our instructors must have the flexibility in their teaching to serve these students well. This handbook is designed to help you with the goals and expectations of distance education at College of the Mainland and to make your experience as a distance education instructor a positive one for both you and your students.

## **Distance Education Standards**

### ***Minimum Presence***

The following elements must be present in each course shell and across all modalities (online, hybrid, or face-to-face):

1. A Welcome Announcement which introduces the course and instructor, clarifies the course modality (online, hybrid, or face-to-face), identifies any required software/platforms/special resources, and includes information on Inclusive Access (if applicable.)
2. Accurate and Up-to-Date Syllabus which provides instructor contact information, communicates office hours and location, and reflects accurate course dates, section number(s), and other essential details.
3. An Up-to-Date Gradebook which is updated at least weekly. If a third-party platform is used for grading, it must either automatically sync with the Learning Management System or grades must be entered manually into the Learning Management System each week.

### ***Faculty Responsibilities***

1. Faculty must use the current approved syllabus template as indicated by the Vice President for Instruction.
2. Faculty must post a syllabus/outline specifically for their online course in which the faculty member addresses online assignments, quizzes, tests, discussion boards, journals, wikis, blogs and/or any other type of assessment requirements with due dates, information about adaptive release (if used), and any other pertinent information to help an online student navigate the course.
3. Faculty members and division chairs will ensure the curriculum offered in online courses is consistent and as rigorous as the curriculum offered in face-to-face courses.
4. Course materials posted should be common file types and meet accessibility standards.
5. Student academic support services library, tutoring, Ed Tech support site, testing center, shall be clearly identified in the LMS course shell under the Info & Resources header.
6. Faculty should ensure their textbooks are listed with the College Bookstore for ease of student access. If faculty are using Open Educational Resources (OER), faculty shall provide a link for students to access the textbook.
7. Course orientation is the responsibility of the faculty.

8. In order to clarify expectations for students, all faculty offering distance education courses must create succinct yet substantive summaries of meeting times or delivery methods for publication in the class schedules for each semester. Further, if a faculty requires students to come to campus for testing or other activities, the faculty member must clearly indicate this information in the notes of the class published in the class schedules each semester.
9. Faculty feedback shall be timely and formulated with the goal of improving student performance on all subsequent assignments.
10. Faculty members will establish contact with students at the beginning of the semester and maintain regular communication throughout the term. Communication will employ any suitable means including discussion boards, email, individualized chat sessions (including online "office hours"), telephone, face-to-face communication, math lab, writing lab, etc.
11. Faculty members will respond to a student's voice mail or email within 2 working days.
12. Faculty members will promote instructor-student and student-student interaction.
13. Faculty members will be available to interact with students.
14. Faculty will maintain virtual office hours consistent with college policy.
15. Deadlines and expected activities will be clearly stated at the beginning of the term.
16. Faculty members will monitor student's participation and progress and follow the online attendance policy posted in the college catalog for withdrawal as used for on-campus classes.
17. All distance education faculty members will use the college's approved Learning Management System. Supplemental learning management systems and outside learning resources will be linked inside the faculty member's course.
18. All electronic and information resources developed, procured or changed by an institution of higher education shall comply with the accessibility standards for institutions of higher education Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments in Sections 504 and 508.
19. It is the responsibility of the instructor to ensure all copyright provisions are met and permissions have been obtained as appropriate.
20. Regardless of whether the course is online, hybrid, or face-to-face, all faculty must maintain an up-to-date gradebook for all courses.
21. Faculty will work to ensure online/hybrid courses meet the best practices as outlined in the Guidelines, Best Practices, and FAQ section of this Educational Technology SharePoint site.
22. Disaster Preparation Expectation - Instructors should use the institution's LMS to ensure continuity during shutdowns. Post syllabi, create content folders for lecture notes, presentations, videos, and other materials. Additionally, set up assignments and tests to keep classwork progressing.

### ***Administrative Responsibilities***

1. Faculty will meet with their department chairs and the distance education coordinator prior to the development of an online or hybrid course.

