

Distance Learning

Faculty Handbook

TVCC Distance Learning Faculty Handbook

Contents

Distance Learning at Trinity Valley Community College	3
Mission Statement	3
Definition (EBB Legal 19 TAC 4.103(9))-	3
TVCC Distance Learning Options.....	3
Online (internet) Course	3
Hybrid (HYD) Course	3
ITV Course	3
Standards and Criteria for Distance Learning Courses (<i>EBB Legal</i>)-	4
Responsibility for Quality.....	4
Faculty Qualifications and Development.....	4
Online Course Approval	4
Minimum Expectations for all Online Courses.....	5
Suggested Timeline of Semester Activities for Online Instructors	5
How to Become an Online Instructor for TVCC	6
Training for Online Faculty.....	6
Quality Matters “Applying the QM Rubric ”	6
Introduction to Teaching with Blackboard 9.1	6
When Should I Complete the Required Training?	6
TVCC’s Course Certification Process	7
Justification for Course Certification	7
TVCC Distance Learning Course Standards Rubric.....	7
Implementation of Course Certification	8
Suggested Distance Learning Instructor Training and Course Certification Timeline	8
Are You Interested in Becoming a TVCC Course Reviewer?	8
Virtual Office Hours for Distance Education Faculty.....	8
Amount of Virtual Office Hours Allowed	8
Posting of Virtual Office Hours	9
Intellectual Property	9
Copyright.....	10

Distance Learning at Trinity Valley Community College

Mission Statement

Trinity Valley Community College is a learning-centered college that provides quality academic, workforce, and community service programs to meet the educational needs of our students and the citizens of our service area. The TVCC Department of Distance Learning is committed to advancing the quality of our distance learning education to meet or exceed the standards of our courses delivered in a traditional, face-to-face manner or in a “hybrid” setting.

Definition (EBB Legal 19 TAC 4.103(9))-

A distance education course refers to instruction in which the majority of the instruction occurs when the students and instructor are not in the same physical setting. A class is considered a distance education class if students receive more than one-half of the instruction at a different location than the instructor. Instruction may be synchronous or asynchronous, delivered to any single or multiple location(s) through electronic, correspondence, or other means.

TVCC Distance Learning Options

Trinity Valley Community College currently offers more than 120 distinct distance learning courses taught by over 80 instructors. Currently, we provide three types of distance courses:

Online (internet) Course – Course materials are presented and student performance is assessed entirely online with limited expectations for the student to travel to campus. The expectations for an online student to travel to campus are limited to taking exams in a proctored setting at one of our TVCC campuses or another secure location agreed upon by the instructor PRIOR to the exam windows. Online course materials and assignments are typically provided via the TVCC e-Course system.

Hybrid (HYD) Course – Hybrid classes combine the best elements of traditional face-to-face instruction with online instruction. Most courses only meet once a week in person with the remainder of instruction occurring online. When teaching a hybrid course, both the face-to-face and online component must be integrated. To minimize or omit the online component is not different than failing to hold required class meetings in a face-to-face class.

ITV Course – Interactive Video Conference instruction meets during regularly scheduled class times. This technology provides the option for instruction to be delivered simultaneously to many sites, including high schools, prison units, and colleges around the state. Instructors assigned to teach ITV courses should notify the Department of Distance Learning at least ONE week in advance of the session so that an ITV room may be reserved.

TVCC Distance Learning Faculty Handbook

Standards and Criteria for Distance Learning Courses (*EBB Legal*)-

- Instruction shall meet the quality standards applicable to on-campus instruction.
- Students shall satisfy the same requirements for admission to the College, to the program of which the course is a part, and to the class/section itself, as are required of on-campus students. Students in programs to be offered collaboratively must meet the admission standards of their home institutions.
- Faculty shall be selected and evaluated by the same standards, review, and approval procedures used by the institution to select and evaluate faculty responsible for on-campus instruction. College Districts shall provide training and support to enhance the added skills required of faculty teaching classes through electronic means.
- The instructor of record shall bear responsibility for the delivery of instruction and for evaluation of student progress.
- All instruction shall be administered by the same entity administering the corresponding on-campus instruction. The supervision, monitoring, and evaluation processes for instructors shall be comparable to those for on-campus instruction.
- Students shall be provided academic support services, including academic advising, counseling, library and other learning resources, and financial aid, appropriate for distance-education and off-campus learners.

