

2015-16

# Seminole State College Distance Education Plan & Procedures

Seminole State Colleges  
empowers people for  
academic success, personal  
development and lifelong  
learning.



Prepared by the Distance Education  
Committee Writing Team  
Seminole State College

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## **SSC Distance Education Committee Vision**

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### *A CONTINUING QUEST FOR UNPARALLELED EXCELLENCE*

*Seminole State College seeks to be an institution of unparalleled excellence, regarded by both internal and external constituents as a college whose quality is second-to-none, where employees and regents make a continual effort to meet the needs and exceed the expectations of our community and our students.*

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## **2015-2016 Distance Education Committee Membership**

Kelli McBride	Distance Education Coordinator and LAH Associate Professor (Chair)
Michael Schnell	Technology Specialist (Online Placement Subcommittee Co-Chair)
Dawna Hamm	Professor and Chair of Business and Information Systems
Christian Morgan	Professor and Division Chair, LAH
Yasminda Choate	Assistant Professor, LAH
Jamie Mills	Assistant Professor, MSE
Brad Schatzel	Assistant Professor, BIS
Bill Knowles	Associate Professor and Division Chair, Social Sciences

# SSC Distance Education Plan & Procedures

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## What Is Distance Education at Seminole State?

Seminole State College (SSC) employs Higher Learning Commission (HLC) definitions for distance-delivered courses and programs: "Distance-delivered courses are those in which all or the vast majority of the instruction and interaction (typically 75% or more) occurs via electronic communication, correspondence, or equivalent mechanisms with the faculty and the students physically separated from each other." The College offers two forms of distance education: online courses and interactive electronic television (IETV) courses. Online courses are offered in an asynchronous format whereas IETV courses are offered synchronously. The College currently offers fifty-six courses using online delivery in five of its six academic divisions. A total of four courses from two different divisions are offered through IETV.

As defined by HLC, "Distance-delivered programs are...those certificate or degree programs in which 50% or more of the required courses may be taken as distance-delivered courses." The College currently offers twenty degree programs that fit this definition. SSC does not offer any degree programs in which one-hundred percent of the courses are available through distance delivery. The College offers no correspondence courses or programs.

## Why Distance Education?

SSC offers Distance Education courses in order to provide students convenient access to quality instruction at a distance using the combination of passionate instruction, innovative pedagogy, and rapidly evolving electronic technologies. Distance Education aligns well with the College mission in that it has demonstrated the ability to empower people for academic success, personal growth and lifelong learning. The College is committed to balancing the ever-increasing student demand for online education with a disciplined maintenance of academic rigor, the development of a solid distance-learning procedural infrastructure, and flexible plans for measured growth.

In the pages that immediately follow, the *Plans and Procedures* articulates in depth the details of the College's rationale, planning and existing procedures. Sections that describe specific plans of action for 2015-16 are denoted with a blue bubble in the section heading. The subsequent *Expectations and Protocols* section is more of a simplified list of responsibilities based on the *Plans and Procedures* for SSC personnel and students.

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## Plans and Procedures for Measured Growth

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The past ten years have seen unprecedented growth in online-course offerings and enrollment at SSC. With growth from only a few hundred credit hours of enrollment generated in 2003-04 to approximately 10,000 credit hours each of the past three academic years, the College has made a significant fiscal and human resources commitment to distance education. With demand for online courses continuing to increase, SSC has adopted a more intentional posture with reference to the role that distance education will play in the institution's future. As described below, the strategic plan for measured growth concentrates on the growth of course quality and not the variety of course offerings, but does allow for conservative incremental increases in enrollment numbers.

### *Distance Education Web Site*

### 2015-16 Plan of Action

The Distance Education Coordinator was tasked to create a web site that would publish information, forms, policies and procedures for SSC's Distance Education program. This site was completed in late 2014 and continues to expand. The web address is <http://www.sscok.edu/distanceeducation/>.

## Courses

All courses, no matter the delivery method, fall under the purview of the Vice-President of Academic Affairs and must meet all curriculum requirements with the same academic rigor. Online courses must use the same objectives and outcomes and have curricula that match the academic rigor of traditional courses. Online courses must also follow the similar administrative requirements. However, the nature of distance education may require some adjustments or alternatives to procedures for face-to-face courses.

