

Full-Time Faculty Handbook for Compensation and Workload

Appendix 8: eLearning

eLearning is defined as the conducting of teaching and learning activities in environments, media, or formats in which the majority of the teaching and learning takes place by means of telecommunication or media technology. This typically refers to online and blended learning delivery formats.

Enrollment Management

Online

In general, the range of enrollments for online courses should be between 15 and 39 students. The precise number of students permitted in any given section will be determined by these guidelines and recommendations, and by the Academic Administrators.

Section Enrollment Caps

Academic departments have the primary responsibility for section enrollments. Waitlist and enrollment caps should be appropriate to the pedagogical needs of the course and are managed by the Provost Office.

Academic departments determine enrollment caps for each section based on the above recommendation, as well as content- or instructor-specific limitations.

In determining enrollment cap numbers, it is important that a department consider the attrition that online courses may experience; 10% to 20% attrition is not unusual. As a result, it may be helpful to set a higher enrollment cap for eLearning course sections to ensure that sections are properly filled.

Minimum & Maximum Enrollments

A minimum enrollment of 15 students will be required for an online section to be offered. When there is a need for sections to be offered with section counts lower than the recommended minimum, departments should coordinate with the Division of eLearning and other appropriate College departments or areas.

Each online section will be limited to a maximum enrollment of 39 students. If a course section reaches an enrollment of 40 or more students, a new course section of that course should be created.

Administrative Drops for Non-Attendance

During the designated drop period, faculty are strongly encouraged to administratively drop students for nonattendance. Dropping students for non-attendance will open class seats for other students during the add/waitlist period. Also, it removes the issue of faculty having to submit a failing grade at the end of the semester for students who never attend, as SLCC

does not have an unofficial withdrawal process.

For online classes, students who do not submit any assignments or substantively participate by the first assignment deadline may be administratively dropped by the instructor, but the final opportunity to drop the course is by the official drop deadline.

Hybrid (Online + Classroom)/Livestream Lecture

Hybrid learning refers to courses that provide a mix of in-person instruction with online activity. There is no single model for blended learning. The phrase encompasses a wide range of approaches.

Traditional hybrid courses replace classroom seat time (once or twice a week) with specific online learning activities and assessments. Traditional hybrid sections should be limited to 15 to 39 students, similar to online sections.

Other hybrid course models (e.g., learning emporium and others) may require other enrollment strategies and practices. Initial pilots of these models will require agreement from the Associate Dean, School Dean, the Director of *SLCC Online & eLearning*, and the Provost's Office. If proven successful, the Discussion Team will need to review and approve the associated workload and compensation associated with these hybrid course models.

Faculty Teaching Assignments

Faculty Workload

Using the enrollment cap information stated above, a full-time faculty member's teaching assignment should follow the stated parameters as noted in Appendix 2, Faculty Workload.

Faculty who teach an eLearning course as part of their assigned teaching load or as overload should have the necessary skills, training, and certification to effectively teach and engage students in such delivery modes. Training and certification should be completed prior to giving eLearning teaching assignments. And if that is not possible, faculty must complete the Online Teaching Credential concurrently with their first online teaching assignment.

Faculty are experts and mentors in online courses rather than facilitators, so their presence and engagement are critical to each online course. As such, expectations of what faculty presence and engagement should and could look like in online courses at SLCC are outlined in the Faculty Online Engagement Guidelines. Faculty teaching online are required to meet standards for Regular and Substantive Engagement (conventionally referred to as RSI).

Faculty Requests for an Online-Only Teaching Assignment

Full-time may request or be assigned to teach their entire teaching assignment online.

Administrative approval should be based upon student needs and enrollment patterns, considering the need for a balance of delivery options for students, as well as department or division resources and requirements. The faculty members must ensure that sufficient lead-time has been provided to make recommendations and plans for effective course/program scheduling.

Prior to an online-only assignment:

- The faculty member **must** demonstrate competency in the use of proposed technology including effective pedagogies for the online environment. Competency will be determined by department faculty and the academic administrator in conjunction with the Division of eLearning.
- Show evidence of success by having successfully conducted a minimum of one online course for an academic year (two semesters).

If a faculty member has fulfilled these two requirements, they will submit a current copy of the form Request for an Online-Only Teaching Assignment and Agreement to her or his Academic Administrator.