Responsibility for Quality

The Vice President of Instruction is responsible for assuring the quality of all Trinity Valley Community College distance learning courses with assistance from the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Associate Vice President for Workforce Education, and the Director of Distance Education. The Provosts and Division Chairs are responsible for the quality of distance learning courses within their respective campuses and schools.

Faculty Qualifications and Development

The same faculty qualifications will be applied to TVCC Distance Learning instructors as to all instructors who teach in a traditional face-to-face setting with Trinity Valley Community College. Although the instructor's specific duties in teaching distance learning courses will vary from those used in teaching within the traditional classroom, the ultimate goal of quality education remains the same.

Online Course Approval

Trinity Valley Community College will maintain the same process for scheduling Distance Learning Courses with faculty as they do with traditional, face-to-face courses. However, Provosts, Associate Vice-Presidents, and Division Chairs will only schedule NEW online instructors that have successfully completed the required training described below as verified by the Department of Distance Learning.

TVCC Distance Learning Faculty Handbook

Minimum Expectations for all Online Courses

To ensure consistent and quality elements in all of the TVCC online courses, distance learning instructors will be expected to include, *at a minimum*, the following in their online course(s):

- A “Start HERE” (or similar) page that is prominently located and provides guidance to the students as they begin the semester
- A COMPLETE syllabus which includes at least the following:
 - Instructor information (i.e. name, contact information, office hours)
 - Expected response time from the instructor
 - Course description
 - Textbook and required course materials information
 - Measurable instructional or learning objectives
 - Course grading framework
 - Assessment/evaluation information
 - Drop policy
 - Cheating policy
 - ADA policy
- Communication about the TVCC course evaluations
- Attachments in a “user friendly” format (i.e. PDF, html) which don’t require special software to open
- Communication with students shall be made using TVCC authenticated accounts ONLY (i.e. e-Courses or TVCC email accounts). Exceptions to this can only be made IF the student requests alternative contact options WITHIN a TVCC authenticated account.

Suggested Timeline of Semester Activities for Online Instructors

Activity	Fall Semester	Spring Semester	Summer Semester
Submit e-Course Request Form to ecourseshelp@tvcc.edu	April 1 st (previous semester)	November 1 st (previous semester)	March 1 st (previous semester)
Upload all syllabi to TVCC website	April 9 th (previous semester)	December 1 st (previous semester)	March 26 th (previous semester)
Have online courses complete and finalized	May 1 st (previous semester)	December 1 st (previous semester)	April 1 st (previous semester)
Have course available for students to begin	NO later than 1 st day of classes	NO later than 1 st day of classes	NO later than 1 st day of classes
Verify/Reconcile TVCC Cardinal Connect Roster with e-course users	End of week 1 AND 12 th class day	End of week 1 AND 12 th class day	End of week 1 AND 12 th class day
Back up and export all online courses and store in location external to e-Courses	NO later than December 10 th	NO later than May 10 th	NO later than August 10 th

TVCC Distance Learning Faculty Handbook

How to Become an Online Instructor for TVCC

In an effort to maximize the quality of presentation and curriculum within our online courses, The Distance Learning Committee for TVCC suggests training components that potential online instructors must complete before having access to their online course. Once the potential online instructor has completed these two training components, they will be provided access to an online course that they may begin developing according to the standards outlined in our Course Certification Rubric. A template course (without content) is available for new instructors to use if they desire. If an instructor chooses this option, they will be provided the template and instructed to use it as a foundation to build upon while incorporating content and evaluation tools. Ideally, a semester will be dedicated to the instructor to build and develop their online course and have two internal evaluators review and certify that the newly developed course meets the standards outlined in the TVCC Course Certification Rubric.

