POLICY TITLE
Faculty Considerations for Distance Education and Use of Blackboard

POLICY NUMBER
ASOM 7.5 (formerly APPM 5.1 & 5.2)

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY
Ivy Tech Online Education Institute, Online Technology Coordinators, Academic Affairs

CREATION / REVISION / EFFECTIVE DATES
Created May 2001/Revised from original APPM 5.1 & 5.2, June 2012/Effective June 2014

PURPOSE
This policy and procedure outlines special considerations for faculty who teach distance education courses, as well as provides training guidelines required of all faculty in the use of Blackboard.

ORGANIZATIONAL SCOPE OR AUDIENCE
All faculty and staff

DEFINITIONS
Blackboard: The College’s current learning management system, available at http://online.ivytech.edu

POLICY
Faculty who are hired to teach any type of distance education course should be considered both for teaching excellence as well as their ability to effectively utilize technology in the facilitation of a course.

All faculty members hired to teach online must complete an Ivy Tech approved certification course prior to teaching that online course.

All faculty at Ivy Tech are required to utilize the Blackboard platform for communication of essential course information to students. All faculty at Ivy Tech must complete required training in the use of Blackboard.

PROCEDURE
Selection of Faculty & Requirements of Faculty Teaching at a Distance
Teaching faculty are selected and hired by the region originating the course. Faculty who teach or develop distance education courses are required to complete appropriate distance education
training and/or certification or demonstrate competency established through previous training or experience.

If a prospective instructor wishes to teach online, the preferred method of demonstration that the faculty member has met the requirements for training/certification is for the faculty member to successfully complete IVYC101: Online Faculty Certification. Regions should document successful completion of this course on the employee’s official training record via the training portal.

If a prospective instructor for a distance education course states they have earned certification to teach at a distance through previous experience from another institution or entity, the prospective instructor should:

1. Provide proof of successful completion of an approved equivalent training program. A listing of currently approved equivalent training programs is available from the Center for Instructional Technology.
2. Complete the Applying the Quality Matters Rubric training (and/or provide documentation of successful completion of this training at another institution).

If the prospective instructor does not have proof of successful completion of an approved equivalent training program, then the following alternative path may be utilized to demonstrate the instructor has prior experience necessary to teach at a distance:

1. Provide access to a current or previous online course or to course materials
2. Provide contact information for a supervisor at the institution for which he/she taught
3. Provide copies of student assessments of instructor/course.
4. Complete the Online Instructor Certification Survey
5. Interview with a full-time faculty member who has experience teaching online

Information collected should be reviewed by the appropriate hiring personnel in the region and a determination made as to whether or not the prospective instructor meets the requirements for teaching at a distance at Ivy Tech Community College.

If extraordinary circumstances require the assignment of an uncertified online instructor, this assignment must be approved in writing by the Associate Vice President, Online Academic Programs prior to the assignment of the faculty member to the course. In addition, a certified online instructor must be co-assigned to the course to monitor and provide support for the uncertified instructor. The uncertified instructor must complete the appropriate certification and/or training program before a second teaching assignment for a distance course is given.

Faculty are required to follow all College policies regardless of delivery method. This is inclusive of any policy of the College and may include such things as copyright, intellectual property, safety, FERPA, information and data security, and any other appropriate policy.
All Faculty teaching at a distance should be aware of the Quality Matters program and Quality Matters rubric. Current Quality Matters information is available via the Ivy Tech Online area of Infonet.

Training and use of Blackboard for all College Courses
All faculty members are required to utilize Blackboard to communicate basic course information in all course sections regardless of delivery method. The requirement to utilize Blackboard includes for each course section, at a minimum, the faculty member will use Blackboard to:

1. Communicate their contact information under the Instructor button
2. Provide the Course Syllabus and a calendar of course activities under the Start Here button
3. Distribute and collect assignments and assessments through Blackboard whenever appropriate. Returning assignments and assessments through Blackboard is also highly encouraged.
4. Maintain accurate grade information throughout the course in the Blackboard Grade Center. Grade information provided should include all information necessary to fully calculate the student grade.

All faculty members are required to complete training on the basic use of Blackboard through successful completion of BBRD 101 prior to the start of their first teaching assignment. Regions should document successful completion of this course on the employee’s official training record via the training portal.

Faculty Loading for Distance Education
See ASOM 7.2 for the College's faculty loading policy and specific provisions related to distance education courses.

Special Consideration for Course Design for Distance Education Courses
A course taught via a distance education delivery method must foster a high quality, engaging course environment which seeks to develop and promote a “community of learners” approach. Appropriate levels of interaction are required in distance education courses between instructor and student, student to student, and student with content. The following minimum requirements must be met in order to foster a community of learners:

1. Interaction is a product of course design. Course developers will consult with instructional design staff as needed to ensure that appropriate levels of interaction are provided for through the design of each course. Faculty developing all forms of distance education courses must utilize the Quality Matters™ rubric as the standard against which they develop the course.
2. Online courses must use the current, approved Online Course Syllabus template. The syllabus template is regularly updated to include the most up to date information about available College resources as well as to maintain alignment with Quality Matters and other quality initiatives.
3. Online courses must use the current, approved Online Course Template. The course template is regularly updated to include the most up to date information about available
College resources as well as to maintain alignment with Quality Matters and other quality initiatives.

4. Faculty teaching a distance education course must respond to student questions within 36 hours. In rare circumstances where a faculty member is aware he/she will not be able to meet this commitment, this should be discussed with the faculty member’s immediate supervisor prior to the time period during which this commitment will not be able to be met and an appropriate plan of action developed (e.g., informing students of the anticipated delay, arranging for another faculty member/teaching assistant to assist students during this time, etc.). This commitment will be noted in the course syllabus and in the course announcements.