### *Course Selection and Application*

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In addition to factors such as student demand and faculty interest, SSC has adapted HLC's *Guidelines for the Evaluation of Distance Education* to help determine which courses are offered through online delivery. The informal questions listed below are applied in making such a determination. Typically, proposals to deliver a course in an online format originate at the division level when a division chair submits a "Distance Education Course and Instructor Application" to the Distance Education Committee. Approved applications are then forwarded to the Division Chair Council for consideration and possible approval. Both of the above committees fall within the chain of command of the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

### *SSC Guiding Questions for Distance Education Course Selection*

1. Is offering the course online consistent with the mission of SSC?

2. Is offering the course online consistent with the *SSC Distance Education Plan and Procedures*?
3. Does offering the course online align with the institution's system of governance and academic oversight?
4. Is the online course curriculum coherent, cohesive, and comparable in academic rigor to similar courses offered in face-to-face formats?
5. Does offering the course online align with the *SSC Assessment of Student Learning Procedure*?
6. Is the faculty course developer appropriately qualified and trained to a level that allows him/her to effectively deliver the online curriculum and evaluate student success?
7. Does SSC possess the capacity to provide effective student and academic services to support students enrolled in the online course?
8. Does SSC possess the capacity to ensure the academic integrity of the course?

### ***Course Offerings Expansion***

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Consistent with the national trend, the demand for online education continues to grow at SSC. The College remains firmly committed to growing online enrollment in a manner that maintains academic rigor and integrity but does not outpace the development of institutional infrastructure. Fifty-six courses at SSC are now offered using online delivery. The College has enacted a temporary moratorium on increasing this number while it turns its attention to improving the quality and design of the courses currently being offered. As course quality improves and administrative procedures become more institutionalized, the College may revisit the expansion of its online course offerings. Within this framework, modest increases in online enrollment (approximately 5% or less) may be generated by increasing the number of course sections of online courses currently offered.

### ***Course Development***

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The development of online courses is the responsibility of SSC faculty under the supervision of the appropriate Division Chair, the Coordinator of Distance Education, and the VPAA. Faculty or faculty teams who develop online courses are called *course developers*. Developing courses is considered part of a faculty member's contractual duties; however, Division Chairs or the VPAA may request additional compensation for special situations. Courses are required to meet established course outcomes and objectives and any other relevant criteria (MATRIX, Articulation Agreements). Courses developed by SSC faculty are the property of SSC (College Policy II-7-4). Online course development follows the existing process for developing courses, but includes additional steps unique to online courses. Existing requirements for all SSC courses include creating a syllabus based on the college-approved course master syllabus, incorporating direct and indirect assessment, and using internal and external evaluation (student evaluations

and feedback, faculty self-assessment, mentoring, division chair observation). Additional requirements specific to online courses include the “Distance Education Instructor and Course Application” and the Quality Matters peer-review and course certification process.

### ***What Is Quality Matters™?***

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QM is a subscription-based, non-profit organization that provides peer-reviewed assessment of online course design and recommendations for course improvement. The QM certification process uses the QM Rubric, one specific for higher education, to help colleges improve the quality assurance of their distance education programs. The QM rubric, used by more than 700 colleges and universities, focuses primarily on online course design and implements forty-one research-based standards divided into eight categories to ensure the quality of course design. Courses that satisfy a predetermined scoring threshold during the peer-review process are awarded Quality Matters Certification. QM course certifications are valid for a period of five years. QM also provides professional development for faculty and administrators.

The QM course design rubric is used by peer review teams to evaluate courses (but not faculty performance). Course developers can also use the rubric as a guide to improve and/or create online courses. The eight standards on the QM Rubric are: (1) Course Overview and Introduction, (2) Learning Objectives (Competencies), (3) Assessment and Measurement, (4) Instructional Materials, (5) Learner Interaction and Engagement, (6) Course Technology, (7) Learner Support, and (8) Accessibility. All standards focus on student-centered approaches to design, and standards 2-6 stress the importance of aligning course content with measurable course outcomes and learning objectives.

