FACULTY CERTIFICATION and RECERTIFICATION
FOR ONLINE AND HYBRID COURSE DEVELOPMENT
SUNY NEW PALTZ

Statement of Purpose

In keeping with its long-standing reputation for academic excellence and exceptional teaching, SUNY New Paltz is committed to the development and delivery of high quality online and hybrid learning environments. Online and hybrid learning environments are different from more traditional face-to-face models, and many teaching faculty have limited experience as students or teachers in the online and/or hybrid environments. Moreover, evolving standards for accessibility in the online and hybrid environment are complex, and many faculty require assistance in developing and maintaining online/hybrid courses that meet legal requirements for accessibility. Therefore, the development of online and hybrid courses demands special consideration and attention, and appropriate faculty development, support, and compensation is warranted.

Policy Statement

In the February 2014 Academic and Professional Faculty Meeting, the C.C.E.T. (now renamed the Committee on Education Technology or C.E.T.) proposed a policy statement for verification of faculty expertise for teaching on-line/hybrid courses. The proposal, which received a positive vote, was as follows:

> *The Central Committee on Educational Technology recommends the replacement of the current review process for online/hybrid courses from the current course-based process of Curriculum Committee/Graduate Council review for existing courses to a faculty-focused, verification process with the goal of assisting faculty in developing pedagogical and technical expertise to move courses to online/hybrid environment.*
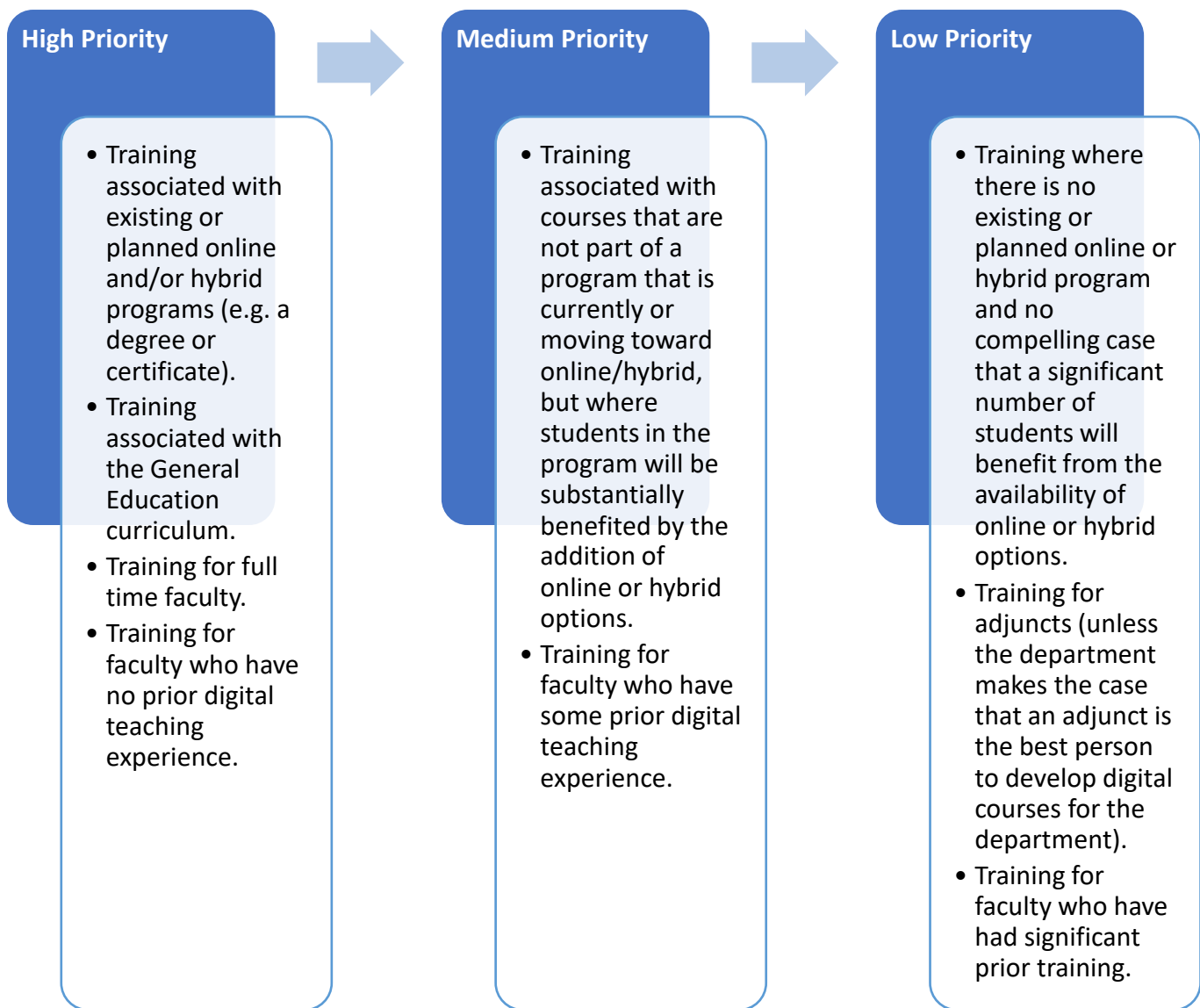
Rationale