2. Faculty will complete the online/hybrid course approval process before the design of the course in the institution's LMS.
3. All online courses will undergo student evaluation consistent with the evaluation methods utilized in face-to-face courses.
4. Technical support for distance education courses and related support services will be provided through College of the Mainland's structured services offered through the Educational Technology Services Department.
5. Support for Financial Aid, Library Resources, Counseling, Special Student Services, Career Services are offered through College of the Mainland's website.
6. Distance education faculty will be assisted through training opportunities to develop online learning and assessment materials and provided with ongoing professional development activities.
7. Adjunct faculty and full-time faculty will meet the same requirements to teach online courses as they do in face-to-face courses.
8. All distance education faculty must have documentation, on file in Educational Technology Services, of an online training certification for online instruction, or an equivalent accepted by the Distance Education Committee.
9. Students will retain the same rights to privacy in online classes as they would in a traditional classroom environment. Confidential information (including grades, private contact information, or personal information directly attributed to a student) should be transmitted only through secure interaction. Online discussion boards, open chat rooms, or group emails will not be used as a forum to post grades.

### **Online Attendance Best Practices**

In a distance education context, documenting that a student has logged into an online class is not sufficient, 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 initiating contact with a faculty member to ask a course-related question... – *FSA Handbook 2017-18, Volume 5, p. 61.*  
<http://edtech.com.edu/online-attendance-best-practices/>

### **What to do Before, During, and After Your Online Course**

<http://edtech.com.edu/what-to-do-before-during-and-after-your-online-course/>

### **Evaluation and Professional Development**

Distance Education faculty will be evaluated by their respective Department chairs in a manner consistent with faculty who teach traditional or face-to-face courses. However, Distance Education faculty will set an annual goal to improve their skills in online or hybrid education. Goals can be met through on campus training, professional development day, travel to professional conferences, or additional coursework at another college or university. The faculty members will work with their department chairs to identify appropriate goals.

### **Program Assessment**

Every 3 years, the Distance Education Coordinator will conduct a program review to evaluate the overall quality of Distance Education at the college. The review will assess the program on an institutional level. Topics will include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Completion Rates
2. Technology Needs
3. Faculty Training and Professional Development
4. Student Preparation
5. Institutional Support
6. Counseling and Advising
7. Governance and Policy Making

### **Faculty Expectations**

<http://edtech.com.edu/faculty-expectations/>

### **Best Practices for Online Faculty**

<http://edtech.com.edu/best-practices-for-online-faculty/>

### **Definitions**

#### ***Internet (IN)***

Internet (online) courses are courses where more than 85% of the planned instruction occurs when the students and instructor are not in the same place. Some courses may require face-to-face sessions totaling no more than 15% of the instructional time. Face-to-face requirements will be listed in the comment section of the course registration system and in the course syllabus. Students must have Internet access, be able to use email and the web, create and save documents in specific file formats and upload files as an attachment.

#### ***Hybrid (HY)***

Hybrid (blended) courses are courses where a majority (more than 50 percent but less than 85 percent) of the planned instruction occurs when the students and instructor are not in the same place. Typically, hybrid courses require less than 50% of scheduled instruction be conducted on campus with the rest conducted asynchronously via the institution's LMS. The course syllabus will contain a section delineating the integration between face-to-face and online instruction. Additionally, it will discuss how the online environment connects and supports the classroom activities. Students must have Internet access, be able to use email and the web, create and save documents in specific file formats and upload files as an attachment.

#### ***Classroom (CL)***

Classroom courses are traditional courses which provide 100% of the planned instruction in a traditional classroom on campus. All classroom courses will have an LMS shell provided which may be used to provide students with access to web-based course resources and/or assessments.

### Online Course Development

**Figure 1. Understanding the Difference Between Face-to-face, Hybrid, Online, & 100% Online**

Teaching Online Certification & LMS Training	Delivery Method for Courses	Class Schedule Symbol	Online/ F2F Instruction Split
Not Required	Face-to-Face	CL	All content <b>CAN BE</b> in D2L Brightspace. 1%-50% Instruction in the LMS. e.g., Class meets face-to-face as scheduled in the semester unless otherwise stated by the instructor.
Required	Hybrid	HY	All content <b>MUST</b> be in D2L Brightspace. 51%-99% Instruction in the LMS. e.g., Class will meet face- to-face 8 times or less in a 15-week semester course.
Required	100% Online	IN	All content <b>MUST</b> be in D2L Brightspace.