### ***Continuing the Quality Matters Initiative***

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#### ***2015-16 Plan of Action***

In an effort to establish a formal system for the design and improvement of online courses, SSC began a five-year process of subjecting each of its online courses to the QM peer review and certification process in 2014-15. The implementation plan is still underway and involves five well-tested, high-enrollment courses that will undergo peer review after the revised courses have been piloted at least two semesters, according to QM recommendations. Subsequent years will see an incremental acceleration in the number of course reviews and certifications. As the campus develops a QM quality assurance expertise and a QM quality assurance culture, increasing numbers of courses will undergo review each of the next five years. At the completion of the five-year cycle, the College intends to have all online courses QM certified. At present, participation in a QM course review is voluntary. However, the College will eventually require QM certification (and re-certification every five years) for all online courses.

QM certified courses will be taught using only the QM certified course design. Modifications to the design of QM certified courses must adhere to rubric standards, require the approval of the appropriate Division Chair, Coordinator of Distance Education, and VPAA, and may require QM peer review. All new SSC online courses will require QM certification prior to being offered. Faculty teaching courses who have not been selected yet for QM peer review should use the

QM rubric to begin implementing suggested best practices for online delivery. Faculty who have received QM certification will act as advisors for this process.

The College has allocated appropriate funds for the QM subscription, professional development for faculty course developers, and for the fees associated with the course review process. It has also outlined specific goals and measureable outcomes that it hopes to realize in part as the result of implementing Quality Matters. Ongoing achievement of these goals and outcomes will be analyzed and reviewed each year and adjusted as necessary by the Distance Education and Curriculum Committees.

### *Intentional Goals of Implementing Quality Matters at Seminole State College*

1. Establish a comprehensive and continuous quality assurance and course improvement framework for online courses that aligns with accreditation standards.
2. Grow a supportive, collegial climate of quality assurance in Distance Education.
3. Provide a research-based professional development resource for online faculty.
4. Cultivate an on- and off-campus professional collaboration network for the discussion of Distance Education.

### *Desired Outcomes for Quality Matters Implementation*

1. Consistency of virtual environment and student experience.
2. Improve student engagement and learning outcomes.
3. Consistency of online faculty role and virtual language.
4. Campus-wide online course design expectations and online course "shell."
5. Faculty collaboration.
6. Increase online enrollment.
7. Demonstration of online course quality through assessment.
8. Course completion and student success.
9. Increase campus graduation rate.

### *Instructional Methodology*

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SSC requires all online courses use the college's learning management system (LMS), though some courses may use additional systems in conjunction with a textbook or course pack. Other than being required to use the specified LMS, faculty choose the course methodology. The "Distance Education Instructor and Course Application" provides checkboxes for faculty to indicate which tools they use, but there is no requirement to use a certain number of tools. Other requirements, such as writing assignments and exams would come from the course

outcomes and objectives and/or division-based requirements that faculty have agreed upon.

Faculty also determine the type and amount of student-to-student and student-to-faculty interactions. Best practices for online teaching highly support consistent interactions. Faculty should expect students to spend as many hours online as they do in class per week, with homework in addition to that time. The standard recommendation is that students should expect to log-in to the class three times a week and check email in addition to this time for changes and updates. Faculty should consult the QM Higher Education Rubric for common standards for online course design.

### ***Copyright and Accessibility***

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All online course materials must comply with Title 17 U.S. Code, the United States Copyright Act, the Digital Millennium Copyright Act of 1998, and the Technology, Education, and Copyright Harmonization (TEACH) Act of 2002. Courses must also comply with federal guidelines for 508(B) accessibility. Faculty certify copyright compliance by submitting a Fair Use Checklist form with their Distance Education Instructor and Course Application. The college provides information on the legal use of resources, and the LMS has built-in accessibility tools (e.g., screen readers), and VBrick has closed captioning capabilities for lectures. Some students may need more accommodation than what is built into the system. In such cases, faculty will be apprised of this by the ADA Counselor. Requests for accommodations must go through the ADA office and be initiated by the student. Faculty should direct all inquiries there and provide at least a link to that information in their Cruiser courses.

### ***Course Assessment***

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The College participates in a well-established, robust assessment process that probes student learning and the student experience at periodic intervals and at various levels. Details pertaining to the SSC assessment process may be found in the *SSC Assessment of Student Learning Procedure* available on the SSC assessment webpage. The Course-Embedded Assessment employed by the process during assessments of general education and degree programs also serves the assessment needs of online courses at SSC. Similar to all face-to-face courses, all online courses are required to implement Course-Embedded Assessment. Assessment of online courses occurs on the same schedule and adheres to the same guidelines as the Course-Embedded Assessment that occurs in conjunction with face-to-face courses. Faculty and Division Chair analysis of assessment results requires a discussion of specific areas of interest related to student learning. In addition, it includes a section for listing specific plans of action based on assessment results and budgetary needs tied to the plan of action. Most importantly, the guidelines also specify different models for follow-up analysis and discussion of assessment results among peers and supervisors. Such follow-up has the intention of closing the assessment loop and should lead to implementation of new practices and allow for experimentation with various innovative techniques to improve student learning.

