

TITLE: QUALIFICATION OF DISTANCE LEARNING OR HYBRID LEARNING INSTRUCTORS

POLICY NO: 2-1

EFFECTIVE DATE: 10/18/11

VCCS POLICY NO: N/A

REVISED DATE: 02/06/18

I. Purpose:

To ensure an appropriately skilled instructor pool for distance learning by establishing guidelines for the qualification of instructors to teach distance learning or hybrid courses, and by establishing guidelines for documenting ongoing currency of knowledge and skills to teach online and hybrid courses.

II. Definitions:

Center for Distance Learning (CDL): the center that ensures the quality of online courses offered at J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College (Reynolds).

Instructional Design for Online Learning (IDOL): a three (3) credit-hour course (EDU 287) that introduces learners to the fundamentals of creating and organizing online courses according to the ASSURE Model of instructional design and the standards created by Quality Matters™, and for which faculty members receive twenty (20) professional development hours.

Mentor: a faculty member who has been qualified to teach online for two (2) years, and who has been QM™ certified or has an online course that is QM™ certified.

PDO: a professional development opportunity that requires a minimum of one (1) hour of participant engagement in activities that enrich the knowledge, skills, and abilities of online instructors.

Quality-of-delivery review: a review of a distance learning course using Quality Matters™ standards and/or other standards as determined by the faculty member's dean.

Quality Matters™ (QM™): a faculty-centered, peer-review process for certifying distance learning courses. Quality Matters™ and QM™ are trademarks of MarylandOnline (MOL).

Skilled: to demonstrate, through qualifying training or by demonstrating applied knowledge, that one has the basic pedagogical, technological, and administrative skills necessary to teach distance learning courses.

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Teaching Online Program (TOP): a three (3) credit-hour course (EDU 285) that introduces an instructor to the pedagogy, instructional design, and technology for teaching online courses, and for which faculty members receive twenty (20) professional development hours.

Topics in Online Teaching and Learning (TOTAL): a flexible, modular professional development program for Virginia Community College System (VCCS) faculty who teach hybrid, blended, or online courses. These online workshops, provided in the form of interactive modules that are two-to-five weeks in length, are offered through Blackboard and address the pedagogy, instructional design, and technology for teaching online courses. Faculty members receive twenty (20) professional development hours for completing Part One of TOTAL and twenty (20) professional development hours for completing Part Two of TOTAL.

III. Policy:

A. Establishing initial qualifications for teaching online or hybrid courses

Faculty members at Reynolds who want to teach distance learning or hybrid courses must demonstrate the appropriate knowledge and skills to do so. This involves providing evidence of specific applied pedagogical, technological, and administrative skills and submitting a developed online course, using a Reynolds learning management system (LMS) site for review of course design and quality of delivery.

Faculty members who want to teach distance learning or hybrid courses shall follow the guidelines outlined on the Center for Faculty Engagement webpage titled Certification for Teaching Online at Reynolds. After following that process, faculty will submit [JSRCC Form No. 60-0010](#), Request to Teach Distance Learning Courses. Program heads and deans may take a proactive role in identifying qualified faculty and encourage them to complete the application.

Reynolds prefers that its online faculty obtain the appropriate knowledge and skills by taking EDU 285: Teaching Online Program (TOP), or by completing TOTAL Modules Part 1. Completing TOP or TOTAL Modules Part 1, submitting a developed online course for review, and meeting the quality standards of the course review, identifies the faculty member as eligible to teach distance learning or hybrid courses at Reynolds. Class scheduling decisions, including scheduling for online courses, are made by deans or their designees.

Faculty members who do not complete TOP or TOTAL Modules Part 1 can also qualify to teach distance learning or hybrid courses at Reynolds by completing option A.1, A.2, or B, defined below.

Option A A faculty member new to the college who can produce documented evidence of training in distance learning can opt to demonstrate requisite knowledge and skills by either of the following:

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1. Completing the IDOL course (EDU 287) or TOTAL Modules, Part 2, and submitting a developed online course, using a Reynolds LMS site to demonstrate course design and quality of delivery to CDL. CDL shall use the Course Review Checklist to ensure adherence to Reynolds standards.

-or-

2. Entering into a mentor relationship with an assigned discipline-specific mentor to ensure that the content of the developed online course meets the minimum Reynolds standards.
 - a. The developed online course, using a Reynolds LMS site, shall be submitted to CDL for review of course design and quality of delivery. CDL shall use the Course Review Checklist to ensure adherence to Reynolds standards.
 - b. CDL and the mentor shall make recommendations to the faculty member and the faculty member's dean. The dean's approval will be based on a final review by CDL to assure that recommendations have been implemented and that quality standards are met.
 - c. Qualified mentors shall be identified by program heads and deans, and they shall serve on a voluntary basis. Mentors shall receive ten (10) hours of professional development credit, documented in the Virginia Learning Center (see section IV.A.4. on how to receive credit).

Option B. A current Reynolds faculty member who has taught distance learning or hybrid courses for at least two (2) semesters within the last two (2) years, may continue to teach those courses but must request to have a course reviewed for adherence to QM™ standards for course design.

