

FACULTY CERTIFICATION PATHWAYS

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 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

Online and Hybrid Course Development Prioritization

Because the development of high quality online and hybrid courses requires significant institutional investment, development should be guided by recognized priorities:

1. **Priority 1:** Highest priority will be given to the development of faculty and courses that are part of an existing online and/or hybrid program (e.g. a degree or certificate) or part of the General Education curriculum.

2. **Priority 2:** The next highest priority will be given to the development of faculty and courses that are part of a program that is moving toward online and/or hybrid delivery.
3. **Priority 3:** The next level of priority will be given to the development of faculty and courses that are not part of a program that is currently online/hybrid and is not moving toward online/hybrid delivery, but where enrollments in the course are such that students in the program will be substantially benefited by the addition of online or hybrid options (ex: Fall and/or Spring face-to-face courses routinely fill and students would benefit from the addition of online or hybrid options in the Fall, Spring, Winter, or Summer session).
4. **Priority 4:** The lowest level of priority will be given to the development of faculty and courses where there is no existing or planned online or hybrid program and where there is no compelling case that a significant number of students will benefit from the availability of online or hybrid options.

In order to manage these priorities, all online or hybrid faculty and course developments must have prior approval of:

- a) Chair
- b) Dean
- c) AVP for Graduate and Extended Learning
- d) Provost

Faculty Development and Quality Assurance Pathways

All online and hybrid courses offerings must be associated with one of three faculty development and quality assurance pathways.

1. **Pathway One: Full Development**

Both the course and the developing faculty member are new to the modality (online or hybrid).

- a) The developing faculty member must go through full-certification for the modality (online or hybrid).
- b) The full-certification process involves one-on-one collaboration between the developing faculty member and his/her/their assigned instructional designer in concert with the development of the course.
- c) Because both the developing faculty member and the course are new to the modality:
 - i. the instructional designer will provide the faculty developer with standard best-practice guidelines for the modality, guidelines and resources regarding accessibility, any templates available for the modality, and access to Bb or other platforms necessary for the development of the course,
 - ii. the developing faculty member must complete a series of self-paced, on-line tutorials,
 - iii. the developing faculty member must work one-on-one with his/her/their assigned instructional designer through each phase of the course development process, seeking technical and modality best-practice input and advice while maintaining independence regarding disciplinary expertise and content,
 - iv. 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),
 - v. once certified by the instructional designer and the department chair, the course may be offered in its modality by that faculty member.
 - vi. The process should not take more than 16-weeks.
- d) Payment for Pathway One is \$1,000 per credit hour for the course (ie: a 3-hour course is \$3,000). Payment will be made upon completion of the full certification process.

2. Pathway Two: Course Development

The faculty member has previously been certified in this modality (online or hybrid), but the course is a new course development.

- a) Pathway Two involves one-on-one collaboration between the developing faculty member and his/her/their assigned instructional designer in developing or substantially revising the course for delivery in the modality.
- b) Because the faculty member has already been certified in the modality, the focus is on providing faculty development aimed at introducing the faculty member to new technologies, training the faculty member in any updates to existing technologies, sharing any new templates or guidelines for online/hybrid learning, and assisting the faculty member in gaining OSCQR certification for the new or revised course.
 - i. he/she/they will notify the instructional designer of specific assistance requested for this development (ex: assistance with new LMS features, video production assistance, ...)
 - ii. the instructional designer will provide the faculty developer with standard best-practice guidelines for the modality, templates available for the modality, and access to Bb or other platforms necessary for the development of the course,
 - iii. the faculty developer will check in with his/her/their instructional designer at scheduled points in the development process (beginning, mid-point, near-completion point, and as otherwise needed by the developing faculty member), seeking technical and modality best practices input and advice while maintaining independence regarding disciplinary expertise and content,
 - iv. 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 attention to the disciplinary content, appropriateness for the overall departmental program, and quality of the course development),
 - v. once certified by the instructional designer and the department chair, the course may be offered in its modality by that faculty member.
 - vi. The process should not take more than 16-weeks.
- c) Payment for Pathway Two is \$700 per credit hour for the course (ie: a 3-hour course is \$2,100). Payment will be made upon completion of the certification.