The Course-Embedded Assessment process also lends itself quite well to the determination of equivalent learning between sections of the same courses with face-to-face and online

deliveries. Consequently, for course titles taught using online delivery, SSC implements mandatory reporting and analysis of assessment results aggregated by course title and delivery method. Such comparisons of the achievement of student outcomes objectively quantify the performance of students in face-to-face courses vs. students in online courses. As with any assessment activity at the course level, Equivalent-Learning Assessment will lead to relevant delivery adjustments by instructors and course design improvements by the Online Course Faculty Developer under the direction of the appropriate Division Chair and Vice President of Academic Affairs. Equivalent-Learning Assessment for online sections occurs annually as per the *SSC Assessment of Student Learning Procedure*. Specific guidelines for comparison of equivalent learning between online and face-to-face courses, as well as Course-Embedded Assessment, are available on the SSC assessment webpage.

As a component of assessing student engagement and satisfaction, all SSC courses participate in student survey called *Student Feedback on Instruction*. In order to align this process with the unique features of distance education, the College has implemented a separate survey specifically designed for online courses. As a part of this process, discussion and analysis of the results of this survey by faculty and administration lead to formal and informal adjustments intended to improve instruction and learning in online courses.

### ***Academic Integrity Adjustment***

**2015-16 Plan of Action**

The College requires all online courses complete fifty percent of assignments in a way that verifies student identity and integrity. Verified student coursework includes, but is not limited to, exams, quizzes, assignments, and papers to be administered through an on-campus proctoring center or an approved off-campus location. In fall 2015, faculty requested the Distance Education Committee consider lowering the required proctoring percentage from 50% to 33%. After research and discussions, the DEC recommended the new percentage be 40%, and this recommendation was accepted by the administration.

### ***SSC Distance Education Proctoring Center***

**2015-16 Plan of Action**

Accordingly, SSC created a free space for students to receive on-campus proctoring for their online classes. The Distance Education Proctoring Center in the SSC library continues to be funded by the college. Proctoring Center protocols and procedures are published on the Distance Education web site at <http://www.sscok.edu/distanceeducation/>. These include instructions for students who need to obtain off-campus proctoring.

## **Degree and Certificate Programs**

### ***Program Expansion***

Currently, twenty of the College's twenty-three degree/certificate programs meet the HLC definition for being a Distance Education program. Additionally, SSC does not intend to offer any degree programs that are available entirely online. However, new embedded certification

programs are under development, and some may ultimately be available entirely online.

## Faculty

### Credentials

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In accordance with HLC guidelines, faculty must meet certain qualifications before being hired at SSC and before teaching online courses. The *Guidelines for the Evaluation of Distanced Education* states that “faculty responsible for delivering the on-line learning curricula and evaluating the students' success in achieving the on-line learning goals are appropriately qualified and effectively supported.” SSC requires all faculty teaching distance education courses complete all three levels of LMS training: Cruiser-Beginner, Cruiser-Intermediate, and Cruiser-Advanced. Faculty must also complete and receive approval of the *Distanced Education Instructor and Course Application* form for each course they teach.

### Training/Professional Development

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The most specific training and professional development required by the college is the three-level system developed by the Distance Education Committee. Additional training on a more informal level occurs on campus between faculty. Within Cruiser, faculty can access the Faculty Cruiser Tips and Discussion forum to post questions, answers, best practices, and training videos they have created. This forum consists of a blog and message board with established communities, such as creating a grading scheme, and the ability to create new communities. There are also bookmarks to relevant teaching-related information, like the TEACH Act. Faculty can also request a Cruiser Development shell be loaded into their personal Cruiser account. This shell allows them to design and develop a course. Cruiser itself provides an extensive library of training videos and tutorials to help faculty master the LMS. For external training and development, the college provides professional development funds that faculty can request for conferences and seminars related to distance education. They should apply to their Division Chair and Faculty Senate Professional Development Committee. Faculty may be required to have specific professional development, such as Quality Matters training, before teaching a course online. The college provides colloquia and workshops throughout the year on a variety of professional development topics, including distance education. In annual faculty evaluations by division chairs and the VPAA, faculty list all training, workshops, seminars, and certification programs they have attended.

