eLearning Faculty Handbook

eLearning Department

W.H. Gullette Technology Building, Panola College
Carthage, Texas 75633

Revised August 2016

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Distance Learning Faculty Handbook

Welcome to eLearning at Panola College. This handbook is provided to facilitate creation and management of online courses and instructional tools and to explain the processes and responsibilities of the Department of eLearning. The Handbook includes general departmental procedure and may not address every issue related to distance learning.

Introduction

Department of eLearning

Panola College eLearning, located in the Gullette Technology Building, refers to the department that: (1) administers the Canvas Learning Management System (LMS) and distance education (online, hybrid, and Interactive Television); (2) provides professional development and training for faculty and staff; (3) maintains the college website; and (4) supervises the distance education testing center in Carthage. This handbook addresses issues related to the Canvas LMS and distance education.

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Academic Standards of Online Instruction

Panola College provides distance education opportunities for students in support of the vision, mission, and values of the College.

Distance education instruction meets the same standards and academic rigor as its traditional counterparts, adheres to the guidelines outlined in the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools distance education policy statement and meets the requirements outlined in the *Panola College Distance Learning Faculty Handbook.*

Distance Learning

According to Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, distance learning is "a formal educational process in which the majority of the instruction (interaction between students and instructors and among students) in a course occurs when students and instructors are not in the same place. Instruction may be synchronous or asynchronous. A distance education course may use the internet; one-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave,

broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communication devices; audio conferencing; or video cassettes, DVDs, and CD-ROMs if used as part of the distance learning course or program."

Mission of Panola College eLearning Program

The mission of the eLearning program at Panola College is to expand the mission of the College by providing students with more flexible learning opportunities. The eLearning program provides educational opportunities to pursue courses, certificates, and degrees online.

Definitions

Online course – at least 85% of course delivered via the internet; at least two proctored activities required
- Example: ENGL 1301.401 (4 indicates online)
- May include synchronous web conferencing
- Student evaluation instrument: EvaluationKit student survey
- Administrative evaluation instrument: Online/Hybrid Course Evaluation form

Hybrid or blended course – 51-84% of instruction delivered online with the balance face-to-face or ITV; at least two proctored activities required
- Not designated in course number – labeled in course notes in schedule. Schedule notes must include class meeting dates (and times, if different from time listed in schedule).
- Hybrid course development forms must include percentage of online content and list resources/activities that will constitute that percentage.
- May include synchronous web conferencing
- Student evaluation instrument: EvaluationKit student survey
- Administrative evaluation instrument: Onlne/Hybrid Course Evaluation form

Interactive Television (ITV) course – delivered using ITV two-way video-conferencing equipment
- Example: ENGL 1301.4T1 (4T indicates a distance learning ITV course)
- Student evaluation instrument: EvaluationKit student survey
- Administrative evaluation instrument: Dean/Director Evaluation form or Hybrid Course Evaluation form, depending on percentage of online content

Web-enhanced course – at least 85% of course delivered face-to-face; online resources or activities provided but limited to less than 15% of scheduled class meeting time
- Not designated in course number
- Student evaluation instrument: EvaluationKit student survey
- Administrative evaluation instrument: Dean/Director Evaluation form

Instructure Canvas

Canvas Learning Management System Administration

The Canvas LMS Administrator is responsible for the administration of the LMS under the supervision of the Dean of Distance and Digital Learning. Because the Student Information System (SIS) is integrated with the Canvas LMS, Canvas class shells are created for all academic and most Continuing Education courses that are added to term schedules in the SIS. The LMS administrator works

with Continuing Education, Human Resources, Admissions, and other departments as needed to create and maintain course and instructor data.

Courses are visible to students the first day of each academic term. Students accessing Panola College's LMS must authenticate using their LMS student-user account and unique password.

Courses are maintained in the Canvas LMS for one year. Faculty members are responsible for archiving and maintaining a local copy of each of their class sections each semester. The Canvas administrator works with instructors to resolve issues related to extending courses or recovering accidentally deleted or compromised courses.

Faculty Professional Development and Training

Certification in Instructional Technology (CIT)

As stated in the Panola College Faculty Handbook, all online courses are hosted in the Canvas LMS supported by the College. All instructors complete training and certification in the use of specific technologies and strategies necessary for effective course design and delivery. The Department of eLearning provides the training and maintains documentation of completion.

