



Online Education Policy ACA 2.0 Office of Academic Affairs

Policy Type: Administrative
Applies to: Faculty and administrators

POLICY DATES

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The University of Mount Union recognizes the importance of delivering quality online programs within the context of providing relevant undergraduate and graduate studies. All online learning programs are developed and delivered in a manner consistent with our institutional mission of preparing students for fulfilling lives, meaningful work and responsible citizenship. We strive to carry out online learning that is consistent with all formal academic endeavors, yet cognizant of the technology and student support demands that may be particular to the online learning environment. Our practices for online education are aligned with those endorsed by Quality Matters.

The University maintains agreements that must be in place to serve students who reside out of state or pursue program-related practical experiences that are out of state via membership in the National Council of State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) and/or separate state agreements where necessary.

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Definitions

Term	Definition
Online course	An online course is a course in which the students, or some of the students do not meet face to face with their instructor but rather communicate and exchange ideas through a computer network. Learning resources such as reading, assignments, and quizzes may be delivered online or via printed materials. Communication in online courses occurs mainly through

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	online resources such as e-mail, blogs, wikis, discussion boards, video conferencing, chat rooms, virtual classrooms, and other future technologies
Synchronous vs. Asynchronous	<p>Online courses may be delivered synchronously, where students meet in a live virtual setting. Synchronous learning provides similar teaching and learning experiences to those in a traditional classroom. Students are expected to meet as a class at specific times that will be posted by the Registrar. Instructors of synchronous courses can use webinar software, such as iLinc or Elluminate, as a virtual classroom or other virtual settings such as Second Life. Brightspace (Desire2Learn) includes a live chat as well. Chat rooms can also be used as a vehicle for a live, although somewhat limited, learning experience.</p> <p>Courses may also be delivered asynchronously with no or limited live classroom interaction. Obviously, opportunities always exist for live one-on-one interaction through phone and chat rooms. Asynchronous classes provide opportunities for instructors to provide for their students creative and interactive learning content. In fact, it is highly recommended that students in asynchronous learning environments be presented with a variety of learning content methods.</p>
Fully Online or Hybrid	<p>A fully online course is defined as a course with no required face-to-face interaction. Fully online class sections will be designated as such so that students enrolling in these classes are aware that all course requirements will be fulfilled outside of a physical classroom. Because online courses are held to the same quality standards as regular classroom courses, University of Mount Union student transcripts will not make a distinction between physical and online courses.</p> <p>A hybrid course combines some face-to-face interaction with online course requirements. Such a course replaces regular classroom meeting times with online instruction.</p>

Policy Details

I. AUTHORITY AND CONTROL

The institution ensures that faculty design and implement online learning processes that meet accreditors' demands and observe the need for rigorous assessment of student learning outcomes. Academic program review processes led by the administration and facilitated by faculty committees are carried out to track the effectiveness of online offerings. Contractual arrangements (such as those with technology providers) are carried out within the parameters of accreditation and institutional standards.

II. QUALIFICATIONS OF FACULTY

The University of Mount Union hires, orients, trains, promotes and grants tenure to faculty in keeping with institutional policies and procedures and the requirements of regulatory bodies. Practices ensure that faculty meet the standards for education, scholarship and experience set by relevant accreditations bodies. Opportunities for continued education and training in new pedagogies and curricular reforms encourage faculty to maintain their competence.

III. PROGRAM PLANNING

The University's strategic and annual planning processes include the development of goals to address online learning in the areas of recruitment, program planning and review, student learning outcomes, budget and technology needs, institutional capacity for growth and analysis of student support needs. New programs are subject to a rigorous process to determine their feasibility and ongoing programs are routinely examined as part of the institutional program review cycle.

IV. CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

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Curriculum for online learning is developed using the same administrative and academic approval processes as traditional educational programs. New courses must be examined and approved by faculty committee prior to a vote of the full faculty. Curriculum development for online learning includes analysis of technology needs and student support needs.