The form includes a statement of how the faculty member will contribute to other faculty duties outside of teaching. It requires signature approval from the Academic Supervisor, Dean, and Provost. Copies of approved Requests for an Online-Only Teaching Assignment will be kept by the Department and the Provost Office (coupled with the salary load document).

Faculty requesting to teach a full load online will work with their Academic Administrator in consultation with the Dean, regarding work for service and professional development. The documentation will be filed in the Dean's office.

Compensation

Regular Teaching Assignments

Compensation for courses taught as part of full-time faculty members' regular teaching assignments should be considered part of their contractual base salaries. Adjunct faculty are compensated using the approved adjunct instructional rate.

Overload Teaching Assignments

Teaching compensation for courses taught above a full-time faculty member's regular teaching assignment is paid at the part-time instructional rate. As defined by the nature of their employment, adjunct faculty do not have overload assignments.

Faculty Overload

Overload teaching assignments should follow the stated policy procedures (#C4S01) as delineated in section 2.8 Overload Policy and Procedures. Faculty assigned to an eLearning course development project should have limited overload teaching assignments – a single course section or less – as agreed on by the Academic Administrator and the Division of eLearning. Where possible, no overload teaching assignments should be given to those participating in a development project, to ensure adequate time and effort is given in teaching and development tasks.

Course and Program Design and Development

Faculty may develop courses alone or in conjunction with the Department of eLearning. Independent of who develops the course, all online courses must meet the internal quality standard to be offered to students. If the faculty or Associate Dean want to collaborate with eLearning on course or program development, they may reach out to eLearning support or the eLearning project manager.

The Department of eLearning offers a variety of course design development services for all teaching modalities ranging from short-term consultations to multiple-semester course development projects. Some of these services require faculty to work outside of their regular course load and may receive compensation for their additional work. Any project that qualifies for compensation will need approval from the associate dean(s) responsible for the course and faculty load.

Compensation for course development work is dependent on the estimated scope, timeline, and effort of the project proposed. Compensation may be in the form of 1) a stipend or 2) a reassigned teaching load. When compensation is determined to be through a stipend, eLearning will provide funding for the project. The timeline, modality, deliverables, and other requirements for receiving a stipend will be explained in the stipend agreement contract originated by eLearning. Faculty and associate deans may reach out to eLearning support or the eLearning project manager to get information on current stipend rates, timelines, and course development options. In rare cases when compensation is determined to be through a reassigned load, faculty and associate dean will determine load agreement, which will be approved by the appropriate Dean and Provost.

Course Review

eLearning conducts quality reviews of the design of courses and faculty can participate in this process as a subject matter expert. Course quality reviews are currently conducted only by approved full-time faculty members. Faculty will be required to complete training prior to reviewing courses and attend annual training workshops to be considered active reviewers. Faculty who review a course will receive a one-time stipend according to current rates and budget when the review is submitted.

Online Engagement Guidelines

Faculty are experts and mentors in online courses rather than facilitators, so their presence and engagement are critical to each online course. As such, the online guidelines committee has sought to establish some expectations of what faculty presence and engagement should and could look like in online courses at SLCC.

The minimum guidelines for engagement in an online course at Salt Lake Community College are as follows:

- Interactions with students will be initiated by faculty at least once per week
- Faculty will utilize and initiate a variety of interactions throughout the course, rather than a single method (such as an interactive announcement each week).
- Interactions will be conducted within Canvas (the learning management system or LMS)
- An engagement plan will be included in the syllabus management system documenting how faculty will interact with students each week. Examples of such engagement are listed below but are not meant to be prescriptive or exhaustive.

Examples of Weekly Interaction and Engagement:

- **Discussion boards.** Posting in a discussion lets the students know that you are present in the course, that you care about their learning, and are reading their posts. As one instructor says, "When you teach in the classroom, you talk; when you teach online, you participate in threaded discussions. If an instructor is not participating in the threaded discussions, the course becomes a correspondence event rather than an online learning experience" (Mandernach, Gonzales, & Garrett, 2006).
- **Interactive Announcements.** Announcements by themselves do not represent a moment of interaction, but there are clever ways to turn a simple announcement into a moment of engagement. For example, you may turn an announcement into a threaded discussion where students may post questions or responses to your suggestions or ideas. Alternatively, post perspectives about current events that reflect who the faculty member is and then ask students to share their own perspectives from outside the class. Some faculty members also post easter eggs in their announcements, which guide students to unexpected parts of the course (and then ask students to find the hidden components) or to extra credit.
- **Q & A Sessions.** Hold an impromptu question and answer session with students synchronously or asynchronously. A threaded discussion at the end of a module asking students about a specific subject or their understanding of a process or concept can lead to powerful moments of interaction in our teaching. Adding points to the session also offers students incentive to discover how much they can learn from their faculty—even in moments where they have a strong understanding of the material.
- **Small Groups.** Weekly, the instructor offers a time when multiple students can meet with the faculty member to ask questions, get clarifications, and talk about course content and assessments. The strength of this addition to a course is a) students can

see and talk to the instructor in real time; b) it can help students make connections to other students in a non-scripted setting; c) the scheduling on different days at different times provides students the opportunity to find a time that works with their own personal schedules.

- **Surveys.** Surveys in Canvas allow faculty to ask specific questions regarding learning outcomes, points of clarification, or comments about the course. Some faculty find it helpful to post an announcement or video response to the anonymous student surveys, which can aid in comprehension, clarity, and reorient the student experience within the course.
- **Grading with individualized and specific comments for each student.** Giving feedback on assignments is also an interaction with students. When grading assignments to meet this requirement, the comments should be specific to each student and substantive. Perfunctory, formulaic, or automated responses to assignments would not be an example of regular or substantive interaction.
- **Direct Instruction.** Direct instruction is defined as meeting with students synchronously in a distance education class through videoconferencing technology. As students often take online courses, so that they do not need to meet at specific times or have a regular schedule, this method meets the Department of Education definition but should be seen as an optional requirement in fully online courses. If regular and scheduled times for direct instruction are required for the course, this may be seen as a livestream or hybrid teaching modality and should be listed as such for students in the catalog.

Engagement Plan Requirement

- Faculty will include an engagement plan within their Canvas courses. As mentioned above, an engagement plan should establish specific details on how regular and substantive engagement will occur in this specific course. An example template for this engagement plan is available at the end of this document and can be included in future Canvas courses. The template for this engagement plan is available in the syllabus management system.
 - As the examples of online interaction vary for each discipline and department, the online guidelines hope to inspire and encourage creativity in meeting the regular and substantive engagement requirements. And rather than requiring specific or set forms of interaction, the guidelines instead require an engagement plan set by the department or faculty outlining specific methods of interaction within the course. This requirement also makes the RSIs measurable within the course, as students, faculty, peer-reviewers, or administrators can clearly see how the interactions will occur.

Engagement Plan for Online Classes

- **Set clear expectations on faculty response time:** Clearly communicate the frequency and methods of communication and engagement that students can expect from you. For example:

- I will respond to email within [insert your timeline], and I will offer feedback on major assignments within [insert your timeline]. Please use the Canvas Inbox to contact me, as I will prioritize this email over other modes of communication.
- **Clarify the modes of engagement:** [This list should include a variety of interactions generated by the faculty member within Canvas.]
 - In this course I will be posting interactive announcements which will offer specific opportunities for class questions and extra credit every other week.
 - Additionally, I will be participating in the discussion forums with you to share my perspective within the discipline and to offer some nuances of interpretation that may not be present in your textbook.
 - Lastly, we'll be holding small group Q & A sessions, where we can learn from our peers (and faculty) on some of the more difficult units within the course.

Expectations for Student Participation

This list should include any preferences or course policies on how students should communicate with you or others within the course. The following are examples.

- **Discussion Boards:** Participation in the Discussion Boards counts toward your Participation Points. Your instructor and fellow students will read and comment on your posts so please follow the rules for online conduct. See the Section on Netiquette below for more details. Your instructor will generally review and/or comment on Discussions at least once a week.
- **Add a Profile Picture or Avatar:** You will engage in many online interactions within Canvas during this class. Creating a distinctive online identity with a profile picture or avatar will help set you apart and create a distinctive virtual presence for your Canvas interactions. Follow these instructions to add your profile picture to your user account.
 - [How do I add a profile picture in my user account as a student?](#)
- **Canvas Inbox:** While there are many methods of email available, please use the Canvas Inbox first, as this will be our primary mode of communication throughout the course.