The processes for implementing this policy have undergone multiple revisions since the policy was adopted in 2014. The 2017 reorganization of Graduate and Extended Learning and the hiring of a new Assistant Vice President for Graduate and Extended Learning has provided an opportunity to revisit the existing, evolving processes. The 2017-18 co-chairs of the C.E.T. (Jason Wrench and Rachel Rigolino), Instructional Design (Kate Bohan and Rich McElrath), and the AVP for Graduate and Extended Learning (Shala Mills) have met to consider the strengths and weaknesses of the current processes and procedures. Informed by their individual experience and by feedback from administrators and faculty, they collectively offer this proposed set of procedures aimed at better implementing the approved policy.

Procedural Guidelines
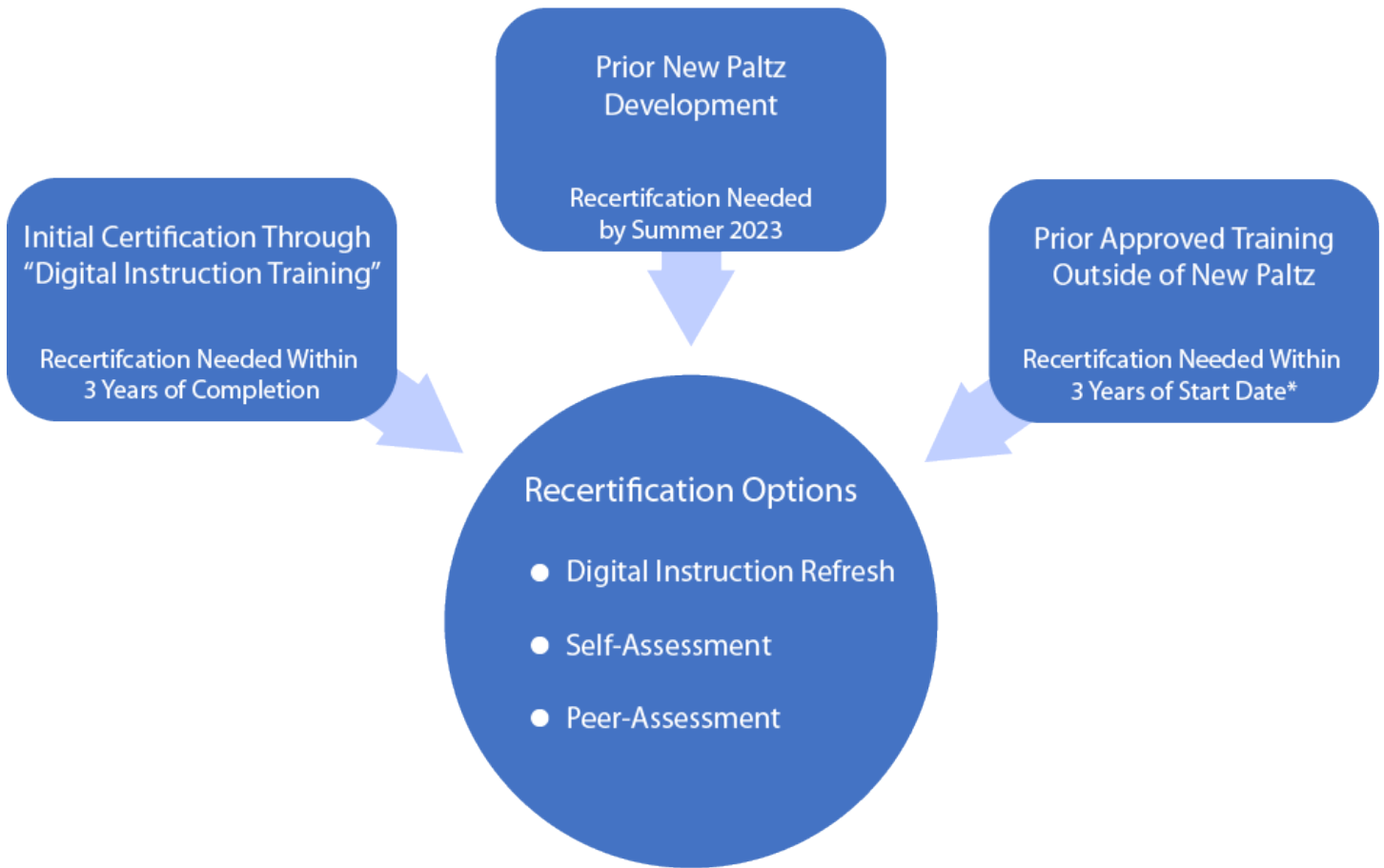
Training Prioritization