V. RECRUITMENT AND ADMISSION

Recruitment and admission of students for online learning is carried out in manner consistent with traditional recruitment and admission processes. All necessary consumer disclosures are maintained and ethical practices are in place. The published practices include thresholds for student readiness that are routinely analyzed to determine that those accepted into undergraduate and graduate academic programs are prepared to succeed.

VI. ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING AND PROGRAM REVIEW

Assessment of online learning is conducted using processes led by the administration and carried out by faculty, staff and student representatives making up the Committee on Assessment. Program Review cycles are carried out with leadership from the administration and conducted by the Committee on Assessment. Every seven years the department develops a plan that is reviewed by the Committee on Assessment. Departments are asked to demonstrate progress in achieving their plans and utilizing their feedback annually. Results are used to create improvements in student learning and to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. Similarly, a plan for the assessment of the Integrative Core (general education) is regularly carried out.

VII. SUPPORT FOR THE ONLINE LEARNER

Academic student support planning is conducted by the administration to identify and respond to emerging needs and evaluates current practices. Changes are implemented by those responsible for online curriculum development, such as faculty, and student and faculty support services.

VIII. OWNERSHIP OF MATERIALS

Content created at the University of Mount Union by faculty developers will have dual and separate ownership by the University and faculty developer. The University will retain the right to offer the course with other faculty instructors, even if the developing faculty member leaves the University. The faculty member will retain the right to use the course materials to offer the class at other institutions, even if the developing faculty member leaves the University.

IX. TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

All Faculty, Students, and Staff at the University of Mount Union must comply with the Technology Resources Acceptable Use Policy, which describe unacceptable use, Technology User Code of Conduct, Network Use Policy, E-mail Policy, Hardware & Software Support Policy and Data Security.

Responsibilities

Position or Office	Responsibilities
Academic Affairs Staff	Requests policy review and revision by Academic Policies Committee every two years or as changes warrant; updates policy with approved changes and reissues policy

PROCEDURES

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Please review the information in this document before applying to offer a course fully or partially online. In addition, faculty wishing to create a **new** course that will have an online component (either fully online or hybrid) but has not been already approved by Academic Policies (prior to 2018) or Curriculum Committee, must also submit a new course proposal through the Curriculum Committee. Instructors should first consult with their department chair and be prepared to provide a rationale for offering the class online in the *Online Course Creation Proposal* document.

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I. COURSE DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE

Because of the significant up-front work required to successfully teach an online course section, proper planning is essential. Below are the deadlines to submit the "Online Course Creation Proposal" to the Faculty Technology Committee (FTC).

<u>Projected term the course will be offered</u>	<u>Proposal Deadline</u>
Fall	January 15
Spring/Summer	September 15

II. COURSE SECTION APPLICATION

All faculty proposing to create fully online or hybrid courses must first complete an **Online Course Creation Proposal** and follow the **Quality Matters Course Review Rubric Worksheet** as a guide. For more information, please contact the chair of FTC or the Manager of Instructional Design: ext. 3198.

III. COURSE DEVELOPMENT PROCEDURES

Determine if the course being offered will be considered a new course.

- If yes, submit a new course request to Academic Policies Committee according to published deadlines and then complete the Online Course Proposal and quality matters instructor worksheet as follows.
- If no, meet with Cara McEldowney (Manager of Instructional Design: ext. 3198) to discuss the various resources Mount Union has to help you in your preparations and then complete the *Online Course Proposal* and submit it to the chair of FTC.

For more online teaching resources, go to <http://www.qualitymatters.org>.
New users will need to create an online account

IV. REVIEW AND NOTIFICATION

The proposal will be reviewed by FTC for approval. The applicant will then be informed of the decision on offering the course section with possible suggestions for modifications. The Registrar's Office, Academic Affairs, and the Department Chair will be notified of the new online section.

Contacts

Subject	Office	Telephone	E-mail/URL
Assistant Academic Dean	Academic Affairs	330-823-3266	Academic@mountunion.edu
Faculty Technology Committee	Faculty Senate	330-823-3649	Academic@mountunion.edu
Manager of Instructional Design	Information Technology	330-823-3198	IT@mountunion.edu

History

All changes must be listed sequentially, including edits and reviews. Note when the policy name or number changes.

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