The Educational Technology Coordinator, in cooperation with the Dean of Distance and Digital Learning, plans and implements on-site and online training in instructional technologies and effective instructional strategies. Training is provided for effective use of established software and procedures, and also includes the introduction and integration of new and innovative tools and techniques. In addition to faculty, College staff may join in any training offered. Professional development opportunities are announced in campus email notices and are posted on the eLearning Professional Development Calendar.

The eLearning Administrative Secretary trains instructors and facilitators to use the ITV equipment and troubleshoots minor problems. In the case of more serious problems, the appropriate vendor is contacted for assistance.

Teaching Tools

The table below lists some of the most frequently-used software available to Panola College faculty and staff members. For more information about these resources, contact the eLearning department. Training in the use of these and other tools is offered throughout each semester.

Resource	Value
Canvas Orientation for Students	This online tutorial provides an introduction to Canvas online learning and is available on request. Face-to-face orientation is offered during the first week of each semester.
Adobe Connect	Adobe Connect is a web conferencing tool that can be used to create synchronous class presentations, online tutoring, virtual office hours, student advising sessions, and other real-time interactive conferences. ($150 per user annually)

SmarterMeasure	SmarterMeasure is an online assessment tool that analyzes a student's readiness for online learning, along with other skills necessary for college success. Assessment is free and is encouraged for students in online, hybrid, and college preparatory courses. SmarterMeasure provides feedback and suggestions in the following areas: • Personal attributes (procrastination, time management, etc) • Learning styles • Reading rate and recall • Technical Competency • Technical knowledge • Typing speed / accuracy http://panola.smartermeasure.com/
Certification in Instructional Technology (CIT)	CIT training is provided online and in face-to-face classes and must be completed before the beginning of the first semester of teaching. The course includes an introduction to the basic features of the Canvas LMS and provides a foundation for further instruction in the design and development of quality online, hybrid, and web-enhanced courses.
Turnitin	The Turnitin toolkit is integrated with the Canvas LMS and is primarily used to detect plagiarized material. It also allows instructors to provide feedback to students through markup tools, rubrics, proofing tools, and peer review options.
Respondus	Instructors can create exams within Respondus or upload existing exams for converting and uploading to Canvas LMS. Additionally, Respondus can link with many existing publishers' question banks and create exams from those.
Respondus Monitor	Respondus Monitor is an online proctoring tool that is integrated with the Canvas LMS and allows students to engage in proctored activities with the use of a webcam and specific testing parameters as an alternative to proctoring at college testing centers. The tool is an option that instructors may choose on a limited basis, depending on subscription space available.
ZOOM	Zoom web-conferencing software can be used to create synchronous class presentations, online tutoring, virtual office hours, student advising sessions, and other real-time interactive conferences. Both free and subscription versions are available.

Getting your Course Online

Course Development for Online and ITV

Because online instructional strategies are integrated throughout the curriculum at Panola College, all instructors should complete Certification in Instructional Technology (CIT) before teaching a course. Panola College instructors are encouraged to design courses based on Best Practices for Distance Education and the Quality Matters Higher Education Rubric. Panola College maintains membership in the Quality Matters organization.

All distance education courses are included in the eLearning department's inventory of approved courses, maintained by the eLearning Administrative Secretary. The process for development and

delivery of distance education courses is as follows:

1. Submit the Online/Hybrid Course Development Proposal to the eLearning Office before beginning development of an online course. If converting an existing online course into a hybrid course, submit the Request to Convert Online Course into Hybrid Course form.

2. Enroll in and complete the Certification in Instructional Technology course before beginning online course development. Contact the eLearning department for enrollment information.

3. After the Course Development Proposal is approved by the eLearning department, begin developing the course, working closely with the Educational Technology Coordinator and mentors in your own department.

4. When course development is complete, submit the Principles of Good Practice Checklist for the course. The Checklist structures a self-analysis of the course and provides an opportunity to incorporate the THECB Principles of Good Practice for online courses before the course is offered. The completed Checklist should be reviewed when converting an online course to a hybrid course.

5. Submit Course Completion Contract with appropriate signatures to the Office of eLearning.

For additional eLearning faculty resources, see http://www.panola.edu/elearning/ and the Canvas Faculty Resources course.

Interactive Television (ITV)
Panola College has two ITV classrooms in the W.H. Gullette Technology Building and one classroom at each of the remote sites in Marshall and Center, Texas. ITV classes provide synchronous, interactive, two-way audio and video conferencing through the facilities of the Northeast Texas Network (NETnet), of which Panola College is a founding member.