Because the training to develop high quality online and hybrid courses requires significant institutional investment, funding for that training should be guided by recognized priorities:

High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority

High Priority

- Training associated with existing or planned online and/or hybrid programs (e.g. a degree or certificate).
- Training associated with the General Education curriculum.
- Training for full time faculty.
- Training for faculty who have no prior digital teaching experience.

Medium Priority

- Training associated with courses that are not part of a program that is currently or moving toward online/hybrid, but where students in the program will be substantially benefited by the addition of online or hybrid options.
- Training for faculty who have some prior digital teaching experience.

Low Priority

- Training where there is no existing or planned online or hybrid program and no compelling case that a significant number of students will benefit from the availability of online or hybrid options.
- Training for adjuncts (unless the department makes the case that an adjunct is the best person to develop digital courses for the department).
- Training for faculty who have had significant prior training.

In order to manage these priorities, all online or hybrid faculty and course developments must have prior approval of the Chair, Dean, AVP for Graduate and Extended Learning, and Provost.

Initial Certification or Prior Development Status and Recertification Options

Prior New Paltz Development

Recertifcation Needed by Summer 2023

Initial Certification Through "Digital Instruction Training"

Recertifcation Needed Within 3 Years of Completion

Prior Approved Training Outside of New Paltz

Recertifcation Needed Within 3 Years of Start Date*

Recertification Options

- Digital Instruction Refresh
- Self-Assessment
- Peer-Assessment

*Faculty approved prior to Fall 2020 need recertification by Summer 2023

Initial Certification

Initial Digital Instruction <u>Training</u> is appropriate where a faculty member is new to teaching in the digital environment. Initial Certification through completion of the Digital Instruction Training is required for all faculty teaching online or hybrid who do not meet one of these exceptions: 1) faculty who were granted initial certification through prior training at New Paltz, or 2) faculty who have been approved to teach online/hybrid at New Paltz based on documentation of training at another institution.