Training for Online Faculty

The Department of Distance Learning provides information and assistance to the instructor as they are completing the required training. The training provided consists of pedagogical concepts of online instruction as well as specific instruction on the Blackboard 9.1 system, which is currently used by TVCC for our e-course platform. Ideally, these two training components consist of:

Quality Matters “Applying the QM Rubric” (APPQMR)

This is a two week online course that costs \$300 and has limited availability each semester. To register for the course, you will need to contact your supervisor and get permission (and account information). *The Applying the QM Rubric (APPQMR) workshop is QM's flagship workshop on the QM Rubric and the process of using the QM Rubric to review online courses. It is intended for a broad audience, including but not limited to faculty, instructional designers, administrators, and adjunct instructors who wish to understand more about the QM Rubric and process of course review. The APPQMR is the pre-requisite for the Peer Reviewer Course, which is the required course to become a QM Peer Reviewer.*

Distance Learning Instructor Course

TVCC uses e-Courses, a Blackboard-based learning management system. The Distance Learning Instructor Course highlights features of the Blackboard Learning Management System (e-Courses) that TVCC uses. You will learn how to use some of the more common applications within e-Courses that will allow you to build course content while managing and assessing learners. This “training” can be completed at your own pace but it is highly recommended that you view the contents prior to teaching online with TVCC. As long as you continue to teach online for TVCC you will remain “enrolled” in the course so you can access the materials and information any time they are needed. When you login to e-Courses you will see this course listed in your main course list.

TVCC Distance Learning Faculty Handbook

When Should I Complete the Required Training?

It is strongly recommended that you take the required training courses two semesters BEFORE you want to teach an online course for TVCC. Once you complete the required courses, you will then have a semester to design and build your course. Even with the assistance of the Department of Distance Learning, you will find that the process of building and designing a course can be quite time consuming if you intend to produce a quality online course that will meet the TVCC Course Certification Standards.

TVCC's Course Certification Process

Justification for Course Certification

With the growing population of online courses AND students, Trinity Valley Community College is committed to ensuring quality online courses. In an effort to provide quality online offerings, the Distance Learning Committee has developed a Course Certification process in which all online courses will undergo an internal review by a 2 course reviewers who have obtained a "peer review" certification by successfully completing a three week online course through Quality Matters.

The TVCC Course Certification process focuses on the quality of online courses and the manner in which content is presented and learners are assessed. Course reviewers will focus on five standards (outlined below) and determine whether or not the minimum expectations are met for each of the standards.

When there are discrepancies between the course and the standards, the course reviewers work individually with the instructor whose course is being reviewed to offer suggestions for improvement. Then, after revisions to the course are made by the course instructor, the reviewer must again navigate through the course to verify that the revisions are adequate and the course "meets" the TVCC standards. The key standards of the rubric include:

TVCC Distance Learning Course Standards Rubric

Distance Education Course Standards Summary	Standard
	<u>Start Here Module:</u> The "Start Here" Module is present, visible, and complete.
	<u>Syllabus:</u> The "Course Syllabus" is available, accessible from the "Start Here" module, and complete.
	<u>Course Design:</u> The course is designed to deliver content in a coherent and sequential manner.
	<u>Course Content:</u> The distance education course is comparable in rigor, depth, and breadth to the same or similar course when taught using traditional face-to-face delivery methods. In using the same learning outcomes, students should spend comparable time completing the distance education course as the same traditional face-to-face course.

TVCC Distance Learning Faculty Handbook

Interaction/Engagement: Instructional methods include effective communication tools to deliver course content and measure student engagement.

