Procedures for Implementation of University Policy
Cato College of Education

To address the [UNC CHARLOTTE ACADEMIC POLICY: Evaluation of Distance Education and Online Courses and Programs](#), the Cato College of Education convened a working group to develop a plan for implementation and evaluation of this policy.

The members of the working group are:
- Teresa Petty, Senior Associate Dean
- Brad Smith, Director of Assessment and Accreditation
- Beth Oyarzun, Clinical Associate Professor, Department of Educational Leadership
- Taryne Mingo, Assistant Professor, Department of Counseling
- Karen Cross, Clinical Associate Professor, Department of Reading and Elementary Education
- Cindy Gilson, Associate Professor, Department of Special Education and Child Development
- Adam Myers, Clinical Associate Professor, Department of Middle, Secondary and K-12 Education

We break our plan into five categories, with action steps listed below each category:

1. College Leadership Processes

Online learning is integrated into the institution's mission, vision, and planning processes. **Each academic college will articulate processes** *surrounding online learning and its* **development, implementation,** *and* **evaluation** *in academic planning for their respective departments.*

- College leadership will communicate expectations for online courses and programs. This information will be shared via the Faculty Handbook. This information will be added prior to the beginning of Fall 2023.
- This plan will be shared with the College Leadership Team and discussed at its January 23, 2023, meeting.
- This plan will be presented to the Faculty Council on February 1, 2023, and then shared with the entire college for approval.

2. Course Development Processes

The development of online learning policies and respective online courses and programs will **follow the standard processes for curriculum approval** *according to each academic college and the University.*

- Course outlines are available for all courses, regardless of modality. All curricula are approved through the university approval processes and submitted via Curriculog. Courses (except CSLG) are designed based on professional standards and CAEP accreditation standards.
- CSLG courses are designed based on counseling accreditation standards (CACREP), determining course content. See CACREP standards: https://www.cacrep.org/

- Course delivery format will be decided by the program and department chair prior to the publishing of the course schedule. Once the course schedule is published, course delivery formats will not be changed.
- Currently, the college utilizes the following delivery modalities:
  - Undergraduate programs are offered face-to-face with the exception of our Online TA to Teachers program.
  - Graduate Certificate programs are offered online.
  - Master's programs vary and utilize both face-to-face and online delivery.
  - Doctoral programs are face-to-face with a few online course offerings.
- Courses developed for the online platform will meet one of the following requirements:
  - Quality Matters course certification
  - Cato College of Education Assurances - Faculty will review their course(s) and complete [this form](#). The Office of Assessment and Accreditation will collect this information.

3. Best Practices for Online Learning

*Online courses will be comparable in rigor to face-to-face instructional formats. Each **academic college will develop and maintain a plan** that ensures the use of best practices for online learning as related to the specific discipline. The college plan will include benchmarking to face-to-face courses if offered, and its policies on course enrollments, expectations of student work, course design, course objectives, and the provision for a supportive learning environment for student-to-student and student-to-faculty interaction. For any wholly online degree program, the college plan will include a pathway to timely graduation.*

- Benchmarking: Most courses in the Cato College of Education are offered in only one delivery format. Regardless of delivery format, the course objectives identified in the course outline, identified Student Learning Outcomes, and course assessments will be the same. Data from course assessments will be collected via Taskstream by the Office of Assessment and Accreditation.
- Course enrollments: Appropriate course capacities are determined by the department chair and program directors. Course enrollment is regulated through advisor registration permissions and Banner restrictions based on program, prerequisites, class level, etc. Programs also have a predetermined course sequence.
- Student workload: Program faculty will develop a statement of workload expectations to be included in the course syllabi.
- Supportive Learning Environment: The college faculty and administration will develop a statement of expectations around regular student-to-student and faculty-to-student interaction in online courses, which will include a communication plan on course syllabi regarding timeline for feedback on assignments and instructor availability.
  - These expectations will be added to syllabi inserts which will be distributed by the Office of Assessment and Accreditation prior to the start of each semester.
- Plan for Timely Graduation: Program Advisors will meet regularly with students to discuss progression and utilize advising software (i.e., DegreeWorks) to monitor student progress. The departments will ensure regular offering of courses to avoid delay of student progression towards graduation.

4. Evaluating Online Courses

Each academic college will develop and maintain a process for the evaluation of its online courses and programs and the support services provided*. The college will also use the results of the evaluation for improvement. Inclusion of the following is required: assessment of student learning and improvement plan, online course and/or program evaluation including examples of student work and student and faculty interaction, student evaluations, support services, use of appropriate technology, and retention efforts. Student services for online courses will be supported by the University and specific distance education programs will be supported by the School of Professional Studies (SPS).*

The Cato College of Education promotes the continuous improvement of teaching through multiple means:

- Peer review: The college utilizes a peer review process for all early career faculty and adjunct instructors. The process includes observations of both face-to-face and online teaching. The college has developed observation tools for face-to-face and online delivery modalities. Tools for asynchronous, synchronous, blended formats are available
  - https://education.charlotte.edu/resources/faculty-resources/peer-observation-teaching-procedures
- Student course evaluations: The college will evaluate the current course evaluation instrument's viability for online courses, considering the removal of a few questions (e.g., "My instructor met the class as scheduled in the syllabus" and "My instructor was available during scheduled office hours") and insertion of a few new questions that are appropriate for all courses regardless of delivery format.
- The college also collects data through multiple sources to determine effectiveness for all instruction regardless of delivery modality. These include: assessments, rubrics, program surveys for students, alumni surveys, employer surveys, and state level surveys and measures of educator effectiveness.

5. Faculty Preparation

Each academic college will identify the selection and training processes for faculty responsible for delivering online courses to ensure faculty are educationally and/or experientially qualified to deliver online courses to ensure academic rigor*. Faculty may use multiple pathways, including internal or external reputable sources, to demonstrate their competency in online course design and teaching and learning. The Center for Teaching and Learning is one resource provided by the University to assist in the training and support of faculty regarding best practices, online course design, and the learning management system.*

- Faculty are expected to use campus-supported academic technologies whenever possible (i.e., instead of using third-party, non-supported tools with similar functionalities to the campus-supported ones). The college has also invested in academic technologies to support high-quality online instruction.
- Faculty who teach online will include in their annual report an explanation of the professional development they completed or provided over the previous year that supports teaching online. They will also include their plan for professional development for the coming year.
- For early career faculty, teaching enhancement plans are utilized as part of the peer observation process.
- Faculty will submit a self-assessment to document their readiness and preparation to teach online. This will be collected by the Office of Assessment and Accreditation.
- Adjuncts will be paired with a course mentor to support their development in teaching.

- Observations of adjuncts are required through the [peer observation process](#).