



Teaching Modality - Handbook Changes

RES 252648

AAC, FAC

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate approves revisions to the University Handbook regarding the teaching modality of courses at CSUB. Deletions are in ~~striketrough~~, and additions are in **bold and underlined**.

203.11 Distributed Learning Committee

University faculty have adopted a distributed learning policy for online and **flex hybrid** instruction (Academic Senate Resolution 1213028). The Distributed Learning Committee (DLC) is responsible to monitor for issues that arise with regards to the distributed learning policy and to **improve ensure** the quality of online and **flex hybrid** instruction, including the **development of guidance for certification of faculty wishing to teach online and/or flex hybrid** courses.

The DLC consists of (1) one faculty member from each of the academic **colleges schools**; (2) **one faculty member at-large** ~~the Faculty Coordinator of Online Instruction from the Faculty Teaching and Learning Center (FTLC)~~; (3) the Faculty Director of the FTLC; (4) a student representative from ASI; and (5) one staff member with direct responsibilities related to CSUB's learning management system (ex-officio). Additional members may be appointed as ex-officio members by the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs, at the recommendation of the current DLC members. **The Faculty Director of the FTLC convenes the first meeting of the year, during which the committee elects a chair.**

Faculty members on the committee are expected to have experience with the designing and teaching of online/**flex hybrid** courses and should **have received training in** ~~be certified by CSUB for online/**flex hybrid** instruction~~. Faculty members are elected in accordance with the election procedures in Sections 202.6 and 202.7 and serve on staggered two-year terms. The student representative will be selected by ASI on an annual basis. The staff member will be appointed by the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs on an annual basis.

As issues with the distributed learning policy arise, the DLC shall either (1) refer the issue to the Academic Senate for development of policy, or (2) develop a policy on a particular issue itself and then refer the proposed policy to the Academic Senate for consideration. The DLC shall report annually to the Academic Senate on online and **flex hybrid** instruction trends and issues.

If certification for teaching online and/or hybrid courses is available, the DLC shall issue guidance on becoming certified for online and/or hybrid instruction at the beginning of each academic year.

The DLC shall develop and maintain guidance for online and/or flex instruction, including but not limited to professional development pathways, instructional support recommendations, and quality standards. The Committee shall conduct a review of this guidance at least once every two years and revise it as necessary to ensure continued relevance.

The DLC shall meet at least once per semester. Failure to convene shall trigger review by the Academic Senate to ensure that policies governing online and/or flex instruction remain current, functional, and aligned with shared governance principles. The Academic Senate shall initiate steps to reconstitute the Committee or assign interim oversight to an appropriate Senate body to ensure continuity of distributed learning policy review and quality assurance.

303.1.1 Teaching Assigned Courses

Faculty shall teach their assigned courses in accord with the officially approved course descriptions provided in the current university catalog. Unless authorized by the department or program to teach a course in an online or **flex hybrid** format, faculty shall teach in a face-to-face format.

The assignment of courses includes responsibility for the mode of instruction (e.g., face-to-face, flex, or online). The determination of course modality is primarily a departmental or program-level decision, made through established curricular and scheduling processes and grounded in pedagogical appropriateness, disciplinary standards, and student learning outcomes.

Departments and programs shall ordinarily determine the modality of their courses independent of administrative preference, except as provided below. Departments and programs shall ordinarily determine the qualifications of their faculty who teach online courses and are responsible for ensuring the faculty are in compliance with the applicable accreditation and other requirements for that program.

College Deans retain a coordinating role to ensure that instructional offerings within the college are consistent with the University mission, student access needs, and resource constraints. In fulfilling this role, Deans may work collaboratively with departments and programs to ensure that a sufficient proportion of courses are offered in face-to-face format, recognizing that face-to-face instruction is the primary and expected mode of instruction at CSUB.

In the event of a disagreement between a department or program and the College Dean regarding course modality, the parties shall engage in good-faith consultation (e.g., Faculty Ombudsperson, DLC, FTLC Advisory Board, etc.) to resolve the issue. If consensus cannot be reached, the matter may be referred to the Provost or designee for resolution. Any decision that departs from the department's or program's recommendation shall be documented in writing and grounded in academic, operational, or resource-based considerations.

Changes to course modality after registration begins shall require approval of the College Dean.

RATIONALE: Referral 2025-2026-19 calls for clarification of instructional policy and teaching modality authority, particularly with respect to departmental autonomy and the role of administration in modality decisions.

This resolution affirms that teaching modality is fundamentally a pedagogical matter best determined by departments and programs, while also recognizing the responsibility of College Deans to ensure that instructional offerings align with institutional mission and

student expectations, including the University's emphasis on face-to-face instruction as its primary mode of delivery.

The resolution further responds to the prolonged inactivity of the Distributed Learning Committee by reinforcing expectations for its operation and oversight role. The Distributed Learning Committee (DLC) policy has not been updated in more than a decade, and the Faculty Coordinator of Online Instruction position has been discontinued. During this period, instructional modalities have evolved substantially. Online and flex teaching are now integral components of many faculty members' regular teaching assignments, and CSUB no longer requires certification for online instruction. These handbook revisions redefine the role and scope of the DLC to reflect current institutional practices. Maintaining clear, functional, and faculty-driven policies for online and flex instruction is essential to instructional quality, shared governance, and institutional coherence.

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