Process
- The faculty member identifies a course that will be developed as part of the training exercise.
- The faculty member must complete a series of asynchronous, on-line tutorials, working one-on-one with their assigned instructional designer through each phase of the course development process, seeking technical and online learning best-practice input and advice while maintaining independence regarding disciplinary expertise and content.

- The instructional designer will provide the faculty developer with standard best-practice guidelines for online learning; guidelines and resources regarding accessibility; any appropriate templates; and access to Bb or other platforms necessary for the development of a course,
- Once the course development is complete, the faculty developer and instructional designer will meet with the department chair to review the final course development and seek final feedback and departmental approval (with the chair giving particular attention to the disciplinary content, appropriateness for the overall departmental program, and quality of the course development).

Timeframe
- Development takes place prior to the semester in which the class is taught.
- The process should not take more than 16-weeks.

Payment
- Payment for Initial Certification is $1,000 per credit hour for the course (ie: a 3-hour course is $3,000). Payment will be made upon successful completion of the training.

Three Year Certification
Once certified by the instructional designer and the department chair:

- The faculty member is certified to develop and deliver other online/hybrid courses for a period of 3 years, without additional training. However, if the faculty member develops a new course that is in a modality they have not previously developed (ex: the faculty member has developed and delivered online courses, but now wants to develop/deliver a hybrid course), then they should consult with the instructional design team to determine what additional training might be appropriate.
- The faculty member may seek assistance from the Instructional Design Team and are encouraged to participate in workshops.
- The faculty member must be recertified every three years (See recertification details below).
    - Faculty who have gone through any prior New Paltz Certification must go through recertification by the end of Summer 2024.
    - Faculty who have previously been approved to teach online/hybrid on the basis of prior experience at another institution must go through recertification by the end of Summer 2023.
    - Beginning Fall 2020, faculty who are initially approved to teach on the basis of prior experience at another institution must go through recertification within 3 years of their first online/hybrid course taught at New Paltz.

Recertification
Open SUNY best practices require us, as an institution, to review our online courses for quality assurance. Moreover, the institution has a legal and moral responsibility to provide accessible learning spaces. Thus regular review and revision to ensure both quality and accessibility is critical. Recertification is required every 3 years and can be done in one of three ways:

Recertification through Digital Instruction Refresh
1. Recertification through Digital Instruction Refresh uses the same training content as the Digital Instruction Training for Initial Certification.
    a. The faculty member identifies a course that will be newly developed or *significantly* re-developed as part of the training exercise.

b. The faculty member must complete a series of asynchronous, on-line tutorials, working one-on-one with their assigned instructional designer through each phase of the course development process, seeking technical and online learning best-practice input and advice while maintaining independence regarding disciplinary expertise and content.

c. The instructional designer will provide the faculty developer with standard best-practice guidelines for online learning; guidelines and resources regarding accessibility; any appropriate templates; and access to Bb or other platforms necessary for the development of a course.

d. Once the course development is complete, the faculty developer and instructional designer will meet with the department chair to review the final course development and seek final feedback and departmental approval (with the chair giving particular attention to the disciplinary content, appropriateness for the overall departmental program, and quality of the course development).

2. Recertification through the Digital Instruction Refresh is $500 per credit hour for the course (ie: a 3-hour course is $1,500), typically with no more than one paid digital instruction or digital instruction refresh per faculty member within a 3-year certification window.

Recertification Through Self-Assessment and Revision

1. For recertification through self-assessment, the faculty member identifies a course that will be reviewed and revised using the OSCQR rubric and WCAG standards.

2. The faculty member meets with an instructional designer to review the beginning status of the identified course and discuss the process for Self-Assessment. Where this initial session reveals the need for significant revision, the faculty member may consider whether the Digital Instruction Refresher is a more appropriate approach.

3. The faculty member then reviews the identified course and makes appropriate modifications, documenting the self-assessment and revision using the associated rubrics.

4. The faculty member then meets with the instructional designer to review the self-assessment and revision.

5. Approval of the self-assessment and revision work will result in recertification for a period of 3 years.

6. Funding may be possible if coupled with continuing education or other funding sources where available and appropriate.

