

NCTA DISTANCE LEARNING POLICY

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to describe how distance learning is offered at NCTA. Distance learning refers to dual credit courses and courses delivered via online methods of instruction. Online presentation of course material is the only form of instruction addressed in this policy. Hybrid courses follow course requirements for face-to-face courses and have the same student learning outcomes and assessment procedures as the comparable face-to-face course. Courses taught via real-time video instruction follow normal NCTA classroom policies.

Distance learning courses for degree seeking students have a section code of 700, dual credit and concurrent courses have a section code of 800 or 900, online courses for non-degree seeking students have a section code of 500. For the purposes of this policy, dual credit courses are college courses taken by high school students which provide the opportunity for the student to earn both high school credit and college credit. Concurrent courses are college courses taken by high school students which allow the students the opportunity to earn only college credit.

Online course requirements:

- **Student Learning:** Distance learning courses are college-level and are of the same high quality, cover the same content, and have the same rigor as other college-credit courses offered by NCTA. Faculty may consider inclusion of an online education orientation session to assist first time students in achieving success with online education.
- **Course Consistency:** Online courses have the same student learning outcomes and assessment protocol as face-to-face courses. Online courses are generally delivered with the Blackboard web-based learning management system.
- **Quality Faculty:** Online courses will be offered through NCTA by instructors who meet NCTA accreditation requirements (found here: <https://www.hlcommission.org/Document-Library/determining-qualified-faculty.html>).
- **Regular and substantive interaction:** All online courses will involve regular and substantive interaction between students and the instructor. Faculty will document the method of creating this involvement prior to offering the course. Examples of regular and substantive interaction include regular participation in discussion boards, regular email communication, or regular communication via video phone technology such as Skype or Adobe connect.
- **Due dates for assignments:** All online courses will have set due dates for assignments.
- **Regular semester scheduling:** Online courses will generally follow semester scheduling. Courses will start at the beginning of the semester and end at the end of the semester.
- **Student identity verification:** All faculty teaching online courses will document a robust method of identifying students during assessment activities. Generally, student identity is verified through high school teacher or public library librarian proctors. In all cases, students will be required to use a secure login and passcode (i.e through the myNCTA system). Password recovery is required via secure technology such as the use of a secret question or a two factor authentication protocol such as texting to a cell phone or sending a separate recovery email. Alternate methods of student identity verification must be documented by the faculty member. Additional methods may include video confirmation of identity using technology such as Skype or Adobe connect.

Support Services:

The following services and centers are available to support quality online academic experiences for NCTA faculty, staff and students:

- **Computer Help Center.** The Information Technology Services Computer Help Center at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln provides NCTA students with 24 hour access to help with issues such as accessing E-mail and Blackboard and dealing with computer problems. (Web site: <http://its.unl.edu/helpcenter>, E-mail: mysupport@unl.edu, Phone: (402) 472-3970 or toll-free (866) 472-3970)
- **Writing Center and Math Tutoring Services Center.** The NCTA Writing Center and Math Tutoring Services provides writing assistance for resumes, cover-letters, classroom assignments and other documents. The Math Tutoring Services Center provides real-time and asynchronous assistance with math problems. Students receive a reply from a credentialed faculty member within 24 hours of making an inquiry. (Writing Center: Eric Reed at ereed2@unl.edu or 308-367-5276. Math Tutoring Services Center: Tee Bush at tbush@unl.edu or 308-367-5203)
- **University of Nebraska Love Library Access.** University of Nebraska libraries provides interlibrary loan services as well as access to over 250 on-line sources, among them numerous databases containing thousands of professional and peer-reviewed scholarly journals. (Website: <http://libraries.unl.edu/love-library>, Email: askus@unl.edu, Phone: 402-472-9568)
- **Student Services Center.** NCTA is committed to equal access in education. The Disability Services Center assists online students with questions regarding eligibility and applying for accommodations, testing for learning disabilities, and development of Individualized Education Program (IEP) agreements. Financial aid counseling and assistance is also available online through telephone, email, Skype or Adobe connect. Contact Kevin Martin: 308-367-5217, or email: Kmartin4@UNL.edu.
- **Graduation Services.** Students who graduate from NCTA's on-line programs have the option of coming to campus and participating in the May graduation ceremony. Contact Kevin Martin: 308-367-5217, or email: Kmartin4@UNL.edu.
- **Faculty course development assistance.** Faculty receive training on the Blackboard system at orientation and additional in-service education, as needed, on electronic learning and multimedia tools including Adobe Presenter 11 software and other presentation software. Contact your division chair for training services.
- **Instructional Design Services.** Assistance with planning, organizing and offering online courses is available to faculty. Professional designers at the University of Nebraska are available to help faculty members create instructional experiences that maximize student online learning experiences. Contact Tina Smith at 308-367-5267, or email: Tsmith24@UNL.edu.
- **NCTA Computer Technology Assistance.** The NCTA director of instructional technology and telecom is available to assist with hardware, software and peripheral acquisition, set up and troubleshooting. Contact Justin Baugher at 308-367-5210, or email: justin.baugher@unl.edu.
- **Anti-virus software** for UNL students, faculty, and staff, even for personal computers: <http://antivirus.unl.edu/>
- **Box** account with unlimited cloud storage: <http://box.unl.edu/>.
- **TechSmith Lecture and Video Capture** software for faculty: <http://its.unl.edu/t3/lecture-capture-camtasia-relay-will-become-techsmith-relay>. (This technology allows a faculty member to capture anything on a computer screen, video, audio, etc. and then to create and store a video for streaming and download).
- A library of **Blackboard tutorial YouTube videos** developed by UNL is available to faculty and may be found here: <http://its.unl.edu/myunl/myunl-blackboard-help-resources>