## Students

### Target Students

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SSC Distance Education plans to continue to target students in the institution's five-county service area. These online learners enrolled in online courses at SSC fall into two basic categories: those who truly take courses "at a distance" from their homes or place of work and visit campus on a very limited basis, and students who enroll in a combination of face-to-face and online courses. Of these two groups, the vast majority of online learners originate from the latter "on-campus" students. The College has no immediate plans to alter the ratio of these two Distance Education student groups.

Similarly, the College does not plan to target online learners outside of its five-county service area in the near future. One minor exception to this enrollment pattern is SSC student athletes from out of state who take online courses while at home for the summer. The College also openly encourages students from the five-county service area stationed outside of Oklahoma for military or other purposes to take advantage of SSC's Distance Education.

### Student Advising and Eligibility for Online Courses

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In an effort to facilitate student success, the College will be enacting a number of practices related to student advising and placement in the upcoming year. Eligibility for enrollment in online courses will be dependent first and foremost on the SSC placement process mandated by the *SSC Assessment Procedure*. Students who have tested at a reading or writing level that places them in ENG 0124 (Fundamentals of Language Arts) will not be permitted to enroll in online courses until they clear their performance deficiency in Language Arts. As a component of the enrollment process, all students will be counseled by enrollment specialists regarding the academic preparation, study habits, and discipline required for success in online courses. Students without appropriate skills in these areas will not be enrolled in online courses.

### Online Student Orientation

#### 2015-16 Plan of Action

In an effort to prepare students for taking online classes, the College at first considered creating the *Online Course Computer Competency Test* that all students would have to pass before enrolling in an online class. After meetings to decide how to design and implement such a test, the Distance Education Committee recommended that this test be replaced with an Online Student Orientation module built in to all online classes and completed at the beginning of the semester. The VPAA appointed an ad hoc committee to create the module under the supervision of the Distance Education Coordinator. The orientation was piloted in spring 2015 with great success. The module covers basic information such as taking assessments, turning in assignments, emailing protocols, academic integrity. It ends with an online learner contract that outlines the student's understanding of the academic preparation, study habits, and discipline required for success in online courses. After adjustments based on information from the pilot

classes, the orientation module will be automatically imported into all online courses starting fall 2015.

## Technology

### *Learning Management System and Technology Improvements*

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The college provides a universal learning management system (LMS) for course and campus use. The LMS currently in use at SSC is Campus Cruiser. SSC continues to improve services for distance learning through incremental LMS improvements, interactive TV services, and the abilities for lecture capture and playback, allowing a variety of ways to educate students. Forthcoming upgrades to the main campus email, messaging, and calendaring system will improve services for faculty and staff to better correspond with current and prospective students.

All SSC online courses are required to use the College's LMS. Courses may also use the built-in technologies, such as email, chat, discussion boards, and media players. In order to provide the most up-to-date technology for online learning, the college attaches a special fee for online courses to help pay for updates and other Distance Education-related expenses. Like all student fees, these are voted on by the Administrative Council and the SSC Board of Regents.

### *Changing the Learning Management System*

*2015-16 Plan of Action*

The Distance Education Committee has been tasked with looking at the benefits of moving to a different LMS. The major focus of the committee will be on Desire 2 Learn's Brightspace platform, which would provide a more robust and stable LMS. Because of a state contract with D2L, the College may save considerable money in switching to a new LMS.

## Administration

SSC has a collegial campus administrative culture known for its participatory governance. As is the case for all SSC credit courses, Division Chairs directly supervise the administration of online courses. However, online courses are also subject to the recommendations and vision of the Distance Education Committee (DEC). Both the Division Chairs and the DEC perform their duties under the supervision of the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA). The VPAA is a member of the campus Administrative Council which is chaired by the campus President. The President reports directly to the SSC Board of Regents.