ITV instructors:

- Complete ITV training prior to the beginning of the term in which the course is offered. The training is provided by the eLearning Administrative Secretary.
- Use the Faculty Guide to ITV.

At the beginning of each semester, the eLearning Administrative Secretary provides ITV remote facilitators with the ITV Facilitator Packet and provides students in remote classrooms with the ITV Student Handbook.

The Virtual College of Texas

The Virtual College of Texas (VCT) is a collaborative effort of Texas community college districts and the Texas State Technical College System. Courses are listed on a state-wide schedule and students may enroll in the courses through their home colleges.

As a VCT Provider College, Panola College allows instructors to list their online courses in the VCT course schedule. To list an online course in the VCT catalog, contact the VCT Coordinator in the eLearning department. To learn more about Panola College as a Provider College, visit this link:

As a VCT Host College, Panola College permits students to enroll in courses listed on the VCT schedule with the permission of their advisor or the academic dean. To enroll, students contact the eLearning VCT Coordinator. The Dean of Distance and Digital Learning approves VCT courses, in collaboration with division deans.

Virtual College of Texas: http://www.vct.org

Evaluations

Course Evaluations

All distance learning courses will be evaluated according to Panola College evaluation policy outlined in the Panola College *Faculty Handbook*. Faculty response criteria to distance learning evaluations of courses will be the same as response criteria for face-to-face courses. The academic deans have the option of evaluating courses at any time deemed necessary due to reported problems. All formal evaluations are filed according to College policy.

In addition to administrative and student evaluations, distance learning instructors may also participate in self-evaluation and/or peer review of courses. Quality Matters is a national organization that promotes effective online instruction and continuous course improvement. Panola College maintains membership in the organization and evaluation tools incorporate some of the tenets of the Quality Matters rubric. Instructors have the opportunity to complete self-reviews of their courses using Quality Matters software, and may submit courses for local and national peer review and certification. Several Panola College eLearning staff members and instructors serve as nationally-certified course Peer Reviewers for Quality Matters and for the Virtual College of Texas consortium.

Retention Strategies

Student Orientation

The eLearning department provides student orientation to the Canvas LMS in an online course and in face-to-face orientations at the beginning of each term. Students may request access to the online course by contacting the eLearning Office. The face-to-face orientation is voluntary and provides practical help with accessing and navigating Canvas and managing online learning. Students also have access to Canvas support in person, online, and via telephone. Panola College Information Technology Services and the eLearning department offer troubleshooting for minor computer problems.

Interaction

Effective interaction between students and instructors is an important factor in student satisfaction and persistence in distance education courses (http://jolt.merlot.org/vol10no2/croxton_0614.pdf). Both Quality Matters and Best Practices encourage development of specific communication policies in course instructions. Instructors should explain how interaction will occur, how much is required, and how long it usually takes for students to receive feedback or response to inquiries.

The Canvas LMS provides multiple means of interaction—messaging, assignment comments,

assignment media reactions, chat, web conferences, collaborations, and discussions. The eLearning department provides professional development activities devoted to promoting effective course interaction.

Intervention

At any time during a term, and especially at the beginning of the term, instructors may report the names of non-participating students to the Student Success office and they will be contacted and encouraged to participate. Canvas provides an Access Report and Analytics that assist instructors in identifying students who may need to be guided back on track.

Policy

Canvas LMS Requirements

All distance learning courses must be taught using Instructure Canvas and all instructors must be adequately trained to obtain a Panola College Certification of Instructional Technology.

Student Privacy

Panola College eLearning adheres to all requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The College issues each student a campus email and a unique six-digit student identification number at initial registration. The student email and six-digit identification number are required for access to the Canvas LMS. Canvas provides a secure environment for faculty to post course activities including quizzes and tests. Only student work submitted using open forums or discussions can be accessed by other students.

Each faculty member has a unique identifier that grants access to the Canvas LMS. Instructors have access only to their own courses. They receive training on student privacy requirements through the Human Resources office and are encouraged to understand and carry out a commitment to confidentiality, integrity, and security to protect the privacy of students who participate in distance learning activities.

Last Date of Attendance Policy

When reporting grades at the end of a term, the last date of attendance must be documented in CampusConnect. Attendance in online courses is determined by submission of an assignment or participation in an activity. Logging in to the class is not sufficient evidence of participation—document the last date of submission or participation.

Electronic Grade Book Submission

At the end of each semester, instructors submit digital copies of gradebooks to the appropriate academic deans. The gradebook in the Canvas LMS can be easily exported for submission. Contact the eLearning department for assistance with exporting or submitting digital gradebooks.