- **Anti-plagiarism software** is available to faculty and students within every course in Blackboard: <http://its.unl.edu/service-catalog/anti-plagiarism-blackboard-safeassign>
- **Instructional Technology** training for faculty: <http://its.unl.edu/itskills>
- Access to over a thousand **instructional training** and software video tutorials for NCTA faculty may be found here: <http://its.unl.edu/itskills/online-tutorials>.
- Services at **myred.Nebraska.edu** or **myncta.Nebraska.edu**: students can pay bills, request transcripts, enroll for classes, create planners, view course histories, update personal data: http://www.unl.edu/about_myred/home.

Distance Learning Course Approval Process

Courses must meet all NCTA academic requirements, including completion of these course components prior to course approval:

- Course Syllabus prepared according to the approved college format
- Student Learning Outcomes
- Documentation of successful completion of all items listed in *Online Course Requirements*

Faculty who teach in NCTA's distance learning programs are expected to abide by the same policies that guide teaching on-campus, including but not limited to the following policies:

- Course Evaluation Policy
- Credit Hour Policy
- Faculty Qualifications Policy
- Student learning outcomes assessment
- Student rating of instruction

Online courses may not be offered until they have been processed and approved through the appropriate channels, including the Instructor, Division Chair, Academic Council and the Dean.

Faculty Remuneration for Developing Distance Learning Courses

- Instructors may request compensation for the development of new courses to be offered as online courses. Modification of existing courses will not be considered for compensation unless more than 60% of the course needs to be changed for this application.
- If approved, faculty will receive \$400 per credit hour for course development (example: 3 credits x \$400 = \$1,200)
- Payment for course development must be authorized by the Dean in writing prior to the development of the course. Final electronic and print course materials must be submitted to the Assistant Dean prior to course development compensation being issued. Compensation for course development will be made in the month following the approval of the completed course materials by the Assistant Dean and Academic Council.
- To request approval for compensation, complete this form prior to developing the course: *Form to Request Approval for Compensation to Develop a Distance Learning Course*
- After all approvals have been secured, The Division Chair will forward the updated/signed final agreement to the Business Manager for payment.
- NCTA and the Instructor will jointly own all intellectual property rights of the work provided under this agreement. In the event that the instructor separates employment, both the instructor and NCTA may continue to use and modify the course materials as needed.

Faculty Remuneration for Teaching Distance Learning Courses

Distance learning courses are considered a normal part of a faculty member's workload and are treated the same as face-to-face courses when considering faculty workload. For additional details on faculty workload consult the Faculty Workload Policy (<http://ncta.unl.edu/about-ncta/Human-Resources/FacultyWorkloadPolicy.pdf>). Online courses delivered to high school students are treated as dual credit courses. Faculty compensation details for dual credit courses are available in the Dual Credit Policy (<http://ncta.unl.edu/about-ncta/Human-Resources/DualCreditPolicy-final%202-26-2016.pdf>).

Steps in the Process for Approval of Compensation for Teaching a Distance Learning Course

1. To receive compensation for teaching 500 and 800/900 courses, faculty submits the completed Faculty Workload form to the departmental administrative support Assistant at the beginning of each semester.
2. At end of the semester, payments are made for semester credit hours after final grades are posted to PeopleSoft. Payment is only made for students in the dual credit (800/900) classes and non-degree seeking on-line (500) courses.
3. Compensation is not made for students who receive a grade of incomplete.
4. The departmental administrative support Assistant will prepare payment request spreadsheet for the Business Office and send faculty member an email notification of proposed payment.
5. Faculty compensation when an incomplete is resolved
 - a. Upon completion of course requirements, faculty must submit a grade change form to receive compensation.
 - b. Registration/Records will receive the grade change forms from instructors and submit copy to Admin Support Assistant.
 - c. The Administrative Support Assistant will verify the grade change and submit payment request spreadsheet to the Business Office and send email to faculty member notifying them of their proposed payment.