



Northern Essex Community College Distance Education Agreement

Prepared by the Distance Education Committee

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I. Committee Statement

The enclosed Memorandum of Understanding was jointly prepared by the undersigned, consistent with the Distance Education Agreement between the Massachusetts Community College Council/MTA/NEA Day and DCE Units and the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education for the Massachusetts Community Colleges.

In this agreement, the Committee has attempted to provide utmost consideration to the faculty and students of Northern Essex Community College in furthering the established institutional goals of ensuring fair and equitable treatment of distance education faculty, providing flexibility, improving access, and fostering a learner-centered environment.

II. Executive Summary

The Distance Education Committee has worked to develop a policy regarding the development and implementation of distance education courses, including scalable compensation guidelines for faculty. In doing so, we acknowledge the effort required by faculty to adapt traditional courses to different delivery modalities. This policy is consistent with all appropriate contractual obligations while fostering the continued development of distance learning opportunities.

Current distance education offerings are web-based and hybrid (blended) courses. It is hoped that the policies contained herein may continue to apply to the development of distance education at the college as technology continues to evolve. It is understood that provisions of these policies may need to be reviewed every two years as the pedagogy, software and equipment of this instructional modality may significantly change in the future. However, in no event would such alterations be incongruent with applicable collective bargaining agreements.

These recommendations recognize that there can be different levels of development in converting traditional courses to distance education delivery. While all levels will meet the accepted standards of academic quality, there may be differences in the amount of time, effort, and faculty expertise required to develop and implement courses. These differences are reflected in the compensation for each level.

It is acknowledged that distance education is a collaborative enterprise. The college will make its best effort to provide faculty with training, technical and design support. The faculty will avail themselves of these resources so that highest quality educational experience is available to students.

1 **III. Course Development Requirements Table**

2 The table below provides a listing of the required tasks for three proposed levels of compensation
3 for NECC online and hybrid courses. The levels of compensation are determined by the
4 percentage of instructor-created materials in the course. Level 1 requires no instructor-created
5 material, level 2 requires at least 50% original material, and level 3 requires at least 75% original
6 material. In all cases, the tasks do not require work of faculty members that is not specified in the
7 union contract and the distance education interaction plan or that is not required by federal law.
8 Some tasks require work that can be taken as boilerplate from existing course shells or work that
9 can be done with the help of Center for Instructional Technology members. In these cases, faculty
10 also have the option to create their own materials.

11 The compensation for all levels comes with a requirement for faculty members to complete training
12 by CIT members in how to accomplish each task. An optional part of the training for levels 2 and 3
13 is to attend a refresher course in online course construction as well as a non-evaluative diagnostic
14 review of online learning quality by peer faculty three years after the first implementation of the
15 online course. This optional training is done for a stipend.

Course Development Requirements for NECC Online & Hybrid Courses with Compensation Structure		
<p>Level 1 Description</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An external source provides most of the course content with course modifications or enhancements expected • Student access codes are likely required and related costs have been evaluated • Copyrighted content not eligible for resale • Intellectual property is minimal, but solely using unmodified externally sourced materials will not meet this agreement • The external site’s data retention and privacy policies are checked 	<p>Level 2 Description (at least 50% original content created)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An external source may provide some of the content, and original content is expected • Student access codes may be required and costs have been evaluated • Copyrighted content is not eligible for resale • Ownership of intellectual property applies only to content created by instructor 	<p>Level 3 Description (at least 75% original content created)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most of the content is original and developed by the instructor • Course can be sold in accordance with statewide contract • Intellectual property owned by instructor • In the event the course is sold, resources, notes, assignment answers and explanations are included within the LMS to assist future instructors in teaching and facilitating the course
<p>GENERAL STANDARDS</p>		
<p>1. COURSE STRUCTURE & NAVIGATION</p> <p>A. Organize course elements consistently</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize NECC course shell organization and/or create your own consistent organization for ease of navigation • Provide instructions to find various course components and a clear place to get started • Organize course into modules, units or lessons that correlate with the course syllabus • Provide instructions to complete module activities <p>B. Provide students an orientation to the course</p>	<p>1. COURSE STRUCTURE & NAVIGATION</p> <p>A. Organize course elements consistently</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize NECC course shell organization and/or create your own consistent organization for ease of navigation • Provide instructions to find various course components and a clear place to get started • Organize course into modules, units or lessons that correlate with the course syllabus • Provide instructions to complete module activities <p>B. Provide students an orientation to the course</p>	<p>1. COURSE STRUCTURE & NAVIGATION</p> <p>A. Organize course elements consistently</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize NECC course shell organization and/or create your own consistent organization for ease of navigation • Provide instructions to find various course components and a clear place to get started • Organize course into modules, units or lessons that correlate with the course syllabus • Provide instructions to complete module activities <p>B. Provide students an orientation to the course</p>