#### **Master Course**

A Master Course is a course that has been created by one or more faculty members with content area expertise which has successfully completed the Online Course Development in addition to requirements that are unique to master courses. The Master Course will be maintained at this exemplary level by the course developer and made available to other faculty (fulltime and adjuncts) to be used as the basis for teaching the course at College of the Mainland for a period of three years. A course's status as a Master Course will expire at the end of three years but can be renewed for an additional three years by passing an online course review. (Faculty will only be compensated once for each master course.) All faculty members are urged to use available Master Courses.

#### **Archive**

Archiving a course creates a course snapshot at a specific date and time in a downloadable compressed (zip) file containing a copy of the course's content. An archive can be configured to include or exclude student data. Archiving a course does not delete the course from the system. It is the responsibility of each faculty member to archive each section to comply with department record keeping requirements.

#### **Export**

Exporting a course creates a course snapshot at a specific date and time in a downloadable compressed (zip) file containing a copy of the course's content but not user interactions. Exporting a course does not delete the course from the system.

## **Faculty Training and Certification**

### **1. Pedagogical and Technological Proficiency:**

- Faculty must complete training or certification in online teaching methodologies, instructional design, and technology proficiency, including the learning management system (LMS) currently used by COM, such as Desire2Learn (D2L) Brightspace. This training should cover:
  - Strategies for promoting student engagement and participation
  - Active learning techniques and assessment methods
  - Continuous professional development in online teaching practices and educational technologies
- Design and Delivery Training: This training module focuses on effective strategies for engaging students in the online environment, emphasizing interactive activities and learner-centered approaches.
- ADA Best Practices: Faculty will receive instruction on universal design principles and accessibility best practices within the LMS, ensuring that course materials are accessible to all students.
- Brightspace Community LMS Training: Faculty will undergo training on the user interface and functionality of the D2L Brightspace LMS, equipping them with the necessary skills to navigate the platform and effectively utilize its features for course delivery.

### **2. Training Flexibility:**

Flexibility allows faculty to demonstrate their proficiency through various avenues, ensuring that they possess the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively teach online and hybrid courses at College of the Mainland. Faculty have the option to either:

- Participate in all relevant training modules outlined in the Pedagogical and Technological Proficiency section.
- Test out based on past experience teaching online at COM, subject to approval by the appropriate academic department or administrative authority.
- Present verified certification from another qualified and certified college institution, demonstrating proficiency in online teaching methodologies, instructional design, and technology use, as deemed acceptable by the academic department or administrative authority.

### **3. Course Development:**

- Faculty are expected to design online and hybrid courses aligned with COM's curriculum standards and learning outcomes. This includes:
  - Developing engaging content and interactive activities
  - Incorporating multimedia resources to enhance student learning

### **4. Accessibility Compliance:**

- All online course materials must adhere to accessibility standards to ensure usability by students with disabilities. Faculty should receive training on accessibility guidelines and apply them when creating course content.

By meeting these specific requirements, COM faculty will be adequately prepared to deliver effective online and hybrid courses that meet the needs of diverse learners and uphold the college's standards of excellence in education.

### **New Online Course Development Process**

Welcome to the exciting journey of developing a new online course! Creating an effective and engaging online learning experience requires careful planning, thoughtful design, and a focus on student success. This process involves shaping content, designing assessments, and integrating technology to provide a dynamic and accessible learning environment.

The Online Course Readiness Rubric (OCR), based on established work by SUNY and OSCQR, will be used as the instrument to measure the minimum requirements of a quality online course.

SUNY stands for the State University of New York, which is a system of public institutions of higher education in the state of New York. SUNY provides various resources, including guidelines and best practices, to support quality online course development.

OSCQR, or Open SUNY Course Quality Review, is an initiative within SUNY that focuses on developing a set of rubrics and benchmarks for assessing the quality of online courses. The OSCQR rubric serves as a comprehensive tool for evaluating and enhancing the design of online courses to ensure they meet high standards of excellence in education.

The OCR has been further refined using prior best practices at College of the Mainland, with substantial input from faculty on the DE committee. This rubric serves as a comprehensive tool for evaluating and enhancing the design of online courses to ensure they meet high standards of excellence in education.

As course content is purview of the faculty and department, the OCR does not focus on course content specifically but rather on the extent to which material is presented in a clear, well-organized, and learner-focused manner.