Implementation of Course Certification

The Course Certification reviews will be completed for all the Distance Learning Course offerings in an incremental phase. Until full integration, 5-6 courses will be evaluated by at least two internal course reviewers with the Course Certification Rubric every spring semester and fall semester. The selection of the courses to be reviewed will be prioritized in a manner that first identifies high-enrollment courses and then targets instructors who teach multiple online courses. Simultaneously, online courses taught by NEW online faculty will be reviewed while the new instructors are receiving extensive and required training and support to ensure that their courses are created in a manner that is consistent with the TVCC Course Certification rubric. This course certification process will continue until all distance learning courses that are offered have been approved. No later than the 2013 spring semester, ONLY courses which meet the TVCC Course Certification Standards will be approved and scheduled by Provosts, Associate Vice Presidents and Division Chairs each semester.

Suggested Distance Learning Instructor Training and Course Certification Timeline

Target Semester to TEACH Class	Target Semester for Required Training	Target Semester for Course Certification
Fall (option 1)	Previous Spring	Previous Summer
Fall (option 2)	Previous Fall	Previous Spring or Summer
Spring (option 1)	Previous Summer	Previous Fall
Spring (option 2)	Previous Spring	Previous Summer or Fall
Summer	Previous Fall	Previous Spring

Are You Interested in Becoming a TVCC Course Reviewer?

Any TVCC online instructor who wishes to become a TVCC Course Reviewer must complete the Quality Matters Training “Applying the QM Rubric” and “Peer Review Course”. For specific information on registering for these courses and becoming a part of the review team, contact the Department of Distance Learning.

Virtual Office Hours for Distance Education Faculty

College District faculty members shall be eligible to use virtual office hours in accordance with the following:

Amount of Virtual Office Hours Allowed

The maximum number of virtual office hours counted as part of the required 37-1/2 hours of full-time responsibility shall be six hours per week and can be accrued as follows:

TVCC Distance Learning Faculty Handbook

- All College District faculty members shall have one virtual office hour per week to accommodate working with students via internet and blackboard. Students shall be provided a clear method for communicating electronically via e-mail and/or blackboard. Faculty are not required to be in a chat room during virtual office hours but available for electronic communication.
- A faculty member may count a maximum of two virtual office hours per week for each College District internet course taught as part of the employee's regular load. ***Overload internet courses shall not count for virtual office hours.*** Faculty are not required to be in a chat room during virtual office hours but available for electronic communication.
- A faculty member may count a maximum of one virtual office hour per week for each internet laboratory course taught.
- A faculty member may count a maximum of one virtual office hour per week for each course taught that incorporates blackboard as part of the instructional process and is part of the employee's regular load.

Posting of Virtual Office Hours

All office hours must be approved by your immediate supervisor and posted accordingly.

Faculty will need to be available for electronic discussion with students during the virtual the office hours. However, faculty are not required to be in a chat room during virtual office hours, but available for electronic communication.

A faculty member's virtual office hours shall be posted on his or her office door ***and included in the course syllabus posted on the College District's Web site.***

If you have any questions about Virtual Office Hours, please contact your immediate supervisor.

Intellectual Property

As per TVCC board policy CT (Local), All copyrights, trademarks, and other intellectual property rights shall remain with the College District (TVCC) at all times.

As an agent of the College District, an employee, including a student employee, shall not have rights to work he or she creates on College District time or using College District technology resources. The College District shall own any work or work product created by a College District employee in the course and scope of his or her employment, including the right to obtain copyrights.

If the employee obtains a patent for such work, the employee shall grant a non-exclusive, non-transferable, perpetual, royalty-free, College District-wide license to the College District for use of the patented work. A College District employee shall own any work or work product

TVCC Distance Learning Faculty Handbook

produced on his or her own time, away from his or her job and with personal equipment and materials, including the right to obtain patents or copyrights.

Upon the termination of any person's association with the College District, all permission to possess, receive, or modify the College District's intellectual property shall also immediately terminate. All such persons shall return to the College District all intellectual property, including but not limited to any copies, no matter how kept or stored, and whether directly or indirectly possessed by such person.

Copyright

All persons are prohibited from using College District technology in violation of any law including copyright law. Only appropriately licensed programs or software may be used with College District technology resources. No person shall use the College District's technology resources to post, publicize, or duplicate information in violation of copyright law.