**Module 7 – Management of Distance Education**

**Scenario**

With increasing demands for more flexibility, the English Department at San Austin community college (SACC) (fictional) has decided to offer online courses. These are for students with the desire to enhance their education, but who cannot attend the class in person, due to distance or time constraints. These distance learning courses will allow students to still participate in the same quality of learning, but with the convenience of learning on their own time. In order to maximize participation, the class sizes will be capped at 24 students. The classes will fulfill English credit requirements, and will be equivalent to the on-site courses. The instructors will be based out of the main campus of San Austin community college, but the courses and all communication will be done entirely online. The following is a sample policy set forth for review by the SACC Online Learning Coordinator.

**Regulatory**

* SACC’s distance education courses are aligned with the educational objective and mission of the institution, providing inter-institutional agreement.
* All courses offered electronically by SACCs will comply with all standards and regulations required by the Texas Higher Education Board.
* All courses offered electronically by SACCs will be reviewed regularly to certify they meet and will continue to meet these standards and regulations.
* SACC distance courses will not be used to reduce or eliminate core faculty positions, to produce courses of best possibly quality.

**Course**

* Courses offered electronically will also be offered onsite at the SACC campus, ensuring the academic rigor of the distance courses
* The distance courses will adhere to the same academic calendar and schedule as traditional courses as SACCs, supporting inter-institutional agreement.
* A budget for technical support and repair of the distance courses will be created and added to SACC’s yearly budget, to accommodate the new resources.
* The infrastructure and learning material must be accessible and in working order at all times, to fulfil the purpose of distance learning flexibility.

**Student**

* SACC will provide electronic access to the online library resources for off campus research.
* All course advertisements and catalog information will provide accurate and up to date information for the traditional and distance learning courses to help prospective students make informed choices.
* All SACC distance and traditional students will have equivalent access to student services and student rights, benefiting both parties equally.
* Institution specific student information (school email address, course username and password) will be created upon first time, or returning enrollment into the institution, to orientate students into the distance learning system.

**Logistical**

* SACC will create a budget for faculty continuing education in the use of distance education course management and tools, to enhance facility production.
* The SACC English department will be equipped with equipment, software, and communication access to technical support and developers to ensure smooth operations.
* Students enrolled in SACC distance education courses will be required to have access to reliable internet connection and a computer for the minimum technical operations. Further requirements may be added for individual classes.
* Enrollment for distance classes will be capped at 24 students to provide maximum instructor-student support.

**Accessibility**

* SACC will require faculty to use multiple types of communication tools when contacting students and providing feedback to offer several access points.
* All SACC distance courses will be created to ensure accessibility for hearing and visually impaired students for equal opportunity.
* SACC councilors can advise adaptive software to support disabled students upon request.
* All SACC distance courses will provide alternative access and assessment methods to support diverse distance education learners upon request.

References:

Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. Retrieved August 3, 2016, from http://www.nwccu.org/Standards%20and%20Policies/Policies/PolicyDocs/Distance%20Education%20Policy

Simonson, M., Smaldino, S., & Zvacek, S. (2015). Teaching and Learning at a Distance: Foundations of Distance Education, Sixth Edition. Charlotte: Information Age Publishing