Syllabus and Student Instructions

In compliance with Panola College policy, all instructors use the same syllabus when teaching a specific course. Course information in each online or hybrid course must include a link to the official course syllabus on the Panola College website. All syllabi comply with SACSCOC requirements and College policy.

In addition to the official syllabus, instructors in every course should provide information listed in the Required Online Elements document available on the eLearning webpage.

Testing Services

Panola College, in compliance with the provisions of the United States Federal Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) of 2008, Public Law 110-315, requires at least two proctored activities in every online course. Proctoring occurs at approved testing sites, primarily at official college testing centers. Students must present photo identification, preferably the College photo identification, to confirm that the person enrolled in the course is the same student receiving credit for the course. A secure login with user name and password is also required of the student to access the exam. Testing center guidelines for students are posted on the Panola College website.

Panola College provides testing centers dedicated to online student testing on the Panola College Carthage campus and at remote sites in Center and Marshall. Specific times, locations, and other important information are listed on the Testing Services webpage. The information is subject to change and is kept current by the eLearning Administrative Secretary. Clear communication with testing proctors is vital.

Instructors send testing information to proctors using the electronic Instructor Proctored Exam Form on the Testing Services webpage or via email. Submission of the electronic forms sends it to all three testing centers. If using email, send to pc-testing@panola.edu, mcc-testing@panola.edu, and srtc-testing@panola.edu.

Panola College testing centers administer only online proctored activities—hard copy exams are not administered. Instructors may provide scratch paper, formula charts, or other required materials.

With instructor approval, students may submit a Request for Remote Proctoring at an official college testing center at another college or university. The eLearning Administrative Secretary will secure a test proctoring agreement with the remote testing center and will notify the instructor when the agreement is finalized. The instructor will then send testing information to the identified proctor at the other college or university.

Student Complaints

Distance learning students are encouraged to resolve problems when they first arise with the course instructor. If problems cannot be resolved informally, the student may resort to formal grievance procedures described in *The Pathfinder* student handbook, Academic and Disciplinary Complaints and Appeals, page 25.

Incomplete Grades

Incomplete grades may be assigned only with permission of the appropriate academic dean or the Vice President of Instruction. If an incomplete grade is assigned to a student, the instructor must notify the Canvas Administrator and the appropriate Testing Proctor if the student is going to take an online test at a testing center after the course has closed. Failure to notify will result in neither the proctor nor the student being able to access the course to complete make-up work. After six weeks, the Incomplete automatically becomes an F.

Ownership/Copyright

Ownership of the original electronic content developed for use in distance classes under the auspices of the College will be assigned in keeping with Panola College policy DBD Local.

The instructor may not use copyrighted material without clearance. Obtaining permission to use copyrighted material is the responsibility of the instructor. To determine if permission or clearance needs to be obtained, the following four factors should be considered:

- The purpose and character of the use, including whether use is of a commercial nature or is for nonprofit educational purposes
- The nature of the copyrighted work
- The amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole
- The effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work

Copyright resources are available online at the eLearning website and within the Canvas Faculty Resources and on the [library website](#).

Student Support and Services

Virtual Library Services

The Distance Learning Librarian manages resources and support for instructors teaching online, ITV, and hybrid classes. The DL Librarian also oversees services for students enrolled in those courses, with a goal of providing equivalent access to library services for all students. It is essential that online students are informed about available services – all online and hybrid courses should include a link to student library services and support. An Information Literacy module that introduces students to library services and skills is available on instructor request for all classes. For more information regarding virtual services, see the [library website](#).

Student Services

In addition to providing instruction, Panola College employs a variety of electronic methods including email, texting, live chat, online tutorials, web conferencing, and Interactive Television to deliver counseling/advising and other student support services. Students also have access to faculty and student services staff in face-to-face appointments. All student services available to traditional students are provided to distance students.

Disability Support Services

Disability Support Services (DSS) may facilitate accommodations for students with documented disabilities. New students are encouraged to read the [Handbook for Students with Disabilities](#) and to contact the DSS office following admission to ensure needed accommodations are available at time of enrollment.

Telephone: 903-693-2046. Email: dss@panola.edu.

College Store

Course textbooks and other required materials may be purchased online from the Panola College Store.

http://www.panolacollegestore.com

Other sources of information:

- Office of eLearning – dl@panola.edu
- eLearning web pages
- Panola College Board Policy
- Panola College Faculty Handbook