The DEC will be comprised of about eight to ten faculty and staff members whose expertise and passion for distance education are notable and who have been appointed by the VPAA. Ideally, the DEC will consist of at least one faculty member from each division offering online courses. Professional staff members who have appropriate technical expertise that benefits the committee may also be regular DEC members. The chair of the DEC will be the Coordinator of

Distance Education. The DEC will meet at least once per month (and more often as needed) at a consistently scheduled day and time.

### ***Distance Education Committee Action Agenda***

***2015-16 Plan of Action***

The Distance Education Committee will address the following items during its 2015-16 proceedings:

1. Discuss the appropriateness of and possibly develop an Online Learner Bill of Rights.
2. Publicly recognize course and professional development certifications of faculty course developers and QM peer reviewers.
3. Analyze results from the *Student Feedback on Online Instruction* and make appropriate adjustments.
4. Consider piloting blended classes with the intention of reinstating them.
5. Explore the benefits of moving to a new LMS.
6. Design a seat-time calculator to be used for blended classes.
7. Hire a night-time proctor for the DEPC.
8. Find a more efficient scheduling system for the DEPC.
9. Consider adding a paid proctoring service for students to use.
10. Consider adding prerequisites for online courses.
11. Evaluate the online student orientation module and modify if necessary.
12. Formalize the IETV process between the College and local high schools and expand offerings.

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## Distance Education Expectations and Protocols

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The online course expectations and protocols for course design, faculty, academic divisions, students, and assessment are specified below. These expectations and protocols for online courses are mandatory for online students and a condition of employment for faculty members teaching and/or developing online courses as a part of their annual contract fulfillment or on an overload basis.

### *Online Course Expectations and Protocols*

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1. Curricula for online learning offerings must be coherent, cohesive, and comparable in academic rigor to programs offered in traditional instructional formats.
2. Achievement of course outcomes and objectives will be the prevailing measure used to determine course completion and student grades.
3. Online courses must follow the administrative requirements expected of face-to-face courses. This includes but is not limited to creating a syllabus with all required components; incorporating direct and indirect assessments such as course-embedded assessment and student feedback on instruction; faculty self-assessment; faculty mentoring; and Division Chair observation.
4. Online courses require certification through the Quality Matters (QM) peer-reviewed quality-assurance process. The QM certification process focuses on course design and course improvement (<https://www.qualitymatters.org/reviews>). The rubric-based course review process implements research-based standards for online education. All new SSC online courses will require QM certification prior to being offered. Existing SSC online courses will be scheduled for peer review and certification during the next five to seven years. At least five courses per year beginning with the 2015-16 academic year will be reviewed and ostensibly certified. Courses that are reviewed and not certified will no longer be offered.
5. As per Seminole State College Policy (II-7-4), QM certified courses are the property of SSC.
6. Teaching assignments for online courses will be determined by the appropriate Division Chair under the supervision of the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA).
7. QM certified courses will be taught using only the QM certified course design. Modifications to the design of QM certified courses must adhere to rubric standards, require the approval of the appropriate Division Chair and the VPAA, and may require QM peer review.
8. In order to facilitate an appropriate quantity and quality of faculty-student interaction, online course enrollment limits will be set between twenty-five and thirty students. Exceptions to this limit warranted by special circumstances or course content may be granted by and at the discretion of the VPAA.

9. Online courses must be offered and administered through SSC's Cruiser learning management system (LMS). Other online resources such as those offered through textbook vendors may also be used to support online courses.
10. At least forty percent of an online course's grade must be determined using an established method that verifies student identity and integrity. Verified student coursework includes, but is not limited to, exams, quizzes, assignments, and papers to be administered through the SSC Distance Education Proctoring Center.
11. An alternate proctoring venue may be approved on a case-by-case basis by the Distance Education Coordinator. Requests for the use of an alternate proctoring center must use the correct form provided on the Distance Education web site. Requests must include legitimate documentation of the validity and necessity of the request, and verification of the integrity of the proctoring center according to established SSC guidelines.
12. Online course materials must follow federal guidelines for 508(B) accessibility compliance.
13. All online course materials must comply with Title 17 U.S. Code, the United States Copyright Act, the Digital Millennium Copyright Act of 1998, and the Technology, Education, and Copyright Harmonization (TEACH) Act of 2002. Faculty will certify this compliance by submitting a *Fair Use Checklist* form with their *Distance Education Instructor and Course Application*.