7. Timeline for Self-Assessment varies.

Recertification Through Peer-Assessment and Revision

1. Academic divisions may create peer-assessment models so that faculty in their college or department can collaborate and support one another in online learning design. Additionally, experienced and successful online faculty from any academic division may serve as university-wide peer-mentors.

2. Where these peer-assessment models make appropriate use of OSCQR and WCAG standards, and where instructional designers are consulted to review the OSCQR and WCAG documentation and course revision, then the peer-assessment may result in recertification for a period of 3 years.

3. Funding may be possible if coupled with continuing education or other funding sources where available and appropriate.

4. Faculty participating in the campus-wide peer mentoring program will receive the benefits associated with that program.

5. Timeline for Peer-Assessment varies.

Continuing Online/Hybrid Education Funding

Continuing Online/Hybrid Education may, of course, be done independently and outside these procedures. But where Continuing Online/Hybrid Education involves completing a program that has a fee, or significant time investment, the faculty member may apply for Continuing Online/Hybrid Education Funding.

1. A faculty member may apply for continuing education support (up to $200 total) for such approved faculty development. Some third party professional development programs involve additional costs beyond the maximum $200 award that would be the responsibility of the faculty member.
    a) In all applications for Continuing Education funding, the faculty member must document ways in which he/she/they has/have or plans to incorporate the training into one or more of his/her/their courses.
    b) Also, the faculty member must document the completion of the Continuing Education program (ie: by proving evidence of registration, attendance, certification, badging or other completion documentation) in order to receive the funding.
2. Examples of Continuing Education for which a funding application may be appropriate:
    a) LinkedIn Learning certification. The faculty member may choose from a pre-approved playlist or may work one-on-one with an Instructional Designer and his/her/their Chair to design an approved playlist. To receive the continuing education support funds, the playlist must involve a minimum of 10 hours of instruction.
    b) SUNY Center for Professional Development. The SUNY Center for Professional Development offers a range of professional development programs. While some webinars are free, seated or fully online programs involve a fee and some include certification upon completion.
    c) Quality Matters and other third-party online quality assurance programs also offer a range of professional development opportunities.
    d) Disciplinary conferences or workshops aimed at online/hybrid professional development specific to your field may qualify for funding.
3. Approval and completion of Continuing Education does not automatically result in recertification for a period of 3 years; however, recertification associated with Continuing Education is possible if coupled with Self-Assessment and Revision as set forth above.

Multiple Sections of a Single Course

In some cases, a department offers multiple online sections of the same course, taught by different instructors. Because course development requires a significant investment of financial and instructional design resources, it is not appropriate for multiple faculty to use development resources to develop highly idiosyncratic versions of the same course.

Where multiple online sections of the same course will be offered by different faculty, the department should meet with the AVP and the Instructional Design Team to discuss an appropriate approach. The approach will likely involve some collaboration to build common elements of a master course shell to be used by any instructors delivering the course. The department can discuss with the instructional designers how best to build in appropriate individuality for course delivery. The department will work with the AVP to discuss the development plan and an appropriate compensation model for that plan.

Training to Deliver an Existing Course
Occasionally, (as may, for example, be the case with multiple sections of a single course), the institution needs someone to deliver an online or hybrid course that has been previously developed for the modality (online or hybrid), but the faculty member who will be delivering the course is new to the modality.