<p>C. Submit to supervisor and post the DE Interaction Plan for course and place within the course</p> <p>2. COURSE DESIGN</p> <p>A. Post course syllabus and schedule following all contract guidelines at a minimum (including course objectives)</p> <p>B. List course materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide access to content • Provide relevant, supplemental instructional materials • List course-specific software and hardware specifications • Provide technical support information from the publisher or external site(s), including any access code instructions • Align materials to course objectives <p>C. Provide teaching procedures and learning activities as described in contract and DE interaction plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide varied and ongoing opportunities that support learning • Provide venues and activities for interaction • Align activities with course objectives <p>D. Provide Assessments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide assessments or modify/link to existing assessments • Provide basis for grading 	<p>C. Submit to supervisor and post the DE Interaction Plan for course and place within the course</p> <p>2. COURSE DESIGN</p> <p>A. Post course syllabus and schedule following all contract guidelines at a minimum (including course objectives)</p> <p>B. List course materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create at least 50% original content • Provide relevant supplemental instructional materials • List course-specific software and hardware specifications • Provide technical support information from the publisher or external site(s), including any access code instructions • Align materials to course objectives <p>C. Create teaching procedures and learning activities as described in contract and DE interaction plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create at least 50% original learning activities to provide varied and ongoing opportunities that support learning • Provide venues and activities for interaction • Align activities with course objectives <p>D. Provide Assessments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create at least 50% original assessments • Provide basis for grading 	<p>C. Submit to supervisor and post the DE Interaction Plan for course and place within the course</p> <p>2. COURSE DESIGN</p> <p>A. Post course syllabus and schedule following all contract guidelines at a minimum (including course objectives)</p> <p>B. List course materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create at least 75% original content • Provide relevant supplemental instructional materials • List course-specific software and hardware specifications • Provide technical support information from the publisher or external site(s), including any access code instructions • Align materials to course objectives <p>C. Create teaching procedures and learning activities as described in contract and DE interaction plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create at least 75% original learning activities to provide varied and ongoing opportunities that support learning • Provide venues and activities for interaction • Align activities with course objectives <p>D. Provide Assessments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create at least 75% original assessments • Provide basis for grading
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide criteria for evaluating student performance • Align assessments with course objectives <p>E. Prepare and provide instructions for technology used in the course</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blend content from external publisher’s learning system and NECC’s LMS • Include instructions provided by the college or publisher for technology and expectations for its use • Check that files are optimized for web • Align use of technology with course objectives <p>F. Comply with copyright laws</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comply with all federal copyright laws and Fair Use guidelines in use of materials as directed by the college • Cite copyright and licensing status of all content where appropriate <p>G. Comply with accessibility laws</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check that all course materials are accessible and meet state and federal ADA-accessibility requirements and comply with NECC’s accessibility policy and guidelines as directed by the college <p>3. STUDENT SUPPORT & SERVICES</p> <p>A. Use links to technical support resources provided by CIT or create similar links B. Use links to academic support resources provided by CIT or create similar links</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide criteria for evaluating student performance • Align assessments with course objectives <p>E. Prepare and provide instructions for technology used in the course</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blend content from external publisher’s learning system and NECC’s LMS • Include instructions provided by the college or publisher on the technology and the expectations for its use • Check that files are optimized for web • Align use of technology with course objectives <p>F. Comply with copyright laws</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comply with all federal copyright laws and Fair Use guidelines in use of materials as directed by the college • Cite copyright and licensing status of all content where appropriate <p>G. Comply with accessibility laws</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check that all course materials are accessible and meet state and federal ADA-accessibility requirements and comply with NECC’s accessibility policy and guidelines as directed by the college <p>3. STUDENT SUPPORT & SERVICES</p> <p>A. Use links to technical support resources provided by CIT or create similar links B. Use links to academic support resources provided by CIT or create similar links</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide criteria for evaluating student performance • Align assessments with course objectives <p>E. Prepare and provide instructions for technology used in the course</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blend content from external publisher’s learning system and NECC’s LMS • Include instructions provided by the college or publisher on the technology and the expectations for its use • Check that files are optimized for web • Align use of technology with course objectives <p>F. Comply with copyright laws</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comply with all federal copyright laws and Fair Use guidelines in use of materials as directed by the college • Cite copyright and licensing status of all content where appropriate <p>G. Comply with accessibility laws</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check that all course materials are accessible and meet state and federal ADA-accessibility requirements and comply with NECC’s accessibility policy and guidelines as directed by the college <p>3. STUDENT SUPPORT & SERVICES</p> <p>A. Use links to technical support resources provided by CIT or create similar links B. Use links to academic support resources provided by CIT or create similar links</p>
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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & QUALITY MAINTENANCE	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & QUALITY MAINTENANCE	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & QUALITY MAINTENANCE
First time instructors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend iTeach and coaching sessions to obtain NECC online teaching certification • Meet technical competencies prior to training • Engage in appropriate training as mutually agreed upon with CIT and supervisor when developing subsequent courses • Make backups or archives from external sites available for up to one year 	First time instructors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend iTeach and coaching sessions to obtain NECC online teaching certification • Meet technical competencies prior to training. • Engage in appropriate training as mutually agreed with CIT and supervisor when developing subsequent courses 	First time instructors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend iTeach and coaching sessions to obtain NECC online teaching certification • Meet technical competencies prior to training. • Engage in appropriate training as mutually agreed upon by CIT and supervisor when developing subsequent courses
STIPEND	STIPEND	STIPEND
\$500 per credit	\$700 per credit	\$900 per credit
	After teaching course and no later than three years after first offering, attend a refresher course and completes a non-evaluative diagnostic review of online learning quality.	After teaching course and no later than three years after first offering, attend a refresher course and completes a non-evaluative diagnostic review of online learning quality.
	STIPEND	STIPEND
	\$100 per credit	\$100 per credit

