COLLEGE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MEMORANDUM No. 14
STANDARDS FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION COURSES

Date of Issue: November 29, 2001
Revised Date: September 17, 2009

This document provides a uniform standard for converting courses for teaching via distance education. The items included are considered fundamental to quality courses. The goal of these standards is to promote high-quality distance education courses. For the purposes of this document, a "distance education course" is a set of materials and activities applied to teaching an institutionally-approved course, predominantly or entirely via the Internet and a course management system (CMS) or learning management system (LMS).

Types of Online Learning
Online learning at Community College of Philadelphia is offered in two types of formats: fully online and hybrid.
Fully Online courses are conducted entirely via the Internet using the College's CMS/LMS and do not require attendance at face-to-face class meetings.
Hybrid courses combine elements of traditional courses and fully-online courses. They involve the integration of regularly-scheduled in-class and online learning, where the online portion of a hybrid course is taught via the Internet using the College's CMS. In a hybrid course, a certain percentage of the class meeting time is replaced by activities that take place in an online setting.

Hosting
Distance courses shall be hosted on a College server or within an approved CMS/LMS.

Distance Course design
Syllabus
When an instructor is assigned an online or hybrid course by the Department Head, he or she will place a public version of his or her course syllabus on a publicly-available web page, made available by the College. Course information contained in the syllabus must be consistent with Departmentally-approved course documents. The public syllabus shall include, but not be limited to:

- Any additional hardware or software requirements for the course, beyond any posted generic hardware/software requirements; this includes requirements of the CMS/LMS;
- Technological competencies required for the course;
- The e-mail address of the instructor and other contact information
- The department name and the course name and number
- Any pre-requisites or co-requisites
- Requirements for examinations and in-person class meetings
- Required text and any supplemental materials
- Expectations of students stated as student learning outcomes
- General course policies regarding assignments, grading standards, student participation, e.g., how often students are required to log on to the course;
- Statement regarding accessibility for students with disabilities

Departments offering online courses may choose to post generic course syllabi on the publicly-available website for the use of prospective students.

Materials

In accordance with the Collective Bargaining Agreements, the choice of instructional materials shall be made by the instructor(s) teaching a course. All materials should be made available online that can be done so practically, legally, and in accordance with academic standards. Course material will be provided on the CMS/LMS. Other material may be provided in other non-electronic media such as paper or books.

Communication/interaction.

In accordance with accepted standards in distance education, regular defined interaction or exchange between instructor and student shall occur, in fully online and hybrid courses, as in traditional courses. . Online interaction, using communication methods and media appropriate to the course, shall be integral elements of the course. These interactions include those among students, between the teacher and the students, and between the students and the content. Instructors shall maintain regular online communications with students on a schedule made known to their students.

Assessment of students.

Online courses shall include online tests and/or practice quizzes, projects, or other forms of assessment where appropriate. Student assessment need not occur online, but may, at the instructor's discretion or by Department policy. Provision for integrity of assessment should be part of the course design.

Course assessment.

Instructors shall have their online courses reviewed by the Office of Distance Education for meeting online standards and by their departments for meeting departmental academic standards.

Support

The following forms of support shall be available for online courses:

- Technical support for students via phone or e-mail by the Office of Distance Education and/or software vendor where available. This will not include general computer support;
- Academic support for students by instructors via phone, e-mail, or online methods (including synchronous and/or asynchronous tools).
- Technical support for instructors via phone or e-mail by the Office of Distance Education and/or software vendor where available; Testing flexibility for students, especially with conflicts for those courses that require face-to-face evaluation;
- Brief -manual of operation or other documentation for the CMS/LMS, available online;
- Library resources and other general resources ; Adequate training and access to technology for faculty to manage courses while in their on-campus office. Specifically, training includes instruction in online course conversion, in distance education practices, and compliance with relevant laws such as those related to copyright, students with disabilities, and use of the CMS/LMS. Adequate technology includes computer technology appropriate to distance education tasks, an adequate Internet connection, and required software being used in the course by their students.
- Instructors of online courses who require additional necessary software *directly related to their courses* shall be provided a copy for use at home. (This applies only to software that

students are required to have purchased and not to proprietary development software.)

Online and Hybrid Course Approval and Faculty Training Process
In order for a course to be converted to fully online or hybrid format, the following procedures will be followed:

1. The appropriate Department Chair (representing the Department/Program) recommends courses for conversion to an online or hybrid format, and instructors who will participate in the conversion process.

2. Instructors intending to teach either a fully online (DIS) or in a hybrid (HYB) format for the first time at Community College of Philadelphia, must receive appropriate training, to be approved by the Office of Distance Education, in distance education and the currently-approved CMS/LMS. Further training is optionally available for all faculty who are converting or teaching fully online and hybrid courses.

3. When the distance course conversion process is complete, the instructor and the Office of Distance Education conduct a final review and approval based on:

- compliance with relevant laws such as copyright laws and the Americans with Disabilities Act;
- a quality assessment of the product of the conversion process;
- compliance with the other provisions of Policies and Procedures 14 and other College policies.

4. After its final course conversion review, the Office of Distance Education forwards a recommendation for approval to the appropriate Department Chair. After a final Departmental review and approval based on compliance with the officially approved course document and approval by the appropriate Division Dean, converted courses may be offered.

Course Design Quality Assurance
The Office of Distance Education shall develop and revise quality assurance measures to be used as part of the online course development process.