1. Training to Deliver an Existing Course is predicated upon the existence and availability of a well-developed online course in the LMS.
   a) This means that the existing course must substantially comply with OSCQR and accessibility best practices. Prior to requesting a Training to Deliver an Existing Course, the department should meet with an instructional designer to make a preliminary review of the existing course using the OSCQR rubric and WCAG checklist to confirm that substantial work is not needed to meet OSCQR best practices or accessibility requirements.
   b) This also means that the author of the existing course must agree to allow the other faculty member to use the existing course.
2. Because the faculty member is new to the modality:
   a) the instructional designer will provide the faculty developer with standard best-practice guidelines for the modality, guidelines and resources regarding accessibility, and access to the course shell in Bb or the appropriate LMS platform,
   b) the developing faculty member must complete a series of asynchronous, on-line tutorials,
   c) the developing faculty member must complete a one-on-one final session with his/her/their assigned instructional designer, culminating in certification of the faculty member in that modality,
   d) once the faculty member has successfully completed the training, he/she/they may offer the course and other existing and available courses for which the individual is qualified. Because this training is about delivery and not development, this training does not certify the individual to build new courses for online or hybrid delivery.
3. The process should not take more than a month and may be expedited to less than one week upon the request of the Academic Chair and Dean under exigent circumstances (ex: when an instructor change is necessary at the last minute and the only available faculty lack the appropriate certification).
4. Payment for Pathway Three is $500. Payment will be made upon successful completion of the tutorials and the final certification session.

Development of Multiple Courses as Part of an Online/Hybrid Program Launch
Where a department is developing a program or certificate for online/hybrid delivery, then these certification/recertification procedures may need to be adjusted in order to get the entirety of the program ready for launch. The department/program should visit with the AVP to discuss appropriate processes (including training, retraining, template courses, and pay) to prepare the online/hybrid curriculum needed for the program launch. Where such a program is intended for SUNY Online, additional SUNY resources may be available to support the program.

Additional Considerations
1. Adjustments and replacement of existing online and hybrid content can occur at any time.

a) Full-time faculty may make major or minor adjustments to existing online/hybrid courses with or without the consultation of an instructional designer unless specifically directed otherwise by their chair or dean. They are, however, encouraged to do so with online/hybrid best practices in mind.

b) Adjunct faculty should seek prior clarification from their department chairs regarding the appropriate limits to adjustment/replacement of existing online/hybrid content for a specific course they are teaching.

2. Generally, adjuncts should develop courses with the support of a full-time faculty mentor. Please visit with the AVP in situations where there is reason to believe it is appropriate to make an exception to this general rule and if the department needs assistance in identifying an appropriate peer mentor.

3. If concerns about online/hybrid course quality and/or compliance with OSCQR or WCAG standards are brought to the attention of the department (ex: through a student complaint, instructional design team discovery of accessibility compliance issues…), then the institution may require appropriate response and/or remediation.

4. The faculty member and SUNY New Paltz will clarify the copyright and faculty ownership of intellectual property associated with each specific course development. The SUNY system policy can be found at: http://system.suny.edu/academic-affairs/faculty/faculty-ownership/.

a) *"SUNY's policy incorporates the general academic common law work-for-hire exception (to the effect that faculty own the copyright in work produced in the scope of employment), but retains the ability of the University to specifically order or commission a faculty member per written contract to create work-for-hire, in which either the University or the faculty member may own the copyright, as the parties shall agree and reflect in the contract."*

b) SUNY New Paltz is most likely to seek an agreement to retain the copyright in cases where a faculty member is creating the work specifically with the intent for it to be delivered by other faculty.

c) Unless a faculty member is developing the course for delivery by others in his/her/their department, once a faculty member has been paid to develop a course, there is an expectation that he/she/they will deliver that course for SUNY New Paltz at least twice.

Timelines for Digital Instruction Training Applications

The preferred timelines for Digital Instruction Training are as follows. In most cases, review of Applications will be made immediately after the due date and applications received after the due date will be moved to the next training cohort unless space is available, time for development is sufficient, and the need is pressing. Please visit with the AVP for Graduate & Extended Learning if you need to vary from this timeline.

For **Fall or Winter** Course Delivery	For a **Spring or Summer** Course Delivery
• Applications received by **Feb. 1** will be reviewed based on the stated priorities. • Training should begin no later than April 1.	• Applications received by **May 1** will be reviewed based on the stated priorities. • Training should begin no later than Aug. 1.

Training to deliver an existing course or requests for continuing education are done on demand.