### ***Online Faculty Expectations and Protocols***

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1. Online faculty must present appropriate credentials to teach the subject matter as specified by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE) and the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). Online faculty may be full-time, part-time or adjunct faculty members.
2. As designated by the appropriate Division Chair, faculty are responsible for online course development. Development of online courses will occur under the supervision of the appropriate Division Chair and the VPAA.
3. To be eligible to develop and teach an online course, faculty must complete the following levels of Cruiser training: Cruiser-Beginner, Cruiser-Intermediate, and Cruiser-Advanced. Prior to fall 2015, these were titled Cruiser-Basic, Cruiser-Intermediate, and Cruiser-Advanced. To clarify the level of Lite and Basic, the VPAA's office renamed the first two modules, but no changes were made to the training itself in each module.
4. To be eligible to teach an online course, faculty must complete a *Distance Education Instructor and Course Application* and *Fair Use Checklist*. The application and checklist must be approved by the appropriate Division Chair, the Distance Education Committee and the Curriculum Committee prior to a formal teaching assignment in an online course.
5. Professional development through Quality Matters or other approved providers may be required of faculty members who desire to design and/or teach online courses.

Requests for funding to support professional development should be submitted to the appropriate Division Chair.

6. Faculty involved in designing and/or teaching online courses are expected to pursue periodic professional development training specific to online education.
7. Full-time faculty are expected to maintain ten (10) posted office hours per week. Faculty who teach online courses are permitted to fulfill up to two (2) of their office hours per week in the form of "online office hours" in which they are continuously available to students through the internet. Online office hours may be completed at a physical location of the faculty's choosing.
8. Grades for student coursework for online courses must be kept up-to-date by online faculty throughout each semester and published electronically in the Cruiser Gradebook on a regular basis. Alternate means for making grades available to students and administrators electronically are permitted but require the prior approval of the appropriate Division Chair. Instructors are strongly encouraged to maintain a hard-copy backup file of student grades throughout each semester.
9. The recommended upper limit for the online teaching load for faculty is two online courses per semester. However, at the discretion of the appropriate Division Chair, three courses per semester may be assigned. Other workload limits may also apply that supersede this limit in the case of part-time and adjunct faculty.
10. Because face-to-face class meetings provide students consistent access to instructors, online faculty assume additional responsibility for responding to student inquiries in a timely and professional manner. Barring extenuating circumstances, faculty should respond to all student inquiries as soon as possible but no later than 24 hours excluding weekends and holidays.
11. Full-time faculty teaching online classes must proctor in the DEPC at least 2-hours each week. These hours can count as part of the required 10-office hours a week. Faculty needing an exemption from this service must gain approval from the VPAA. Faculty not teaching online classes may also proctor.

### ***Online Course Division Chair Expectations and Protocols***

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1. Under the supervision of the VPAA, Division Chairs are responsible for the oversight of online courses offered in their divisions. As such, Division Chairs are responsible for continuously ensuring the competent delivery of curricula by faculty teaching online courses.
2. In addition to the usual administrative oversight provided for face-to-face courses, which includes but is not limited to faculty observation and faculty mentoring, Division Chairs are responsible for supervising online course development and online course improvement. They are also responsible for designating online course development assignments and online teaching assignments.

3. Division Chairs are responsible for supervising the assessment of online courses in their respective divisions. As stipulated by the *SSC Assessment Procedure*, online courses are to be assessed directly in a manner consistent with face-to-face courses (<http://www.sscok.edu/Assessment/AssessStudentProcedure7-13.pdf>). Student outcomes in online courses are to be compared to outcomes in face-to-face courses of the same title. Division Chairs or their designees are responsible for aggregating and analyzing the assessment data for these comparisons. Division Chairs are also responsible for ensuring the completion and analysis of indirect assessments such as *Student Feedback on Online Instruction*. Division Chairs are charged with working with faculty and seeing that appropriate adjustments and course improvements are made based on the results of these assessments.
4. Division Chairs should encourage the submission of requests for professional development training relevant to online education by faculty in their divisions. At their discretion, Division Chairs are to submit these requests to Academic Affairs, Faculty Senate, or other funding agencies for consideration.