The course must also undergo a quality-of-delivery review, conducted by CDL in coordination with the Dean. In addition to the results of the QM™ review, this review might include, among other things, the results of a peer review of content, a syllabus analysis, and student evaluations of the course under review.

Whether a faculty member can continue to teach distance learning or hybrid courses in the future may depend on the outcome of the review and approval of the dean and/or the Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA). Once a faculty member's course has received a successful review by CDL and appropriate approval, he or she is considered qualified to teach distance learning or hybrid courses for Reynolds.

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B. Refreshment of skills to teach online or hybrid courses

Faculty members at Reynolds who have not taught an online or hybrid course within the past 18 months will demonstrate their currency in pedagogical knowledge and technology skills by successfully completing at least nine (9) hours of professional development in LMS training and/or online pedagogy, and by submitting a developed online course for review. Professional development options include the QM™ workshops, TOTAL workshops, technology training sessions relevant to online instruction, attendance at relevant conferences, or completion of other relevant coursework. These professional development options should be documented for review by the dean and should have occurred within an 18-month period prior to teaching online.

Faculty who regularly teach online or in hybrid courses are encouraged to maintain currency and improve knowledge and skills by routinely participating in ongoing professional development opportunities in online teaching and learning and technology skills. Professional development options include the QM™ workshops, TOTAL workshops, technology training sessions relevant to online instruction, attendance at relevant conferences, or completion of other coursework connected to teaching and learning. These activities should be documented for dean's review upon request.

Faculty whose course is identified through the CDL course review processes as "does not meet expectations" either for course design or for quality of delivery will be asked by the dean to complete additional professional development and to submit revisions to the online course for review. Renewal of approval to teach online shall be based on course review conducted by CDL and completion of additional professional development as required by the dean.

IV. Procedures:

A. Procedures for qualifying to teach online or hybrid courses

1. Procedure for making a formal application to teach online (TOP graduate, TOTAL Part 1 graduate, Option A., or Option B.)
 - a. The faculty member will complete the [JSRCC Form No. 60-0010](#), Request to Teach Distance Learning Courses, and submit the request to his or her dean.
 - b. The dean will use the CDL's recommendations based on the Course Review Checklist to ensure adherence to Reynolds quality standards.

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- c. If quality standards are not met, CDL will counsel the faculty member through its recommendations until the course meets those standards.
 - d. The names of faculty who have completed the requisite professional development and whose courses meet quality standards will be submitted to deans and the VPAA by CDL.
 - e. In cases where TOP, IDOL, and/or TOTAL Modules (Part 1 and Part 2) have been completed at a VCCS college other than Reynolds, an official transcript documenting successful completion of these courses or modules should be attached to the JSRCC Form No. 60-0010.
 2. Procedure for requesting a mentor (Option A.2.)
 - a. The faculty member will complete the [JSRCC Form No. 60-0010](#), Request to Teach Distance Learning Courses, and submit the request to his or her dean.
 - b. In coordination with the program head, the dean will identify and assign a qualified mentor.
 - c. The mentor will work with the faculty member over the course of one (1) semester to develop an online course. At the end of the semester, the mentor will submit a report with recommendations to the dean and to CDL, copying the faculty member.
 - d. CDL will use the Course Review Checklist to ensure adherence to Reynolds quality standards.
 - e. If quality standards are not met, CDL will counsel the faculty member through its recommendations until the course meets those standards.
 - f. The names of faculty who have completed the requisite professional development and whose courses meet quality standards will be submitted to deans and the VPAA by CDL.
 3. Procedure for requesting to have a course reviewed for compliance with QM™ standards and to request a quality-of-delivery review (Option B.)
 - a. The faculty member will complete the [JSRCC Form No. 60-0010](#), Request to Distance Learning or Hybrid Courses.
 - b. CDL will review the course, and if quality standards are not met, CDL will counsel the faculty member through its recommendations until the course meets those standards.

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c. The names of faculty who have completed the requisite professional development and whose courses meet quality standards will be submitted to deans and the VPAA by CDL.

4. Mentors wishing to receive professional development credit for mentoring a new faculty member will send an email to the manager of training and development requesting ten (10) hours of professional development credit. The faculty member will copy the dean, who will respond to verify the faculty member's eligibility to receive professional development credit.

B. Refreshment of skills to teach online or hybrid courses

Documentation of currency of knowledge, skills, and abilities to effectively teach online or hybrid courses will include the following:

1. Faculty who have not taught an online or hybrid course within the past 18 months will provide documentation of at least nine (9) hours of professional development in LMS training and/or online pedagogy, and submit a developed online course for review to CDL.
2. Faculty who routinely teach online or hybrid courses will provide documentation of ongoing professional development in online pedagogy or LMS technologies as a part of their faculty evaluation.
3. Faculty whose course is identified through the Course Review Checklist as "does not meet expectations" will complete additional training as required by the dean and submit a revised course for review CDL. CDL will counsel the faculty member through its recommendations until the course meets those standards. CDL will submit its final recommendations and report to the dean and the VPAA.

A review of course delivery by the dean or designee is also required. (The Online Classroom visitation that is a part of the comprehensive faculty evaluation may substitute, if done within the last three [3] years.)

V. Other Information:

[JSRCC Form No. 60-0010](#), Request to Teach Distance Learning or Hybrid Courses