The course creation process seeks to achieve the institutional goal of offering and maintaining high-quality online courses by:

- Helping faculty establish and maintain high-quality online courses through constructive feedback and suggestions about how to improve the course to align with the quality standards of the rubric.
- Implementing a faculty-driven review process whereby all online courses are reviewed for quality assurance.
- Reporting the results of the peer review to faculty, department chairs, and deans to ensure continuous improvement in online course quality.

The department chair or Dean should submit an email request to the director of Educational Technology Services to begin the new course development process.

### **Course Planning:**

In the course planning stage, faculty will lay the foundation for a successful online learning experience. This involves defining clear learning objectives, structuring content in a logical sequence, and considering various instructional methods to engage students. Through thoughtful planning, instructors will create a roadmap for the entire course, ensuring alignment with educational goals and a seamless flow of information.

- Instructional Designer is assigned to assist faculty members.
- Establish a timeline and meeting schedule.
- Define course objectives and learning outcomes.
- Identify target audience and prerequisites.
- Plan the overall structure and organization of the course.

### **Content Creation:**

In the content creation phase, faculty will craft engaging and pedagogically sound materials tailored to the online learning environment. This involves developing multimedia resources, creating instructional videos, and structuring content for optimal comprehension. Attention to diverse learning styles and the use of interactive elements will contribute to a rich and dynamic educational experience for students.

- Develop engaging and relevant course content.
- Create multimedia elements (videos, presentations, etc.).
- Ensure alignment of content with learning objectives.

### **Technology Integration:**

During the technology integration stage, faculty will seamlessly incorporate digital tools and platforms to enhance the online learning experience. This includes selecting an appropriate Learning Management System (LMS), integrating multimedia elements, and ensuring compatibility with various devices. Emphasizing user-friendly interfaces and interactive features will contribute to a technologically enriched and accessible course environment.

- Select and set up the Learning Management System (LMS).
- Incorporate relevant educational technologies.
- Ensure accessibility and usability for all students.

### **Interaction and Engagement:**

In the interaction and engagement section, faculty focus on fostering active participation and collaboration among students. This includes designing discussion forums, interactive assignments, and group activities to promote meaningful student interactions. Implementing strategies for real-time communication and feedback helps cultivate a vibrant and supportive online learning community.

- Design opportunities for student interaction.
- Implement discussion forums, group activities, and collaborative projects.
- Foster an engaging online learning environment.

### **Assessment Design:**

In the assessment design section, faculty concentrates on creating effective evaluation methods aligned with course objectives. This involves designing quizzes, exams, projects, or other assessments that accurately measure student learning. Faculty also explore technologies and tools for fair and efficient grading, ensuring a comprehensive and meaningful assessment strategy for online courses.

- Develop assessments, quizzes, and assignments.
- Establish grading criteria and rubrics.
- Align assessments with course objectives.
- Setup gradebook.

#### **Quality Assurance:**

The quality assurance section focuses on ensuring the overall effectiveness and integrity of the online course. Faculty engage in thorough reviews to identify and address potential issues related to content clarity, technology functionality, and alignment with learning objectives. This stage ensures a high-quality, reliable, and student-friendly online learning experience.

- Review and test all course elements.
- Ensure multimedia elements work correctly.
- Check for accessibility and usability.
- Ensure compliance with COM new course development rubric.

#### **Launch and Support:**

The launch and support section marks the transition of the online course from development to implementation. Faculty receive guidance on executing a successful course launch, including communication strategies and support mechanisms. Ongoing assistance is provided to address any challenges, ensuring a smooth and effective learning experience for both faculty and students throughout the course duration.

- Officially launch the online course.
- Provide ongoing support to students.
- Conduct course evaluations and make necessary adjustments for continuous improvement.

In conclusion, your active participation in the new online course development process is a pivotal contribution to student success at College of the Mainland. By engaging with the comprehensive rubric, based on the best practices outlined by SUNY and OSCQR, you are not only enhancing your teaching practices but also shaping a positive and impactful learning environment for our students. Your commitment to quality online education plays a crucial role in ensuring the continued success of our academic community. Join us in this transformative journey, and together, let's create enriching online experiences that empower our students to excel.