5. Graded work should be acknowledged and returned in a suitable timeframe for providing appropriate feedback to the student (normally no more than 7 days after the due date for the assignment). The faculty member’s commitment to return work will also be noted in the syllabus.

6. Faculty and students should use college-provided e-mail accounts as the primary e-mail contact.

7. Faculty should preserve records of all communication with students throughout the duration of the course and through the grade appeal timeframe.

8. Faculty should make regular backups of their course materials and course records, with special emphasis placed on backing up records related to student grade determination. Faculty will provide grade records to their supervisor or Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs as requested.

REFERENCES
ASOM Chapter 7: Faculty Responsibilities – all policies within this chapter
All ASOM policies related to the development and delivery of distance courses
Current Coordinated Process for delivery of BBRD 101, BBRD 145, BBRD 146, BBRD 147, IVYC 101, IVYC 201, IVYC 251, IVYC 291 and Quality Matters training

RESOURCE PERSON
Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Senior Training Specialist – Ivy Tech Online Education Institute and Associate Vice President, Academic Online Programs
APPENDIX A
Online Instructor Certification Survey

1. Describe your experiences using a course management system. Specifically include any discussion of your use of the Blackboard system.

2. For a 3-contact hour course, how many hours per week would you expect to spend online?

3. How quickly should students receive a response to communications?

4. How quickly should grades for assignments and discussion boards be posted?

5. Which methods of communicating with students do you prefer? (check all that apply)
   _____ e-mail
   _____ instant messaging
   _____ chat rooms
   _____ discussion board forums
   _____ other

6. How do you define your role on the discussion board forums?

7. How would you create a learning community within your course?

8. Interaction with students is different online than in a face-to-face situation because of the lack of visual clues. Talk about communication in an online setting.

Please rate your comfort level with the following:
   [5 = extremely comfortable; 1 = not comfortable]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>computer use</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>computer technology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e-mail</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>instant messaging/chat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grading rubrics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>learning groups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This is a companion guide to the Faculty Annual Summary Evaluation found in APPM 3.10, page 5. These guidelines are designed to help the evaluator determine if the online faculty member is meeting the facilitation policies and procedures for online learning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Facilitates student learning by delivering classes in accordance with College policy and course objectives. | • The online course uses the statewide course and syllabus templates based on Quality Matters.  
• The statewide syllabus is used and has been updated with contact information for the instructor, Program Chair, and OTC Coordinator. In addition, last day to withdraw dates, messages vs. email, and regional DSS contact information has been updated.  
• NW’s are processed in a timely manner and according to policy  
• Final grades are posted according to College deadlines and policies.  
• Participation/attendance is monitored and recorded according to policy and as outlined in the statewide courses’ directions to Instructors. |
| 2. Makes optimal use of available technology to enhance instructional methods. | • Faculty should use BBIM to communicate and offer online office hours.  
• Faculty are encouraged to utilize multimedia, podcasts, WIMBA, Blackboard Collaborate, web resources, digital texts and technology tools as appropriate for the course content and in meeting the course objectives. |
| 3. Develops/maintains course outlines, syllabi, lesson plans, assignments, tests and materials. Maintains accurate student records, grades and other requirements. | • Course utilizes the statewide course template – which includes the statewide syllabus template.  
• Course follows Quality Matters rubric design guidelines. |
| 4. Interacts with students and co-workers in a professional and cooperative manner complies with College policies, regional guidelines and expectations. | • Responds to students within 36 hours.  
• Reviews, provides feedback on, and returns graded work in a reasonable timeframe.  
• Utilizes at least two communication tools to interact with students such as, email, Bb messaging,  
• Where discussion boards, blogs, or wikis are utilized, faculty member has clearly outlined expectations for both student and faculty participation in these learning activities and has abided by these determined expectations. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5. Provides academic advising for registering students. Maintains regular posted office hours for student interaction each week.</th>
<th>Faculty has created a Blackboard Instant Messaging (BBIM) account and provides online office hours for students utilizing this tool. This is recommended as a best practice and as a back-up tool for communicating with students if Blackboard is not available due to technical problems.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6. Assists Chair with administrative duties including program curriculum, advisory committee meetings, budget development/control and recruitment/retention tasks.</td>
<td>Some faculty may participate as course mentors, developers or as Quality Matters experts for state wide online programming which would require regular attendance at meetings, meeting specific deadlines based on their role, and on-going certification training.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 7. Participates in professional development or scholarly activities which may include in-service, courses, or seminars to advance technical skills as well as knowledge within the field of study. Meets Ivy Tech Credentialing requirements. | - All faculty must complete required training in the use of Blackboard.  
- All online faculty must complete the IVYC 101 Online Faculty Certification course.  
- Faculty employed as mentors or as course developers must complete IVYC 201 and/or IVYC 251 for certifications in these areas.  
- Additional Quality Matters training (Applying the QM Rubric) is recommended for all faculty.  
- On-going professional development is suggested for new Blackboard tools, third-party software products, digital textbooks, and BB Collaborate tools. |
| 8. Supports the institution by serving on and participating in campus, regional, and collegewide professional/community (college or discipline related) activities, communities and task forces. | Faculty member should participate in the course organizations when teaching a statewide online course to report issues, to learn about course updates, issues and solutions, as well as, communicate with course mentors and peers. |
| 9. Maintains safe, quality laboratories and equipment. | Course materials selection and assignment development should take into consideration that students may be working at home with other individuals present (small children, etc.). If a safety concern is a potential in a course, it should be discussed during the course development process so that appropriate steps may be taken. |