### ***Online Student Expectations and Protocols***

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1. SSC online courses are primarily directed at students in the College's five-county service area. However, the College places no formal geographical restrictions on enrollees.
2. In order to facilitate student success, eligibility for enrollment in online courses is dependent primarily on the SSC placement process mandated by the *SSC Assessment Procedure*. Students who have tested at a reading or writing level that places them in ENG 0124 (Fundamentals of Language Arts) are not permitted to enroll in online courses until they clear their performance deficiency in Language Arts.
3. As a component of the enrollment process, students are to be counseled by enrollment specialists regarding the academic preparation, study habits, and discipline required for success in online courses. Students without appropriate skills in these areas are not to be enrolled in online courses.
4. To increase retention in online classes, the College requires all students complete the online student orientation module at the beginning of the semester in their online courses. This module ends with an online learner contract that verifies the student's understanding of the obligations and responsibilities of taking an online class.
5. Since at least forty percent of an online course grades must be determined using an established method that verifies student identity and integrity, online learners must complete a number of exams, quizzes, assignments, and papers at the SSC Distance Education Proctoring Center. The use of alternate proctoring services is permitted but must adhere to established SSC guidelines and may need approval in advance by the appropriate Division Chair. The act of soliciting and securing a specific alternate proctoring arrangement is the sole responsibility of the online learner. Providing documentation of the integrity of the proctoring center and all costs related to the alternate arrangement are the responsibility of the online learner.

### ***Online Course Assessment Expectations and Protocols***

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1. As stipulated by the *SSC Assessment Procedure*, online courses are to be assessed directly in a manner consistent with face-to-face courses. Direct assessments that apply to online courses include course-embedded assessment and the *Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP)*. Student outcomes in online courses are to be compared to outcomes in face-to-face courses of the same title. Indirect assessment of online education includes but may not be limited to *Student Feedback on Online Instruction* and the *Graduate Exit Survey*. Appropriate adjustments and course improvements will be made based on the results of these assessments.
2. The *Student Feedback on Online Instruction* survey must be completed by students in each online section each semester.

## Definitions/Glossary

### **COURSE DEVELOPER**

*A faculty member assigned to develop and/or maintain an SSC course. For Distance Education classes, this person must follow the standards and guidelines established by the Distance Education Committee and Curriculum Committee in conjunction with Quality Matters™. Faculty Developers may be assigned tasks by Division Chairs, the VPAA's office, or the President.*

### **DISTANCE EDUCATION:**

*SSC follows HLC's definition: "education that delivers instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and that supports regular and substantive interaction between students and the instructor synchronously or asynchronously using one or more of the following technologies: the Internet, one-way and two-way transmission through open broadcast, closed-circuit cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communication devices; audio-conferencing; or videocassette, DVDs, and CD-ROMs used in conjunction with any of the other technologies." (from HLC's website)*

### **DISTANCE DELIVERED COURSE:**

*Distance-delivered courses are those in which all or the vast majority of the instruction and interaction (typically 75% or more) occurs via electronic communication, correspondence, or equivalent mechanisms, with the faculty and the students physically separated from each other. The College offers two forms of distance education: online courses and interactive electronic television (IETV) courses.*

### **DISTANCE DELIVERED PROGRAMS:**

*SSC follows HLC's definition: "Those certificate or degree programs in which 50% or more of the required courses may be taken as distance-delivered courses." (from HLC's website)*

### **FACE-TO-FACE COURSE:**

*Courses that require the instructor and students physically meet for a standard amount of seat time based on the number of credit hours in the course.*

### **INTERACTIVE ELECTRONIC TELEVISION COURSES (ITV):**

*Courses delivered synchronously through interactive television to off-site campuses. The instructor and students are separated physically but have face-to-face interaction through ITV.*

### **LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (LMS):**

*A LMS is a software package that provides tools for administrating, documenting, tracking, reporting, and delivering online content. For education settings, this specifically concerns education-related programs and information.*

### **ONLINE COURSE:**

*Asynchronous courses where 75% or more of the class occurs via electronic communication, correspondence, or equivalent mechanisms. These courses follow the same course objectives and standards as face-to-face courses.*

**ONLINE LEARNER:**

*In the most basic sense, simply a student taking courses in an online environment. Ideally, the online learner is a self-starter with good time-management and technology skills and has access to the tools required for online learning (e.g., computers and Internet access).*

**PROCTOR:**

*An SSC-recognized and approved person who administers and ensures the academic integrity of tests taken in places other than the SSC Distance Education Testing Center.*