#### **New Online Courses (Non-Master)**

All course information documents (e.g., syllabus, read me first etc...) as well as the content (e.g., lecture notes, assignments, exams, discussions, etc...) that would be necessary for a student to complete the first 50% of the course must be complete and posted in the online course prior to the beginning of the course review process. Courses should be easy to navigate

and course content should be in web friendly format such as .pdf or .html files. The course file system should be organized with a logical folder structure. Detailed information and best practices for building course content can be found in the Online Course Readiness documents located on the faculty page of the EdTech website.

### **New Online Master Course Requirements**

All Master courses must contain the elements described in the New Online Course section (above) as well as the additional requirements outlined below.

#### **1. Adopting Faculty Instructions**

All master courses must contain a Faculty Instructions file for the faculty member who adopts the master course. This file will provide instructions on how to modify and save the syllabus in .pdf format, add due dates to the schedule, calendar and all assessments. The file should be easy to find and hidden from student view. If the course contains publisher content (in or outside of the institution's LMS) detailed instructions must be provided.

#### **Hybrid Master Course:**

All materials needed to conduct the face-to-face portion of a hybrid master course must be developed and stored in an Instructor Resource folder in the file area of the online course. Materials could include but are not limited to:

- Lesson Guides
- Handouts
- Lab Documents
- Faculty Lab Guides

#### **2. Syllabus**

Master course syllabi must contain all required components per the Faculty and DE Faculty Handbooks and must be specific about course and college requirements but should not contain information unique to teacher or semester. The syllabus must be complete including all assessments, assignments and their alignment to Core Objectives and student learner outcomes. The official syllabus template is available in the Faculty Resources course on the institution's LMS.

- Schedules (if included in the syllabus) should not contain due dates.
- Schedules for 16-, 8- and 5-week semesters will be developed and placed in a Syllabus folder in the Control Panel/Files area of the master course.
- All documents must be provided in an editable format. Microsoft Word is preferred. Creating a syllabus using SoftChalk is not recommended because of the difficulty in making modifications.
- All areas of the document that need to be modified (teacher name, contact info, schedule) should be highlighted.

#### **3. Assessments – (All gradable activities)**

Assessments should not have due dates or adaptive release criteria. Instructions should provide suggested due dates as they relate to a semester not to a particular month and date.

Example: Assignment One, Quiz One: due by the end of the first week of class.

#### **4. Course File System**

The File structure, in the Control Panel/Content Collection portion of the course, should be well organized and easy to traverse. Content should be organized in folders using intuitive naming conventions. Empty and/or unused files and folders should be removed.

#### **5. Approved Master Courses**

To be designated as a Master course, the course must be fully developed with all content, activities and assessments needed for the full duration of the course and contain the additional Master Course elements listed above. The course must also successfully complete the Online Course Review process with an Exemplary rating. Final course approval will be determined by the department chair, dean and Vice President for Instruction.

The faculty developer of a Master course must agree to maintain the course in exemplary condition for three academic years after it has been approved as a master course.

#### **6. Requesting Master Course Content**

Faculty who wish to use a Master course will request the Master course by submitting a request through <http://de-support.com.edu/>. A member of the EdTech staff will retrieve a copy of the most recent Master course content and place it into the LMS course section of the requested faculty member. Faculty members who adopt a Master course may add content to the course but may not alter the existing Master course content.

#### **Ownership/Copyright**

Ownership of the original electronic content developed for use in distance classes under the auspices of the College will be assigned in keeping with COM policy CT (Local).

It is the responsibility of the individual developing the online course to ensure that written copyright permissions are obtained where needed for any copyrighted course materials used in the development of that online course as outlined in COM policy CT (Legal).

#### **Online Course Review Forms/Documents**

##### ***Application to Develop an Online Credit Course and Memorandum of Understanding***

Used to get initial approval to develop a new online course. Provides supporting documentation for PAF submission for successful Master course creation.

##### ***Online Course Readiness Criteria***

Course Readiness rubric sets online course development expectations.

##### ***Online Course Readiness Report***

Report generated by the Review Team as a result of completing an Online Course Review.

#### **Faculty Concerns Related to Review Results**

If, at any time, a faculty member has concerns or questions about a completed Online Course Review Report or Revision, those concerns or questions will be directed to the members of the Review Team. If the response from the Review Team does not adequately address the faculty members' concerns, the faculty member may then take his/her concerns or questions to the OCR Chair for final resolution.

[\*Training and Support\*](#)

[\*Guidelines, Best Practices, and FAQ\*](#)