1 **IV. Compensation**

2
3 **Compensation: Workload Adjustment**

4 For full time faculty, reassigned time in lieu of the payment of a stipend is allowed for all courses
5 developed, provided that such an arrangement is agreeable to both parties.

6
7 **Compensation: Enhancements**

8 Eligibility: Faculty who have developed a distance learning course under the guidelines listed
9 herein, and have continued to teach the course, are eligible to request stipends for further course
10 enhancement as follows:

- 11
12
 - \$100 per credit for optional diagnostic online learning quality review.

13
14 **Compensation: Stipend Payment Review and Schedule**

15 Faculty who have developed a distance education course under the guidelines listed herein,
16 whether the course runs or not, will receive full compensation no later than 30 days after the
17 technical readiness evaluation described in section V of this document when the course materials
18 represent 100% of the course content as described in the Course Development Requirements
19 Table.

20
21 Faculty can request an early technical evaluation consistent with the process described in section
22 *V at any time the course developer believes 100% of the course has been completed.* The
23 evaluation must be completed within 14 days of that request and, if 100% of the course is
24 completed as described in the Course Development Requirements Table, full compensation will be
25 paid the developer within 30 days of the evaluation.
26

V. Policies for Course Implementation

Procedures and Limitations

The total number of stipends offered will be budget driven and the college is not obligated to provide any minimum number of stipends. The stipend for developing a course will be paid after a review of the course by the Vice President of Academic & Student Affairs or designee, using the Course Development Requirements Table as a guideline/tool to determine that the course is complete and ready to be put on the master schedule.

All proposals for developing distance education courses shall be submitted following the established distance education procedures and forms.

As with traditional course offerings, all new distance courses offered for credit must have prior approval of the Academic Affairs Committee. All special topics courses must first obtain curriculum approval through the college's standard curriculum approval procedures.

The Vice President of Academic & Student Affairs shall exercise final approval of all courses. Under special circumstances and through mutual agreement between the college and the instructor, arrangements other than those specified herein may be reached, provided that in no case will such arrangements be in violation of applicable labor contracts.

Distance education courses that are offered for the first time will be reviewed for technical readiness

The NECC Distance Education Agreement has been developed and agreed upon by the Distance Education Committee members and supports the goal of the Committee in an attempt to provide the utmost consideration to the faculty and students of Northern Essex Community College in furthering the established institutional goals of ensuring fair and equitable treatment of distance education faculty, providing flexibility, improving access, and fostering a learner-centered environment.

Distance Education courses that are to be offered for the first time will be reviewed for technical readiness in the following manner. Approximately three months prior to the start date of a newly developed online course, the Vice President of Academic & Student Affairs or designee and the faculty member will meet for the purpose of certifying the technical functionality of the course. Based on the sequential order in which material is presented to students, at least 75% of the learning modules and assessments/assignments will be complete and functional. The criteria used for this measure will be the Course Development Requirements Table. Following this meeting a status report will be provided to the academic area dean by the Vice President of Academic & Student Affairs or designee.

The instructor will be provided the opportunity to correct any technical difficulties that are identified in the above referenced procedure so that the course can be implemented as scheduled. It is acknowledged that this process is to ensure that the online course is operational as reflected in the plan of the instructor and is not an evaluation of the course. The evaluation procedure will be administered as provided by the pertinent collective bargaining agreement(s).

1 Approximately two months prior to the start date of a newly developed online course, the Vice
2 President of Academic & Student Affairs or designee and the faculty member will meet again
3 for the final certification of the technical functionality of the course. At this time 100% of the
4 learning module and assessments/assignments will be complete and functional, based on the
5 Course Development Requirements Table. If the course is not found to be technically
6 complete, the Vice President of Academic & Student Affairs or designee will notify the
7 appropriate academic area dean so that a decision can be made about whether the course will
8 remain on the master schedule or a delay will occur.

9
10 For the Administration

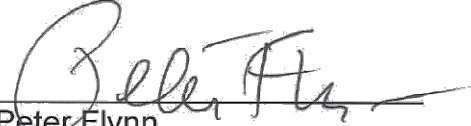
For the Faculty



Bill Heineman
Vice President of Academic & Student Affairs

5/11/14

Date



Peter Flynn
Chair, Distance Education Committee

5/11/14

Date

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