3. Pathway Three: Modality Development

The course has been previously developed for the modality (online or hybrid), and that development shell will be used for course delivery, but the faculty member who will be delivering the course is new to the modality.

Note: A faculty member will be considered "new to the modality" if: 1) he/she/they have never taught a course in that modality at SUNY New Paltz, 2) he/she/they have never taught a course in that modality at another institution, OR 3) he/she/they have not been through any of the pathway certifications at SUNY New Paltz in the last 3 years. In the case of an individual who has taught in that modality at another institution, the chair and instructional designer will confer with the faculty member to determine if modality certification at SUNY New Paltz is appropriate.

- a) The delivering faculty member must go through the modality-certification process.
- b) Because the faculty member is new to the modality:
 - i. 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,
 - i. the developing faculty member must complete a series of self-paced, on-line tutorials,
 - ii. 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,
 - iii. once certified by the instructional designer, the course may be offered in its modality by that faculty member.

- iv. 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).
- c) Payment for Pathway Three is \$500. Payment will be made upon successful completion of the tutorials and the final certification session.

4. Pathway 4: Continuing Education

Continuing Education may, of course, be done independently and outside these procedures. But where Continuing Education involves completing a program that has a fee, or significant time investment, the faculty member may apply for Continuing Education Funding under Pathway 4.

- a) 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.
 - i. In all applications for Pathway 4 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.
 - ii. 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.
- b) Examples of Continuing Education for which a funding application may be appropriate:
 - i. Lynda.com certification. (Note: log in through my.newpaltz.edu) 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.
 - ii. 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.
 - iii. Quality Matters and other third-party online quality assurance programs also offer a range of professional development opportunities.
 - iv. Disciplinary conferences or workshops aimed at online/hybrid professional development specific to your field may qualify for funding.

5. Pathway 5: Self-Assessment and Quality Assurance

OpenSUNY online/hybrid best practices require us, as an institution, to review our online/hybrid courses for quality assurance.

- a) Quality assurance involves keeping oneself abreast of emerging and evolving best practices.
- b) All faculty actively engaged in delivering online or hybrid courses must assist SUNY New Paltz in documenting our quality assurance efforts. If a faculty member has obtained faculty development funding through Pathways 1-4 above, these efforts serve as quality assurance documentation. Where a faculty member is actively delivering online or hybrid courses but has not completed a Pathway 1-4 development in the last three years, then in order to continue delivering online/hybrid courses for SUNY New Paltz, he/she/they must document a Pathway 5 completion. The Office of Instructional Technology maintains the official certification list and will remind faculty annually of re-certification needs.
 - i. Self-assessment. OpenSUNY's OSCQR rubric is designed to facilitate self-assessment. Using the OSCQR rubric, an instructor can review his/her/their online/hybrid courses and make modifications

to those courses where remediation is appropriate. They can then document that self-assessment by meeting with one of the instructional designers to discuss their work.

- ii. Workshop. SUNY New Paltz periodically offers workshops and other opportunities to learn more about the OSCQR standards, accessibility requirements, Blackboard tools or functions, or other topics related to online/hybrid learning. Faculty who attend a workshop can log their attendance as a pathway 5 activity. Faculty can satisfy their re-certification by accumulating 5 workshop points over 3 years. The Office of Instructional Technology will designate workshop points, tied both to time and intensity, and workshop announcements will indicate the points available for the specified workshop.

Additional Considerations

1. All faculty new to a modality (online or hybrid), must become certified through an appropriate pathway.
 - a) Faculty who have been certified in one modality (online or hybrid), go immediately to Pathway Two for certification in the other modality.
 - b) Faculty with prior experience in a modality may seek a waiver with the support of his/her/their department chair and dean.
2. All new course development must proceed through one of the faculty development and quality assurance pathways.
3. 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.
4. No adjuncts can develop courses without a full-time faculty mentor.
5. 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

Pathways 1 and 2

1. *For Fall Course: February 1*. Submit application (Begin Development no later than April 1)
2. *For a Winter Course: May 1*. Submit application (Begin Development no later than August 1)
3. *For Spring Course: May 1*. Submit application (Begin Development no later than August 1)
4. *For a Summer Course: November 1*. Submit Application (Begin Development no later than January 1)

Pathways 3 and 4

On demand, but with approval.