

University Policy for Distance Learning and Web-Enhanced Courses

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Standards for Online Courses

Departments that do not follow the University policy will be required to pay all distance learning fees for their program or course taught online for a given semester.

1. TCU Distance Learning is defined as any for-credit instruction provided to a TCU student outside the State of Texas. This includes internships, clinicals, practicums, video conferencing, online, or any other delivery format. Distance Learning is centralized in the Koehler Center.
2. All distance learning courses taught at TCU must be approved through department/School/College university curriculum committees and/or appropriate accreditation body or bodies. See the accompanying note at the end of this section.
3. All online courses must use TCU's officially adopted Learning Management System.
4. All online courses will use at least three methods to evaluate student learning.
5. Faculty members will develop syllabi for distance education courses which must include:
 - learning outcomes;
 - course policies, pre-requisites, and required materials;
 - grading information;
 - getting help with TCU Online;
 - TCU Mission Statement;
 - the current official statement on disability services at TCU;
 - other TCU resources for students, including Title IX policy and resources;
 - academic misconduct and netiquette.Use of the TCU Syllabus template is strongly encouraged. <https://cte.tcu.edu/syllabus-templates/>
6. All TCU faculty teaching an online course will have completed training in effective online pedagogies and in how to use TCUs Learning Management System prior to the official start date of their course.
 - Required: TCU Online Boot Camp Workshop
 - Required: Preparing To Teach Online Training or copy of certificate from other institution
 - Recommended: Outcomes-Based Teaching and Learning Training
 - Recommended: TCU Online Competencies Training
 - Optional: TCU Online ePortfolio Training
7. All online courses must be accessible as defined by Section 508 of the United States Access Board and all content in the course must meet the standards set forth in Section 508. <https://www.section508.gov/>
8. All online courses will be assessed by Koehler Center staff using the TCU Online Structure Assessment Tool (OSAT). Results from the OSAT and other reporting from TCU Online will be shared with the faculty member and the appropriate department chair or program director.
9. Online programs must meet TCU requirements for faculty and student engagement and course activity. Reports from TCU Online will be created to provide data about engagement. Reporting will be shared with the faculty member and the appropriate department chair or program director.

10. All online courses will use the TCU SPOT evaluation tool issued by the Office of Institutional Research.
11. All graduate online courses will have a distance learning fee assessed for each student taking an online course. Students in graduate online courses will be billed for this distance learning fee. Graduate courses are defined as courses with course numbers of 50000 or greater.
12. All graduate online courses must have all distance learning fees approved by the appropriate program director and/or dean before the official state date of the course.
13. All online credit courses will:
 - Follow the start and end dates listed on class search, unless otherwise approved by the Registrar
 - Have a section number that begins with 4
 - Be flagged with the attribute TCUO
14. All online programs, courses, and distance learning offerings (including internships / clinicals) must meet state compliance / state authorization regulations as defined by specific state legislation and the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA).

Note:

All new programs and courses must follow the [New Course/ Program Approval Process](#).

All online programs, courses, and distance learning offerings must meet state compliance / state authorization regulations as defined by specific state legislation and the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA).

TCU Distance Learning is defined as any for-credit instruction provided to a TCU student outside the State of Texas. This includes internships, clinicals, practicums, video conferencing, online, or any other delivery format. Distance Learning is centralized in the Koehler Center.

Requirements for Teaching Online Courses

1. Training must be completed before the official start of the online course:
 - Required: TCU Online Boot Camp Workshop
 - Required: Preparing To Teach Online Training or copy of certificate from other institution
 - Recommended: Outcomes-Based Teaching and Learning Training
 - Recommended: TCU Online Competencies Training
 - Optional: TCU ePortfolio Training
2. Create online course in TCU Online; course to be fully built by the date specified in the schedule published by the Koehler Center on the Distance Learning website in order to allow Koehler Center staff to insure the course meets all applicable standards.
3. Course learning goals and learning outcomes must be identified and mapped to coursework.
4. The competencies tool within the learning management system will be used to meet accreditation requirements.
5. To go live, a course must:
 - i. earn an [Online Structure Assessment Tool \(OSAT\)](#) score of 70% or greater **(Required)**
 - ii. Implement all improvements identified as short-term / critical fixes before the official start date of the course

These requirements apply to both the initial offering of the online course and for

any subsequent offerings of the course. **Updated June 2017**

Requirements for Online Courses

1. **Online Structure Assessment Tool (OSAT)** score 70% or greater (**Required**) in post-instruction review of the course delivered to students. Based on OSAT findings, the instructor and the Koehler Center will create a plan for the ongoing improvement of the course and the instructor will implement identified items on an annual basis.
Updated June 2017
2. All online credit courses will follow the start and end dates listed on class search, unless otherwise approved by the Registrar.
3. For federal compliance purposes, online courses include regular and substantive interaction between the instructor and the students, which are initiated by the instructor. Each week during the full duration of the stated session, including during the designated university finals period, features some sort of documented academic activity on the part of the students. Activity or engagement that is not related to course content, wholly optional, or initiated primarily by the students does not meet this requirement
4. Faculty engagement in course must total a minimum of **30** hours (based on the benchmark of a three credit course).
5. Student activity / engagement in a 3 hour course should equal or exceed 45 hours (based on the benchmark of a three credit course).
6. Class completion rate (based on student census date as compared with student enrollment at the end of term) should be 88% or greater, barring any exceptional events. (**Required**)
7. Recommended: data within the course reflect that the instructor has measured student learning outcomes in the course separate from course grades. Based on the data, the instructor will create a plan for the ongoing improvement of the learning outcomes in the course and implement identified items on an annual basis.

Standards for Web Component Courses

1. Web component courses must meet for at least 2/3rd of the assigned classroom time in a face-to-face setting. For example, a 3-credit 16-week course must meet for at least 30 hours of face-to-face classroom time. The remaining 15 hours of may be comprised of online work or class sessions. If online sessions will replace some class meetings, notice of this should be provided to students as far in advance as possible, ideally at the start of the class.
2. All web component courses must be accessible as defined by Section 508 of the United States Access Board and all content on web component courses needs to meet the standards set forth in Section 508. These standards are available online at <https://www.section508.gov/>
3. Programs or departments may not charge students additional fees for web component courses.